



Heath Hands Activity Update

Timeframe: 1st April to 28th November 2025

Report to: Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee and Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, and Queen's Park Committee – January 2025 meeting

Heath Hands overview

1. Heath Hands is a registered charity delivering conservation, community, learning and wellbeing programmes across Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, Keats House and at the Kenwood Estate.
2. This short report summarises the charity's main activities on NLOS during the above timeframe according to its strategic and charitable objectives and Strategy and pursuant to the Partnership Agreement signed with the City of London Corporation through until 2029.

Highlights

3. Over 10,400 of volunteering contributed since April across Hampstead Heath.
4. 49 guided walks and workshops, 40 school sessions, 56 corporate volunteering days led by Heath Hands staff. Drop-in garden volunteering launches after work/school and on weekends for public, complementing drop-in litter picking sessions.
5. Annual wildlife monitoring programmes complete and analysis and reporting underway.
6. Heath Information Hut opening since August with over a hundred engagements each Saturday, complementing our other public engagement and interpretation activities.
7. New hedgerow planting programme started in Parliament Hill area following agreement by ColC teams and successful crowdfunder match-funded by Aviva and British Airways. New wildlife pond completed behind Hive.

Strategic Objectives

8. The Heath Hands' Strategy (2021 - 2030) provides strategic direction and outlines our aims and objectives and priorities through 2025/26. This report outlines below our work in furtherance of these four strategic aims (Community, Conservation, Learning, and Wellbeing) since our last report to this committee.

Conservation

9. Practical conservation and garden sessions running across all parts of Hampstead Heath, led by CoLC Ranger, Conservation and Garden teams, with 222 sessions and 3,199 hours.
10. Wildlife monitoring season complete and data being analysed prior to publication of reports on reptiles, butterflies and dragonflies on Heath Hands website in January 2026.
11. Around Parliament Hill, our efforts to improve biodiversity are continuing, with work complete on a new wildlife pond to complement the nearby wildflower meadow and hedgerow projects and new hedgerow planting programme started.



12. Our Hedgehog Friendly Heath project is continuing with support for a hedgehog survey at Highgate Wood in June 2025 in collaboration with CoLC and ZSL's London Hogwatch, and completion of August's National Hedgehog Monitoring Programme at the Heath Extension.
13. 56 companies out on corporate volunteering days since start of April completing tasks agreed with the Heath's Ranger and Conservation teams, focusing on maintenance, litter picking, fence line and ditch management, projects around the Hive.
14. New greenhouse built for our plant nursery at the Hive to support our gardening projects.
15. New drop-in gardening sessions successful, providing an opportunity for people to volunteer informally, after school/ work or at weekends and attracting a different audience. Work focusing on horticultural and conservation tasks around the Hive.

Community

16. To engage different audiences and bring new visitors to the Heath we collaborate with a range of local organisations. Our Community Newsletter now reaches over 650 organisations and members of the public - more info: www.heath-hands.org.uk/community-activities
17. Recent activities have included outings 7th St Pancras Guides, Regent's Park Estate, GOAL Youth Club, Eco Judaism, Kentish Town City Farm and more.
18. Our volunteers supported the delivery of Golders Hill Park Zoo's 120th anniversary celebration and the Kite Festival organised by the Heath and Hampstead Society and CoLC, and the annual Conker Championships.

Learning

19. Our free weekend family-friendly weekend nature sessions have attracted over 1,230 participants since April, with recent activities including tree ID and autumn crafts.
20. Following refurbishment, Heath Info Hut opening Saturdays from 10am-2pm. Over 1,650 engagements since August and positive feedback from visitors.
21. Since April, our staff and volunteers have delivered 49 public walks and workshops on bird ID, pollinators, wildflower meadows, conservation management, tree identification, bats and the river fleet with over 570 participants in total.
22. We have run 40 Heath Friendly School sessions during the summer and autumn terms, with age groups ranging from 5 to 17 and over 920 young people involved.
23. Our youth volunteering programme active in term time with 243 hours contributed, and Work Experience week for Acland Burghley school completed in July 2025.

Wellbeing

24. Our free health and wellbeing programmes including three weekly health walks, regular walks for Mind in Camden, social prescribing and forest bathing workshops are continuing.
25. Development of new partnership with youth mental health providers, The Hive, Camden with activities completed over the summer. New partnership with Rethink Mental Health with festive activities in December.