

**Progress against key workstreams 2024-25**  
**1 October 2024 – 31 March 2025**

Ref:	Workstream	Progress October-March 2024-25
1.	<p><b>City Gardens</b>  Maintain City-owned green spaces in the Square Mile. Complete Finsbury Circus re-landscaping (Nov2023-Dec 2024).  Effectively manage our spaces to ensure they are safe and pleasant and fit to provide the essential long-term benefits of green areas, including increasing biodiversity and adapting to become more climate resilient.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Finsbury Circus</b> opening has been delayed slightly due to issues with preserving tree roots and the establishment of the lawn. It is due to be partially open in April/May and then officially opened in June 2025. The new events policy for Finsbury Gardens has been completed, approved and adopted.</li> <li>• The <b>Biodiversity Action Plan</b> remains on track.</li> <li>• The <b>new keeper</b> role at Bunhill fields has been very successful and is having a positive impact in promoting responsible dog ownership in the area.</li> <li>• <b>Climate resilient biodiverse schemes delivered at:</b>  St Anne St Agnes  St Olaves Silver Street  Little Trinity  Finsbury Circus western Arm &amp; Jubilee Gardens</li> </ul>
2.	<p><b>Nature conservation and resilience</b>  Protect and enhance the biodiversity of our open spaces. Increase the resilience of our open spaces within a wider, interconnected natural landscape.  Establish a natural capital-based management process across our open spaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NLOS</b>  Head of Conservation and Ecologist have been working with Carbon Removals Team, mapping sites on Hampstead Heath for leaky dams and new small ponds. Works starting later in 2025 through to 2027. NLOS Tree Team have also been working with Carbon Removals Team to fund additional veteran tree enclosures on Hampstead Heath to improve resilience against visitor pressure issues. CAS funding has also purchased new soil compaction monitoring equipment along with specialist unit to decompact and inject nutrients into tree rooting zones. This equipment will be shared with Arboricultural Team at Epping Forest. Ecologist is working with local stakeholder group to open up wildlife corridors south of Hampstead Heath creating links between SINC's in London Borough of Camden</li> <li>• <b>Epping Forest:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deer Management Programme: 2024-2025 season completed successfully. ADMP target met and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Appendix 1

Ref:	Workstream	Progress October-March 2024-25
		<p>exceeded using updated data from deer drone census. 30 deer exclusion plots installed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bell heather reintroduction</li> <li>• BNG Assessment Opportunities: EF Head of Conservation providing technical support on CoL Natural Environment Divisions Open Spaces BNG Assessment. Draft reports submitted by consultants and in review.</li> <li>• Built asset management programme: In progress: Residential Property Renovation and Letting Prioritisation work with CSD. Management of built asset portfolio. City Surveyor appointed to support progressing empty property projects.</li> <li>• Carbon Removals Programme - Copped Hall Arable Reversion to Meadow Project: Copped Hall video recorded with EF employees</li> <li>• Tree Safety Works: As of Feb 2025, 133 jobs complete. Completed works: A/B Safety works along Epping New Road including Veteran tree reductions and habitat works, Warners Path, collecting of beech Slab and Pick Hill Triangle</li> <li>• EF provided input and comment on the draft London LNRS in March25</li> <li>• CSS Forest 1: The 2024-5 season for veteran tree management by contractors was completed in February - across the whole season 114 veteran hornbeam trees were managed. This is on top of the 17 beech trees that host the nationally rare Zygodon forsteri moss</li> <li>• CSS Forest 2: The tender for the second part of the major habitat restoration for "Forest 2" was opened. In all, 5 contractors submitted tenders. These were evaluated by the middle of March.</li> <li>• Epping Forest - Sports Consultation on changes to the Greenkeeping &amp; Grounds Team underway.</li> <li>• Great Gregories Solar PV scheme: In progress: 25% funding from RPA grant secured. 75% confirmed funding from CAS as part of wider infrastructure project</li> <li>• LIDAR Project (heritage): In progress: Historic England completed lidar analysis, site visits, recording form developed. Training session held with external groups</li> <li>• Safety 365: 66% audit score achieved March25</li> <li>• Wanstead Park Programme - Temple CMP completed: Wanstead Park Project Officer now in post</li> <li>• Wanstead Park floating reedbed</li> <li>• Wildfire preparedness training included: Vegetation Fire Foundation and Wildfire Management Planning - WMP (Lantra accredited).</li> <li>• Wildfire equipment: one new fire fogger arrived, to be kept at Wanstead. Trailer for it to be mounted on has been ordered. John is due to order a new 4.6m flail for creating fire breaks (and other flailing work)</li> <li>• Chingford Golf Course: 2024/25 irrigation work complete. Increased income generated from hire of</li> </ul>

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		<p>buggies, trolleys, clubs by £8K</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water bowser purchased using CSS funding to improve wood pasture grazing and accessibility to support long-term water supply for cattle</li> <li>• Recruitment of new Conservation Herd Manager</li> <li>• Carbon Removals Programme - Reassessment of Open Spaces sequestration (ground-up): In progress. Supporting Carbon Removals team only. Consulted appointed</li> </ul> <p><b>The Commons</b></p> <p><b>Carbon Removal project:</b> Projects are progressing as planned with two leaky dams installed and permission for further leaky dams pending EA permit process. Planning for the 2025/26 squirrel control program has been undertaken along with CAS supported training on wildfire management for most ranger staff.</p> <p><b>Research:</b> At Ashted Common, researchers from Cardiff University were supported as part of works to sample veteranized trees for fungi while staff have liaised with a Swedish researcher wishing to study the veteranized trees at AC.</p> <p><b>Habitat management:</b> Management of veteran trees and over 300 new pollard trees completed as per program at AC and Burnham Beeches. The first phase of capital program funded livestock fencing replacement works were completed at West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons. The annual habitat management program has been completed as proposed in the different site management plans including sky lark protections area at WWCC and AC</p>
3.	<p><b>Community engagement</b></p> <p>Partnership: create meaningful and lasting partnerships.</p> <p>Ownership: cultivate a sense of deep pride in, and attachment to, our spaces amongst users.</p> <p>Knowledge exchange: ensure continuous transfer of information between the Corporation and its customers.</p>	<p><b>Epping Forest:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brambly Hedge Trail: Trail now installed (awaiting braille and sensory panels on 12 x figures at Connaught Water. 3 x figures to be relocated slightly at Connaught Water. Path improvements at Connaught Water completed.</li> <li>• New EF education partnership forum.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Commons</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the period we had 4573 hours of volunteer support across the Common sites.</li> <li>• We are working regularly with the Ancient Tree Forum, Arboricultural association and SGI (UK) on hosting an international conference on veteran trees. We worked with Burnham Parish Council on revising their guided walks booklet for the Parish.</li> <li>• 31 events were held across the commons sites during the period including talks, guided walks and open days eg Meet the Calves at WWCC with 650 attendees. Community engagement week held at BB by the Community</li> </ul>

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		<p>Engagement Rangers</p> <p><b>NLOS</b></p> <p>Deliverables were added to NLOS 2024-25 business plan and will be progressed as part of the delivery of the Natural Environment Division's 'Community Engagement Strategy'.</p> <p>Large public event 'Night of the 10k PBs' was held on 18 May at the recently refurbished Athletics Track.</p> <p>Heath Hands – our valued partners on the Heath and in Highgate Wood – celebrated their 25th anniversary on 6 June at a well-attended event on the grounds of Kenwood House. The event was a celebration of Heath Hands' achievements in support of green spaces the past quarter century, and was attended by numerous volunteers, elected officials, this committee's Chairman, Director of Natural Environment, Superintendent and numerous other Heath officers. a new five-year agreement with signed with Heath Hands to extend and strengthen the partnership.</p> <p>The charities continued to benefit from the extraordinary efforts of local volunteers, including Friends of West Ham Park.</p>
4.	<p><b>Access and recreation</b></p> <p>Excellence: Enable the best possible visitor journey, creating the right information from pre-visit to on-site experience in exemplar sites.</p> <p>Equal access: Provide welcoming places that visitors from all backgrounds and abilities are comfortable to explore.</p> <p>Inform: Build understanding and knowledge about our open spaces.</p> <p>Visitors will respect one another and will care for and advocate for the sites.</p>	<p><b>Epping Forest:</b></p> <p>Q2 - Countryside Manager, Recycling and Waste Manager, Estates Manager, Q3 - Forest Keeper, Q4 - Forest Keeper x 2 &amp; Apprentice Craftsperson.</p> <p><b>The Commons</b></p> <p>A £50,000 revamp of the information point was completed at BB. The funding was all site generated from film income</p> <p>Community engagement week held at BB in Feb half term. See also above.</p> <p><b>NLOS</b></p> <p>a website audit was completed to ensure the information online is up to date and accurate. The signage audit across NLOS was completed and signage is now being update where needed to ensure accuracy and clarity. Multiple improvements to facilities are being made in coordination with City Surveyor's Dept.</p>

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5.	<p><b>Culture, Heritage and Learning</b>            Develop communities of interest that participate in, advocate for, and support our Natural Environment and Heritage charities.            Develop a learning offer that builds nature connection and wellbeing.            Protect and enhance our built heritage landscape heritage and archaeological assets and promote them as part of our visitor and learning offers.</p>	<p>The 'Firing London's Imagination' education programme has continued to engage young people with the history of the Roman kiln. A total of 529 students from Haringey schools and neighbouring boroughs with high pupil premium rates participated in our KS2 programme between September 2024 and March 2025. Earlier this year, two local schools participated in our new workshop – KS2 Hands on Archaeology and local Roman history workshop – where students handled Roman artefacts and visited the Roman kiln exhibition in Highgate Wood. In the summer term of 2025, we will continue our KS1 Roman woodland adventure session, facilitated by local Forest School practitioner.</p> <p>New Effing Forest education partnership forum the team have exceeded their participation targets, engaging 42,798 Learning Participants in school, play, youth and community activities. The programme engaged participants across 17 London boroughs, reaching children and young people in high areas of child poverty including Tower Hamlets and Newham. The team also launched a Youth Board, empowering young people to engage with and influence the CoL Natural Environment Board. The team received funding from the City of London Cultural and Creative Learning Fund to run nature-based learning projects for children who miss out on holiday enrichment; to engage young people environmental stewardship and active hope; and to engage children with profound additional needs. Programme evaluation includes: 17% increase in feelings of wellbeing and 28% increase in feelings of confidence to explore our spaces.</p>
6.	<p><b>Income generation</b>            Develop and start to implement an income generation plan for the Natural Environment Division. Complete the Operational Property Review.            Conserve and improve built assets across the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens, tackling the 'bow wave' of maintenance backlog works.</p>	<p><b>The Commons</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site staff attended and supported BNG workshops run by consultants to assess income potential on our sites.</li> <li>• Tender was developed for the establishment of a new mobile café unit at Kenley Common. A Paw Wash franchise facility is being investigated for Farthing Downs Car Park.</li> </ul> <p><b>NLOS</b></p> <p>Recruitment for Head of Development &amp; Partnerships is live. Income generation is continuing as per usual, inclusion of user fees (eg swimming), sport pitch hire, cafe leases, filming, etc, and appreciable increases in fees have been negotiated with several existing events, and filming opportunities have been capitalised upon to generate additional income. A full cost recovery model has been instituted in 2024-25 for events. We will hire in (Self-funded) Business Development Officer once the 'Head of.' position is filled.</p>

