

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Open Spaces and City Gardens	17th February 2014
<b>Subject:</b> Open Spaces Health & Safety Audit 2013	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Open Spaces	<b>For Information</b>
<p><b><u>Summary</u></b></p> <p>The annual audit of Health and Safety (H&amp;S) in the Open Spaces Department was carried out in the second half of 2013 and found overall improvements in the management of H&amp;S. Whilst there is good safety practice evident throughout the Department, actions have been identified for continued improvements over the next twelve months and beyond.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>That Members receive this report.</p>	

### **Main Report**

#### **Background**

1. Annual H&S audits are carried out across the Open Spaces Department to monitor existing arrangements under twelve H&S indicators which are described in Appendix 1. The aims of the process are to assure the effectiveness of our H&S management system and support managers in carrying out their H&S roles.
2. During the summer and autumn of 2013 self-assessments were carried out across the Department. Three divisions were then selected to have their self-assessments fully validated:
  - City Gardens;
  - Epping Forest;
  - Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.

This involved visits by staff from other divisions to look at management practices, procedures and the safety culture on the ground. (The divisions are validated in alternate years and the other divisions were visited in 2012.) This report is a summary of points which arose through the process and more generally reports significant developments in H&S management across the Department in 2013.

#### **Findings of the 2013 Audit**

3. H&S continues to have a high priority at all levels of the Department and there was continued improvement overall in the management of H&S.
4. Some examples of good practice identified across the Department include:
  - A workshop exercise was held at Hampstead Heath to test the emergency response to a potential incident involving the dams. This involved the City's Contingency Planning Officer, the Metropolitan Police and LB Camden.

- Updating of all fire risk assessments across City Commons;
  - Completion of comprehensive investigations of a backlog of accident reports at Epping Forest;
  - Initiation of a programme to capture detailed tree H&S management information in an electronic format at West Ham Park;
  - On Hampstead Heath, swimming safety procedures, internal lifeguard training and external audit are exemplars of good practice;
  - Good local recording of vehicle and machinery maintenance at Burnham Beeches;
  - Continued programme of safety inspection and assessment of monuments at the Cemetery and Crematorium;
  - Programme of training for working at height carried out in the City Gardens.
5. Of particular note since the last audit validation, a Technical Officer with a particular focus on H&S started work at Epping Forest. He has provided a consistent and knowledgeable approach to H&S across the division.
  6. Overall the audit showed improvement in H&S (Table 2). There are an increased number of ticks representing a 'Good - Very Good' performance with some indicators meriting 'Excellent' and there are no sites falling into the lowest category 'Needs Developing'. Any local issues found were largely by exception to otherwise safe systems in place.
  7. Each division has a H&S improvement plan to carry out actions identified in the audit. These tasks are integrated in work programmes and Superintendents are responsible for developing and delivering the action plans.
  8. The 'Top X' risks, i.e. the most significant H&S risks in the Open Spaces Department, receive a particular focus at departmental level. These risks and plans to mitigate them are reported to the Town Clerk's Department at six monthly intervals. The Top X risks are currently identified as in Table 1 below:

<b>Table 1</b>	
<b>Risk</b>	<b>Status</b>
Working near underground services	Red
Managing contractors and other third parties on site	Amber
Working at height	Amber (reduced from red in 2013)
Working with the public	Red
Reservoirs	Amber
Unsafe memorials	Red

One risk was reduced from red to amber in 2013 and two risks, '*Working near to the roadside*' and '*Controlled use of firearms*', were dropped from the departmental register as they are now considered to be appropriately managed at divisional level.

## Improvements during 2013

9. A pilot new corporate accident reporting system was rolled out in 2013. Individuals now report incidents by telephone to the Contact Centre where the initial details are captured, a unique incident number is generated and follow up emails are sent to the corporate H&S Section and departmental managers for investigation and appropriate action. Officers are working with the Corporate H&S Manager to provide feedback on the pilot and improve the distribution of the reports. Overall the new system has resulted in improved Near Miss reporting which provides valuable information for identifying potential risks.
10. Accidents and near misses are analysed on a regular basis and discussed at the quarterly departmental H&S Improvement Group chaired by the Director. The number of accidents resulting in injuries, in the last calendar year was down from 55 to 46.
11. Particular focus has been given during the year in the City Gardens Section, to the risks to staff and visitor whilst in the vicinity of the memorials and gravestones at Bunhill Fields. Working closely with the City Surveyor's Heritage Officer and taking advice from the Superintendent of the Cemetery & Crematorium, a survey was undertaken of the stability of the structures. Of the many headstones in Bunhill Fields, seventy-five were deemed unsafe and these were highlighted and an action plan was put in place.
12. We have continued to receive much support from the City's central H&S services. The corporate H&S Manager for HR and representatives of the City Surveyor's Department regularly attended Open Spaces departmental and divisional H&S meetings. The appointment of a new H&S Manager responsible for property across the City Corporation was welcomed and has led to a review of procedures in this area. The Occupational Health Section continued to provide a health referral service and guidance as well as assisting in the monitoring of staff health in relation to occupational risks. The support of the central H&S Managers was particularly appreciated with regard to the fatality of a swimmer at Kenwood Ladies Pond, Hampstead Heath during the summer.
13. There have been significant improvements in access to H&S information through the improved corporate H&S intranet pages with ready access to high quality guidance. In addition the corporate Safety Managers Forum meets on a quarterly basis and aids communication between lead safety personnel across the City of London. The central H&S Committee, chaired by the Town Clerk, now meets four times a year to provide strategic management of H&S. The Open Spaces Department actively participates in both these groups.
14. The City Surveyor continues to play a significant H&S role through the maintenance and development of buildings and infrastructure to ensure safe conditions on our sites. Open Spaces staff and senior managers have continued their work to ensure the Mitie repairs and maintenance contract provides the required level of service.
15. Key challenges for the year ahead include:
  - Developing our departmental H&S plan in line with the guidance provided by the Town Clerk's department;

- Further work on common standards of risk assessments and safe systems of work;
  - Further work to update Fire risk assessments across the department;
  - Continued commitment to ensuring H&S systems are in place and adhered to across the department.
16. The Audit fulfils the performance and legal obligations of the Director and the City of London Corporation to monitor H&S in the Department through an Annual Certificate of Assurance to the Town Clerk for Health and Safety in the Open Spaces Department.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

17. The audit supports Strategic Aims 2 and 3.
- SA2 Provide modern, efficient and high quality local services and policing within the Square Mile for workers, residents and visitors with a view to delivering sustainable outcomes.
  - SA3 Provide valued services to London and the nation.
18. The Audit also links to the Departmental Business Plan through Departmental Objective 5 which seeks to “manage, develop and empower a capable and motivated work force to achieve high standards of safety and performance”.

### **Conclusion**

19. The Audit supports the Department’s H&S policy and measures performance against it, while supporting Managers in maintaining a positive safety culture in the Department.
20. There is a high level of commitment to good H&S practice in the Department and whilst there is an overall improvement we are not complacent and have identified appropriate actions throughout the Department to ensure a balance is made between taking the precautions required and providing accessible and enjoyable open spaces.

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**Table 2.**  
**Findings of the 2013 H&S Audit of:**  
**City Gardens;**  
**Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood &**  
**Queens Park;**  
**Epping Forest**  
 (with previous results for comparison)

<b>Key:</b>	
Excellent	✓ ✓
Good – Very good	✓
Work in Progress	↑
Needs Developing	✗

	Organisation, Implementation and Communication	Risk Management	Training	Volunteers, Contractors, Suppliers	Accident and Near Miss Reporting	Central Support	Checklists, Inspections and Maintenance Records	Policies	First Aid	Emergency Action Plans	Fire Safety	Monitoring and Review
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>2013 Audit</b>												
<b>City Gardens</b>	✓	↑	✓	↑	✓	✓	✓	↑	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood &amp; Queens Park</b>	✓	✓	✓	↑	✓	✓	✓	✓	↑	✓	↑	✓
<b>Epping Forest</b>	↑	↑	↑	↑	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	↑	✓

<b>2011 Audit</b>												
<b>City Gardens</b>	↑	↑	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	↑	✓	✓	✓
<b>Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood &amp; Queens Park</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Epping Forest</b>	↑	↑	✓	↑	✓	✓	↑	↑	✓	✓	✓	↑

## Appendix 1

### The Open Spaces H&S Audit Indicators

**Indicator 1: Organisation, Implementation and Communication.** Each Division must have a local Health & Safety Plan and statement, and ensure that is regularly updated, clearly communicated and understood by all staff.

**Indicator 2: Risk Management.** Each Division should have Risk Assessments and Safe Systems of Work in place that cover all activities, operations and premises and adhere to current legislation and City Codes of Practice.

**Indicator 3: Training.** All staff shall receive a thorough health & safety induction followed by regular recorded and evaluated training determined by legislation, risk assessments and duties.

**Indicator 4: Volunteers, Contractors and Suppliers.** Each Division should have local arrangements to ensure that all third parties are working in accordance with health & safety legislation.

**Indicator 5: Accident and Near Miss Reporting.** Each Division must have procedures to ensure the reporting, investigation and analysis of accidents, incidents and near misses in accordance with City and Departmental Codes of Practice.

**Indicator 6: Central Support.** Each Division should have arrangements in place with the City Surveyors Department, the Occupational Health Section and the central Health and Safety Section to ensure central support according to the schedules defined in the Open Spaces Health & Safety Policy.

**Indicator 7: Checklists, Inspections and Maintenance Records.** Each Division should ensure that all statutory tests and inspections are undertaken in accordance with current legislation and that infrastructure is regularly inspected according to an accurate asset inventory.

**Indicator 8: Policies.** Based on Departmental guidance, each Division should define site specific policies (as applicable) on Water Safety, Tree Safety, Play Equipment, Vehicle Safety, Events and Lone Working.

**Indicator 9: First Aid.** Each Division should have appropriate first aid arrangements relating to training and provision according to current legislation and local risk assessments.

**Indicator 10: Emergency Action Plans.** Each Division should have plans and procedures to deal with emergencies and disasters.

**Indicator 11: Fire Safety.** Each Division should have appropriate fire safety equipment, training and procedures based on local fire risk assessments.

**Indicator 12: Monitoring and Review.** Each Division should review their local Health & Safety Plan on an annual basis, advising the Open Spaces Health & Safety Committee of any key issues arising from this process.