

<b>Committee(s):</b>		<b>Date(s):</b>
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	For Information	2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2014
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee	For Decision	9 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
<b>Subject:</b>		<b>Public</b>
Management Work Plan for Preacher's Hill		
<b>Report of:</b>		<b>For Decision</b>
Superintendent of Hampstead Heath		
<b><u>Summary</u></b>		
This Report presents a detailed Management Work Plan for Preacher's Hill.		
<b>Recommendations</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee be invited to submit their views on the Draft Management Work Plan for this area of the Heath.</li> </ul>		

## **Main Report**

### **Background and current position**

1. Detailed documents specifying how several areas of the Heath will be managed have previously been presented to the Consultative and Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committees. This Report presents a further plan, for Preacher's Hill (Appendix 1).

### **Proposals**

2. Preacher's Hill is a relatively small (2.5 hectares) triangular area lying at the south-west corner of the Heath, separated from the main part of the Heath by East Heath Road. It comprises woodland, grassland, specimen trees, scrub and hedgerow and contains a network of paths. Close to Hampstead and bordered on two sides by housing, it is greatly appreciated by local people as a site for sitting, walking, picnics and children's play.
3. The area requires unusually detailed management, due to its complexity, popularity and small size. Management proposals place emphasis on quality and extent of access, while retaining and enhancing habitats where possible.
4. Access will be improved in particular by reducing areas of bramble, thistle and rank growth, where these have recently spread into grassland and reduced the width of paths, though fringes of these important habitats will be retained. Four

white willows and four native crab apple trees will be planted along Willow Road and Christchurch Hill to screen views from nearby housing.

5. Management to enhance biodiversity includes removing two turkey oaks, a cherry sapling and some elm regrowth to restore south-facing acidic grassland, and planting black poplars to replace trees that have died.

### **Financial and Risk Implications**

6. Activities included within the Management Work Plan will be undertaken using the Heath local risk budgets. There is a reputational risk in not proactively managing the natural aspect of the Heath. Left unchecked, the mosaic of diverse habitats for which the Heath is renowned would be lost to woodland and scrub.

### **Legal Implications**

7. The City has a legal duty under the **Hampstead Heath Act 1871** to maintain the natural aspect of the Heath.

### **Strategic Implications**

8. The proposals link to the theme in the **Community Strategy** *to protect, promote and enhance our environment*.
9. They also link to the **Open Spaces Department Plan** through the **Strategic Aim** to *'adopt sustainable working practices, promote the variety of life (biodiversity) and protect the Open Spaces for the enjoyment of future generations'*, and the **Improvement Objective** to *'ensure that measures to promote sustainability and biodiversity are embedded in the Department's work'*.

These works also fulfil **Essential Actions in the Part 1 Management Plan**, including *"Retain and enhance the Heath's habitats and natural resources to enable continued quiet enjoyment and appreciation of the natural world by its visitors."*

### **Conclusion**

10. A 10-year Work Plan is presented for Preacher's Hill. The programme is ambitious, requiring frequent visits for small-scale tasks, and the extent to which it can be carried out may need review.

The establishment of the aims and practices for managing these areas will feed into the annual work programmes for the appropriate years. Management Work Plans are subject to review at the end of the 10-year period, or sooner if unforeseen events occur.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Draft 10-year Management Work Plan for Preacher's Hill

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