

## City of London Corporation Committee Report

<b>Committee(s):</b> Epping Forest and Commons Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 29/05/2025
<b>Subject:</b> Assistant Director Epping Forest Update Report January – April 2025 (SEF 08/25)	<b>Public report:</b> For Information
<b>This proposal:</b> a) delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes b) provides statutory duties c) provides business enabling functions	<b>Diverse Engaged Communities</b> <b>Leading Sustainable</b> <b>Environment Vibrant Thriving</b> <b>Destination Flourishing Public</b> <b>Spaces</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Katie Stewart, Executive Director Environment
<b>Report author:</b>	Jacqueline Eggleston, Assistant Director (Superintendent) of Epping Forest, Natural Environment

### Summary

This report presents updates on business activity delivered in Epping Forest for the period January to April 2025. The activities are delivered against the objectives outlined in the Epping Forest Management Strategy (charitable objectives), Epping Forest Business Plan and the Natural Environment Strategies.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

### Main Report

#### Current Position

1. Appendix A provides updates on service delivery in Epping Forest and its buffer lands since January 2025. Information for this fourth quarter for

2024/25 should be read in conjunction with separate reports on financial activity, risk management and high-level business planning to provide an overview of progress made against Charity, Corporate and Natural Environment objectives.

Of particular note;

2. His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester visited the Epping Forest Visitor Centre to mark his Golden Jubilee serving as Ranger of Epping Forest. During the visit to Chingford he viewed a special exhibition marking the history of royal connections to the Forest and met with volunteers who had dedicated over 50 hours volunteering to mark the occasion. The Duke also viewed the some of the Brambly Hedge figures that have been installed around the visitor centre and at Connaught Water. The visit was concluded at Lopping Hall where His Royal Highness heard from children from Willingale School and Natural Environment youth ambassadors.
3. We received visits from Iain Duncan Smith MP and Neil Hudson MP and were pleased to show them areas of the Forest within their respective constituencies and discuss topics of concern including fly tipping and development.
4. Investment in new machinery has increased path improvements and surface improvements to car parks. The easy access trail at Connaught Water, which was in a poor state after the winter has been re-surfaced.
5. Keepers and enforcement teams have established multi-agency operations to address anti-social behaviour. ANPR cameras along with vehicle stops at High Beach have resulted in eight vehicles prosecuted for waste carrying and one vehicle seized. A renewed effort is being made at Wanstead Flats to disrupt the ASB in the area.
6. Several studies are under way to aid our understanding of the Forest with baseline surveys of several species, feature assessments, LIDAR analysis and hydrological surveys.
7. Volunteering is increasing and recruitment to vacancies continues at pace with 13 posts filled in this period.

## Proposals

8. Priorities for the next quarter will be to finalise the last of the 'post TOM' recruitment to fill remaining vacancies.
9. The installation of the all-weather path; the 'Gloucester Ride' at Chingford
10. Volunteers Week events and commencement of Epping Forest Roadshows:

10 May	Swaines Green May Fayre
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18 May	Spring Festival in Highams Park
07 Jun	Chingford Village Festival
21-22 June	Wanstead Wildlife Weekend
06 Jul	Epping Town Show
25 July	Epping Forest Field Studies Centre Open Day

11. Cattle return to the Forest.

12. Baseline surveys and BNG assessment completed.

### **Key Data**

13. 2024-25 Year End statistics

- Total fly tips: 656
- Total fires/barbeques: 41/26
- Grazing days: 7532 Forest / 14462 Buffer
- Visitor Centre: 54,674
- 52 filming licences: Total of £246,142
- 59 fitness licences: Total of £6,455.30
- 41 utilities licences: Total of £4,985
- Dog incidents: 39

### **Conclusion**

Considerable progress against Natural Environment Strategy Objectives and Epping Forest management plan objectives has been delivered during the reporting period.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A – Progress against key objectives / actions (categorised by Natural Environment Strategy). Further detail of how the activities align to these objectives is shown in the Epping Forest Business Plan

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