

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee	Dated: 03/02/2026
Subject: Hampstead Heath Risk Management Update Report	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes• provides business enabling functions	Corporate Plan Outcomes: Diverse engaged communities; Vibrant thriving destination; Providing excellent services; Flourishing public spaces; Leading sustainable environment Business enabling functions: Risk Management
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	Katie Stewart, Executive Director Environment
Report author:	Joanne Hill, Environment Department

Summary

This report provides an overview of the risk management processes in place, including risk governance and the format and frequency of reporting, for the Hampstead Heath charity (charity number 803392) for which your Committee is responsible.

The report provides Members with assurance that these processes align with the Corporate Risk Management Framework and meet the requirements of the Charities Act 2011. A summary of the current Hampstead Heath risk register is included within the report, and at Appendix 1.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the content of this report and:

- The summary of the Hampstead Heath risk register presented within the report and at Appendix 1.
- The assurance of the Executive Director that all risks held by the Hampstead Heath charity continue to be managed in compliance with the Corporate Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.

Main Report

Background

Corporate Risk Management Process

1. The City of London's Risk Management Framework incorporates the Risk Management Policy; the Risk Management Strategy 2024-29; and Risk Management Guidance and Training.
2. The Risk Management Policy outlines the City Corporation's overarching approach and requirements in risk management.
3. The Risk Management Strategy 2024-2029 articulates the City of London Corporation's approach to identifying, mitigating, and managing risk. It ensures that the City Corporation upholds duties, delivers priorities, and supports and aligns with organisational ambitions including our Corporate Plan 2024-2029 strategic outcomes enabling delivery, continuous improvement and innovation.
4. To support delivery of the Risk Management Strategy 2024-2029, a Corporate Risk Appetite Statement was recently approved by Court of Common Council. This Statement details the City Corporation's approach to taking risk across nine themes and will be used to aid strategic decision making. Initially, this is being applied to Corporate-level risks only, but will, in time, be rolled out to risks at all levels, including charity risks. Further details will be reported to your Committee as they become available.
5. New and emerging risks are identified through several channels, including:
 - Directly by Senior Leadership Teams as part of the regular review process.
 - In response to ongoing review of progress made against Business Plan objectives and performance measures, e.g., slippage of target dates or changes to expected performance levels.
 - In response to emerging events and changing circumstances which have the potential to impact on the delivery of services. For example, changes to legislation, resource availability, severe weather events.

Risk governance and reporting

6. For each natural environment charity, the responsible Management Committee retains oversight of risk, with officers under their relevant delegated authority in the operational management of the charity having day-to-day responsibility for managing and controlling risk.
7. The Charity Commission requires Trustees to confirm in a charity's annual report that any major risks to which the charity is exposed have been identified and reviewed and that systems are established to mitigate those risks. These risks are to be reviewed annually.
8. The City of London's Risk Management Framework requires each Chief Officer to report regularly to Committees on the risks faced by their department.

9. Your Committee, on behalf of the City Corporation as Trustee, reviews risks faced by the Hampstead Heath charity on a quarterly basis to gain assurance that risks are being identified and managed effectively. This reporting frequency aligns with the City of London's Risk Management Framework and exceeds the requirements of the Charity Commission.
10. Detailed risk registers are presented every six months. The two interim quarterly reports present summary risk registers, with individual risks being reported in detail by exception.

Current Position

Hampstead Heath Risks

11. The Executive Director Environment assures your Committee that all risks held by the Hampstead Heath charity continue to be managed in compliance with the Corporate Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.
12. The Hampstead Heath Risk Register contains 14 risks (three RED, ten AMBER, one GREEN), owned and managed by the Assistant Director, North London Open Spaces and his management team. Risk owners monitor each risk, remaining aware of changes or factors that could affect it, either positively or negatively, and identify any new opportunities to better control each one. Since the last report to your Committee, all risks have been reviewed and updated as necessary; none of the risk scores have changed.
13. The three highest risks remain the 'Decline in condition of assets', 'Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and site', and 'Work related stress', each of which is currently scored at Red 16 (likely to occur, with a major impact). Further details of these three risks are provided below, and they are presented in detail at Appendix 1 for reference.

- a. **Decline in condition of assets**

There are ongoing concerns about inadequate repair and maintenance of the charity's built assets and a range of actions are underway with the aim of reducing this risk. Progress on necessary works is now being seen, including toilet refurbishment work at Hampstead Heath. At Golders Hill Park, the toilets and pathways have been refurbished, and electrical improvements have commenced. Work is also underway to develop a Conservation Management Plan for the Hill Garden and Pergola which will assist with funding applications.

Chief Officers in occupation are typically accountable for asset condition within their functional area. They are responsible for commissioning required work, and ensuring an appropriate funding route is identified. This action is often delivered upon the professional advice of the City Surveyor's Department (CSD). Once a work package is commissioned, it is the responsibility of CSD to deliver those works as agreed and funded within the given cost/timeline/specifications. Regular liaison meetings between the two departments are held to manage the delivery programme. The mitigating actions for this risk include one owned by the CSD's Operations Group Director: to

deliver work packages as agreed with the Environment Department. This and all other actions are kept under regular review.

b. Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and site

Instances of anti-social behaviour continue to occur across the sites, particularly during busy periods. A departmental reporting system is in place to enable rapid reporting of instances where staff experience abusive or unreasonable behaviour by members of the public, which are then followed up with appropriate action. The presence of supplemental security resource at the Lido over the summer had a positive impact in reducing incidents of antisocial behaviour, and this will be repeated at the Lido during summer 2026, as well as during large events and busy periods across the sites as necessary. Locally, officers encourage responsible behaviour by members of the public, via social media messaging, onsite signage and face to face engagement. Preventative measures are put in place where possible and collaboration with the police and other enforcement agencies to minimise incidents is ongoing. It is hoped that these actions will enable the risk to be reduced.

c. Work related stress

This is closely related to the risk of 'impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and site'. Some members of staff are currently experiencing increasingly high workloads due to insufficient staffing levels to meet greater service delivery demands. This is leading to higher levels of workplace stress and anxiety, with individuals working additional, unpaid, hours. Senior Management are actively working to address this risk, including ensuring appropriate support and training for individuals; reviewing staff rotas; and identification of additional funding to increase staff resources. It is hoped that these actions will, in time, reduce the risk score from Red 16 (likely/major) to Amber 12 (possible/major). Other appropriate actions will be considered to enable a further reduction.

14. All Hampstead Heath risks are listed below (and at Appendix 1).
15. The following risks are being managed with the aim of reducing the likelihood and/or impact ratings, and officers are undertaking a range of appropriate actions to achieve the target scores.
 - **ENV-NE-HH 007: Decline in condition of assets**
Current risk score: Red 16 (Likely/Major)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 014: Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and site**
Current risk score: Red 16 (Likely/Major)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 015: Work related stress**
Current risk score: Red 16 (Likely/Major)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 001: Budget pressures**
Current risk score: Amber 12 (Possible/Major)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 004: Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change**
Current risk score: Amber 12 (Possible/Major)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 002: Negative impacts of visitor pressure**
Current risk score: Amber 8 (Likely/Serious)

- **ENV-NE-HH 006: Risks to health and safety**
Current risk score: Amber 8 (Unlikely/Major)
- **ENV-NE-HH 009: Water facilities - safety**
Current risk score: Amber 8 (Likely/Serious)
- **ENV-NE-HH 010: Deterioration of water bodies**
Current risk score: Amber 8 (Likely/Serious)
- **ENV-NE-HH 011: Recruitment and retention of suitable staff**
Current risk score: Amber 8 (Unlikely/Major)

16. The four remaining risks, listed below, are 'accepted' with actions in place to maintain them at their current score. These risks have been reduced to the lowest level possible at present, but officers remain aware of changes and opportunities which could enable a further reduction.

- **ENV-NE-HH 013: Tree event or failure**
Current risk score: Amber 8 (Likely/Serious)
- **ENV-NE-HH 003: Outbreak of fire in woodland/heathland**
Current risk score: Amber 6 (Possible/Serious)
- **ENV-NE-HH 005: Negative impacts of pests and diseases**
Current risk score: Amber 6 (Possible/Serious)
- **ENV-NE-HH 008: Negative impacts of development and encroachment**
Current risk score: Green 4 (Unlikely/Serious)

Corporate and Strategic Implications

17. Effective management of risk is at the heart of the City Corporation's approach to delivering cost effective and valued services to the public as well as being an important element within the corporate governance of the organisation.
18. The risk management processes in place in the Environment Department support the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2024-29, our Departmental high-level Business Plan, charity business plans, the Natural Environment Division's core strategies, and relevant corporate strategies, including, but not limited to, the Climate Action; Cultural; Sport; and Volunteering Strategies.
19. Risks which could have a serious impact on the achievement of business and strategic objectives are proactively identified, assessed and managed in order to minimise their likelihood and/or impact.

Conclusion

20. The proactive management of risk, including the reporting process to Members, demonstrates that the Natural Environment Division of the Environment Department is adhering to the requirements of the City of London Corporation's Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Hampstead Heath Risks
- Appendix 2 – City of London Corporation Risk Matrix

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