

HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Tuesday, 17 June 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held at
Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 17 June 2025 at
5.30 pm

Present

Members:

William Upton KC (Acting Chairman)
Liz Andrew, London Natural History Society
John Arnoldi, Heath Hands
Nick Bradfield, Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee (attended virtually)
Colin Gregory, Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association
Michael Hammerson, Highgate Society (attended virtually)
Ella Mitchell, Hampstead Rugby Club (attended virtually)
Helen Payne, Friends of Kenwood (attended virtually)
Susan Rose, Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee
Richard Sumray, London Council for Sport and Recreation
Jeff Waage, Heath & Hampstead Society
Michele Martin Williams, Vale of Heath Society (attended virtually)

Officers:

Emily Brennan	- Environment Department
Andrew Impey	- Environment Department
Jack Joslin	- Environment Department
William LoSasso	- Environment Department
Jonathan Meares	- Environment Department
Charlotte Williams	- Environment Department
Zoe Williams	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman & Sheriff Gregory Jones, Alethea Silk, John Etheridge and John Weston.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Draft minutes of Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee

A Member requested that Members who attended the meeting online be recorded as present.

It was agreed by the Committee that amendments be made to the minutes in the instances where a question was attributed to the incorrect Member.

RESOLVED – That, subject to the discussed amendments, the public minutes and non-public summary of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held on 29 April 2025 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

3.2 Draft minutes of Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee

The draft public minutes and non-public summary of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held on 20 May 2025 were formally noted.

3.3 Matters Arising

The Committee noted that the Deputy Chairman of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee, William Upton KC had been asked to continue to act as Chair of the Consultative Committee whilst the Chairman, Alderman & Sherriff Gregory Jones KC, was engaged in his Shrieval role.

The Chairman noted that Alethea Silk had been appointed to serve on the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee as a representative from the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee, and Councillor Marcus Boyland would be attending in an observational role.

The Hampstead Garden Suburb Resident's Association (HGSRA) representative asked if there was an update on the resilience arrangements that were being discussed with the London Boroughs of Barnet and Camden. Officers responded that at the last meeting with the London Borough of Barnet's resilience team, a set of proposals were raised that would not be suitable. They further explained that the resilience team would need to establish a consultation with the Hampstead Garden Suburb Resident's Association. Officers noted that the London Borough of Barnet were amenable to the changes requested, and at the request of the Member, provided an example of an issue within the proposal.

The Highgate Society representative requested that the relevant Officer speak to them regarding an archaeological strategy. Officers confirmed that they would follow up with the Member.

The Chairman noted that they had been following up on the policy for access to the Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds. Officers provided an update that, following the recent Supreme Court judgement in *For Women Scotland* on the statutory interpretation of the Equality Act 2010, they were reviewing access policies which included those at the Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds. Officers explained that they were preparing appraisal proposals for the engagement process which would be brought forward for decision as soon as possible. They acknowledged the sensitivity of the issue and noted that, despite the time pressure, it was essential to take the necessary time to determine the most appropriate course of action. The Committee was informed that they would be working with specialist legal advisors to shape the consultation process which would be shared with the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee and the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Management Committee.

The Committee agreed that given the next meeting was after the summer recess, they would be comfortable with being contacted by email about this consultation. The London Council of Sports and Recreation (LCSR) representative agreed that time should be taken to determine the correct approach and emphasised the need for caution in issuing guidance prematurely, particularly in the absence of any national guidance. Officers noted that a holding response was being drafted for Officers and Members to use in response to queries, while the current facility arrangements remained in place. They assured Members that they would not be committing to any changes until the consultation and the review had taken place.

The HGRSA representative noted their agreement that consultation should not begin until the guidance from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission had been received. Regarding the process for consultation, the Member requested that the consultation document be sent to Members to consult with the organisations they represented. They also noted that following the consultation, the Consultative Committee should have the opportunity to comment on the proposal before it went to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee. The Chairman responded that the Equalities and Human Rights Commission's draft code of practice had been circulated, and they were in the process of consultation. The Chairman noted that waiting for the final version of the code of practice may cause a delay in the consultation process.

4. ASSISTANT DIRECTORS UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment which provided Members with an update on matters relating to Hampstead Heath since its last meeting.

The Assistant Director noted that the Cricket Nets and Paddling Pool at Hampstead Heath were opened on 24 May 2025. They noted that the Paddling Pool was opened until 30 May 2025, and there was a brief closure as they

addressed mechanical issues. The Assistant Director also apologised for the cancellation of the Consultative Committee's walk at Hampstead Heath on the Saturday before the meeting. They noted this was due to staffing needed for an unauthorised events that took place that day.

The Chairman noted the additional paragraph that had been included in the report about the City Surveyor's Department's work at Hampstead Heath. They also sought clarity on what the years identified in appendix 1 of the report referred to. The Assistant Director introduced the purpose of the update and the background of the funding for the Cyclical Works Programme, welcoming feedback about the structure of the report.

The HGSRA representative raised a question regarding the reference to potential wildflower meadow creation on the Hampstead Heath Extension. They asked whether this initiative might alter the recreational use of the area for sport or affect the overall perception of the land's traditional agricultural character. The Assistant Director assured the Member that they were not proposing a fundamental change to the use of Heath Extension and clarified that the report was considering the potential opportunities for the future. Officers assured the Member that the part of the Heath Extension for wildflower meadow creation would be incorporated into the area that had already been allowed to succeed into meadows. They noted they would provide the Member with the exact locations in due course.

The HGRSA representative also noted that they had found the appendix of the report about the Cyclical Works Programme difficult to understand without further commentary as the text was small and the matters were not in order of priority. They noted that it should not be a substitute for the progress that had been made on being provided with more information about project prioritisation.

The Heath & Hampstead Society (HHS) representative asked why Golders Hill Park and Parliament Hill Field's year on year forecasting had been recorded separately to that of Hampstead Heath. They were also interested in understanding the factors that drove the fluctuations in the forecasting. The Assistant Director noted that they would follow up with the City Surveyor's department for a detailed response. They explained that the projects that were identified in the forecast were from the forward maintenance plan which accounted for all Cyclical Work Programme projects that should occur. The Assistant Director explained that they were in the process of standardising how the City Surveyors department identified the different areas of Hampstead Heath with how they were identified in the North London Open Spaces.

The LCSR representative expressed a preference for greater clarity on the basis for decision-making across the City Corporation, rather than the detailed information provided in the appendix of the report. Specifically, they sought understanding of why certain areas received more funding than others and how priorities were established. The Member noted that the Consultative Committee should be involved in the process of setting these priorities. Officers confirmed the feedback would be communicated to the City Surveyor's Department.

The LCSR representative asked Officers about what had caused the delay in processing the application for the London 5000m event. The Member highlighted the importance of supporting the local clubs as they were important for the success of recreation on the Heath. The Assistant Director responded that they were supportive of the new event that had been proposed and had been working with the running club to ensure it would be possible. They explained that as it was a new event, the application process was necessary. The Assistant Director assured the Member that a meeting was planned within the next couple of days to finalise the details.

The Member also noted that they had been contacted by the rugby club, which had been instructed to cease operating a café from the Athletics Track. They noted that this arrangement had previously been agreed with a former Superintendent and emphasised the need for improved communication and mutual understanding between Officers and the club. The Assistant Director acknowledged that there may have been an un-memorialised legacy agreement for the rugby club to use the track as a café. They noted that there were some arrangements that needed to be addressed as they had become aware of some health and safety and other issues. The Assistant Director assured the Member that they were committed to communicating with the club. In response to concerns that the clubs were not satisfied with how they had been treated, the Assistant Director assured the Member that they were working in a positive and collaborative manner with all partners, and noted it was helpful to receive the feedback.

Regarding the coppicing required in autumn for maintaining the habitat on the dams and spillways, the HHS representative noted that Members frequently received inquiries from local interest groups and members of the public asking for information on work being undertaken at Hampstead Heath. The Member recommended improving communication through the use of on-site signage and regular updates on the website to explain the nature and purpose of ongoing works. Officers noted the point and explained that the maintenance work on the habitats around the dams and spillways was being carried out at the request of the reservoir inspector.

The Highgate Society representative suggested that publishing information about ongoing and completed surveys on the Hampstead Heath website would help engage the public and raise awareness of the work being undertaken. They also requested an update on the moth survey that had been conducted in previous years. The London Natural History Society representative noted that any support the City Corporation could provide in promoting volunteer opportunities would be appreciated. Officers confirmed that they would discuss this with the ecologist and noted that while a follow-up moth survey was planned, it was not a top priority.

Regarding the coppicing of trees, the Friends of Kenwood representative noted that they had similar discussions at Kenwood, trying to prevent the felling of trees to maintain the backs and prevent erosion. They noted they had been working closely with English Heritage on this and encouraged the City Corporation to

continue the collaboration with them on Hampstead Heath. The Member also noted that in the past, Kenwood had raised public information boards about any work that was being conducted in the area. They encouraged this practice to be adopted on Hampstead Heath.

The Member also asked for an update about the work on the sand pit, noting that it had been closed for over a year. The Assistant Director noted that they were confident they could now move forward with this project following the successful application for match funding. Officers explained the work that had occurred since the closure of the sand pit and noted that repairs would commence as soon as possible once the paperwork had been completed. They believed this would be completed before the end of the calendar year.

The representative of the Vale of Heath Society asked for an update about the water fountains. They noted that there was no longer signage on one of the fountains that remained in disrepair. The Assistant Director responded that the City Surveyors had identified funding for this issue, and they were in the process of choosing a design and instructing a vendor. They noted that were addressing this as a priority.

The representative of the Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee (HCAAC) noted that a large amount of Lime Bikes had not been collected on the Highgate edge area of Hampstead Heath. The Assistant Director responded that they were aware of this issue and were in communication with Lime about resolving this problem. They explained that the instructions for Lime based on their digital control of the bikes was being finalised, and the bikes would be monitored for the rest of the season.

The LCSR representative asked whether there was an update on the results of the Green Flag Award. The Assistant Director responded that the judging was conducted on 21 May 2025, and the official results would be announced on 15 July 2025.

The Member also noted the issue that they did not receive their calendar invite to the Affordable Art Fair had taken place in Hampstead Heath. The Assistant Director apologised noting this was a technical error and assured the Member that they would continue to receive the invitations when this was held in the future.

In response to the Member's query about preventing future unauthorised events taking place at Hampstead Heath, the Assistant Director assured the Member that they were gathering advice on preventing this taking place. They noted that this year's event was smaller than the previous year, and while they had contacted the organisers of the event, they had not received a response.

The LCSR representative also noted that due to the expected high temperatures over the weekend, more people may attempt to use the non-bathing ponds for swimming. They asked if there would be increased Constabulary in place to mitigate this issue. The Assistant Director assured the Member that they were

aware of this problem and that the Rangers and Constabulary had been briefed in preparation.

RESOLVED – That, Members –

- Noted the report and its contents.

5. HEATH HANDS UPDATE

The Committee received a report of Heath Hands, which detailed recent highlights, and its work towards its strategic objectives.

The Heath Hands representative presented the update to Members, noting that it was a busy time of year for the charity. They explained various work underway such as the annual wildlife monitoring programmes, the Hedgehog survey, and the Annual General Meeting which was taking place in July.

The Chairman asked for a progress update on the information hut. Officers responded that they were working with the City Surveyor's Department to complete the necessary repairs, which were expected to be concluded shortly. The Heath Hands representative noted that they had the additional support for the information hut ready for weekends.

The Highgate Society representative welcomed the update and emphasised that making survey information publicly accessible would help highlight Hampstead Heath's importance as a vital ecological resource. The Heath Hands representative responded that there was information available on the Heath Hands website about the surveys that had been conducted. They expressed an interest in working with Officers to integrate this information with content on the City Corporation's website.

RESOLVED – That, Members –

- Noted the report and its contents.

6. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITY REVIEW - FUNDRAISING UPDATE

The Committee a report of the Executive Director, Environment and the Chamberlain which detailed the progress since 2024 and the next stages of this workplan.

The Chairman confirmed with Officers that Members would be invited to a briefing on fundraising opportunities and resourcing later in the year. Officers noted that the dates would be confirmed in due course.

RESOLVED – That, Members –

- Noted the report and its contents.

- Noted the two planned briefing sessions for all interested Members on Biodiversity Net Gain potential at Natural Environment sites, and fundraising opportunities and resourcing for the Natural Environment Charities.

7. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITY REVIEW - HAMPSTEAD HEATH CHARITY ASSETS UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment and the Chamberlain which summarised the processes used to audit the land assets held by the City Corporation as trustee of the Hampstead Heath Charity.

The HGSRA representative queried whether Metropolitan Open Land would be a relevant factor for the trustee to consider. Officers noted that they would take this forward to be included, and that it may also be commented on in the complementary land review.

RESOLVED – That, Members –

- Noted the audit process undertaken for the land assets of the Hampstead Heath Charity and the steps to maintain the Asset Register.
- Noted the list of charity land assets of the Hampstead Heath Charity included in the appendix of the report.

8. GRANT FUNDING MODEL UPDATE

The Committee received a verbal update from Officers of the Environment Department on the Grant Funding Model.

Officers presented an update that provided information on the transition to the Grant Funding Model. They discussed the aims of the Natural Environment Charity Review, the alternatives to the Deficit Funding Model that were explored and the timeline for the transition.

The HHS representative sought clarification on whether the fundraising team was considering all aspects of income generation or just the fundraising aspect. Officers responded that the two fundraising consultants had been appointed to expand the work on assessing different income streams and finding areas for potential income generation. They explained that the consultants would identify the greatest opportunities for income generation and work with Officers to determine how this could translate into income generation targets and priorities. Officers confirmed that the scope of the consultants' work would include the whole range of income generation.

The HGSRA representative expressed concern that the report timeline would be under more pressure towards the end of the financial year, and there may be less time for the Committee to be involved in consultation.

The Member also queried whether there was information on the split between income generated through events, and philanthropic fundraising from the other open space charities identified in the presentation. Officers confirmed that they had considered this, and how much money would need to be spent on income generation. As example, they explained the various income streams generated by the Royal Parks and acknowledged that their donations processes were more advanced.

The LCSR representative asked Officers whether the City Corporation had publicised information about the transition to the Grant Funding Model. Officers explained that they had created a document with Frequently Asked Questions to address those that had been asked in the media. As the next step, Officers noted that they would be working on a plan to update key stakeholders and share as much information as possible on the website.

The Member emphasised the importance of protecting the balance that has been maintained at Hampstead Heath when evaluating income-generating opportunities, particularly by limiting the number of events held. Officers explained that the benefit of having external fundraising consultants was that they would be able to articulate the unique nature of the City Corporation in their review, while also benchmarking against other organisations in an impartial manner.

The Member also inquired about the governance and decision-making processes involved in determining the level of grant funding provided. Officers explained that this involved several components, including funding from sources such as the local risk budget and the Cyclical Works Programme. They acknowledged that further work was needed before a formal proposal could be presented. Officers confirmed that the Chamberlain and the Executive Director, Environment, were co-sponsors of the project and were committed to ensuring that appropriate grant levels were established. They emphasised that this was the initial stage of the process and that a clearer understanding of future income generation would be necessary before final decisions on grants could be made.

The Member asked how conflicts of interest between the corporate trustee and Court of Common Council would be managed when they arose in this process. Officers responded that they would consider this and respond in due course.

The representative from the Vale of Heath Society asked whether more comprehensive information could be provided regarding the initial work undertaken when exploring alternative models. Officers responded that a SWOT analysis had been completed, although such assessments were not typically shared with Members. They added that the request would be relayed to the Chamberlain's department for consideration in future reporting.

The Member also questioned why they had not been invited to participate in the initial workshops and expressed concern about the lack of consultation. Officers explained that the workshops were intended as internal sessions for Officers to explore potential solutions. However, they noted that all-Member briefing

sessions had been held, involving both elected Members and Consultative Committee Members.

The Member asked whether Officers had an initial estimate of the amount that would need to be raised annually through trusts and foundations for Hampstead Heath. Officers responded that it was too early in the process to provide a reliable figure. They assured the Member that any future estimates would be based on good research and data and would be shared as soon as they became available.

RESOLVED – That, Members –

- Noted the verbal update.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee noted that the date of the next Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee meeting was Tuesday 16 September 2025.

10. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

The Chairman raised the question of the Consultative Committee meetings being held at Hampstead Heath, rather than Guildhall. Officers responded that they were working on modernising the IT equipment at Hampstead Heath to allow for online connection. They expressed optimism that the next Consultative Committee could be held at Hampstead Heath.

The HGSRA representative asked Officers about the potential of an additional meeting which had been raised earlier in the meeting. Officers explained that they had raised the potential of an additional Consultative Committee meeting with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, as the report that detailed the results of the Complementary Land Use Appraisal would not be completed until after the Committee's final meeting of the calendar year. They explained that this would give the Consultative Committee the chance to be consulted on the report before it was considered by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee. They noted that this meeting was yet to be confirmed.

As this point, the Chairman sought approval from the Consultative Committee to continue the meeting beyond two hours from the appointed time for the start of the meeting, in accordance with Standing Order 39, and this was agreed.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no urgent business.

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That, the following matters relate to business under the remit of the Court of Common Council acting for the City Corporation as charity Trustee,

to which Part VA and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 public access to meetings provisions do not apply. The following items contain sensitive information which it is not in the best interests of the charity to consider in a public meeting (engaging similar considerations as under paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act) and will be considered in non-public session.

13. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

13.1 DRAFT NON-PUBLIC MINUTES OF HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED – That, subject to the amendments discussed, the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 April 2025 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

13.2 DRAFT NON-PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held on 20 May 2025 were formally noted.

14. CITY CORPORATION GOVERNANCE OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITIES – UPDATE ON PLANNED CHANGES

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment and the Chamberlain.

15. NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions raised in non-public session.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There was no urgent business raised in non-public session.

The meeting ended at 7.56pm.

Chairman

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