

Committee(s):		Date(s):
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	For information	3 rd November 2014
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee	For decision	24 th November 2014
Subject:	Public	
Management Work Plan for the Hampstead Fleet Stream compartment		
Report of:	For Information	
Superintendent of Hampstead Heath.		
<u>Summary</u>		
This report presents a detailed work plan for the Hampstead Fleet Stream compartment.		
Recommendations		
It is recommended that:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee be invited to submit their views on the detailed Management Plan for this area of Hampstead Heath. • That the views of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee are conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee at their meeting on 24 November 2014. • That the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee approve the Management Plan for the Fleet River Compartment. 		

Main Report

Background and current position

1. The Hampstead Fleet Stream compartment is located towards the west of the main body of Hampstead Heath and consists of the stream and stream fringes running from the Vale of Health Pond in the west towards the Catchpit area in the east. It also includes the stream and stream fringes running roughly north to south passing through the Viaduct Pond, together with a third small section running north to south to the west of the compartment.
2. The compartment has been divided into nine distinct sections for easier description of the site and more structured management aims.
3. The compartment comprises approximately 850m of streamline and stream fringes (riparian zone), running through a mixture of fine-leaved grassland,

scrub and woodland habitats. It includes marsh areas and pools formed by the damming of the stream and from a levelling out of the stream channel.

4. As well as increasing the variety of wetland habitat on the Heath, the compartment has an important historic context, being one of only two remaining places where one of London's lost rivers can still be seen on the surface. Sections of the stream are enclosed by fencing, providing undisturbed habitat for nesting and foraging birds. The compartment's relatively undisturbed nature, large extent of fallen timber and its moist environment have allowed an interesting flora of moss, lichen, liverwort and fungi to develop.

Proposals

The Hampstead Fleet Stream Management Work Plan

5. The overall vision of the Fleet Stream Management Plan is to manage the compartment in order to maintain the stream as a visible above-surface water course. Wetland vegetation will be encouraged through the provision of glades and pools, which will further slow velocities and encourage the spread of sediment deposits along the stream's course.
6. Sections within the compartment should have glades created and maintained through cyclic coppicing and scrub removal.
7. Pooling and retention of water will be encouraged through the placing of log weirs at selected locations. These weirs should be maintained through periodic removal of any accumulated sediment.
8. A new pool is proposed at the point where the main west-east stream joins the stream coming from the Upper Bird Sanctuary.
9. It is also proposed to remove the invasive species Himalayan balsam, and to manage the non-native ivy *Hedera colchica* in this compartment.
10. In 2016 it is also proposed to remove a large sycamore from the edge of the stream, to the south of the Viaduct Pond. Its removal would increase light levels to the proposed new pool area.
11. Detailed proposals are attached as Appendix 1.

Financial and Risk Implications

12. Activities included within the Management Work Plan will largely be undertaken using the Superintendent's local risk budget. The culverted section of stream running under Lime Avenue may require the clearing of sediment approximately once every 10-15 years, depending on build-up, for which it is likely a specialist contractor would be required, this would be covered by the Superintendents Local Risk Budget, however additional grant aid may be sought to help fund the works. However the management of the proposed log weirs along the stream chain may be sufficient to prevent accumulation in this culvert.
13. 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 secondary woodland cover and scrub.

Legal Implications

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

Strategic Implications

15. The proposals link to the theme in the Community Strategy to protect, promote and enhance our environment.
16. The proposal also links 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'*.
17. These works would 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'.
18. The following policies from the Natural Landscape chapter of the Part II Management Plan for the Heath are particularly relevant to the Fleet stream management work plan.

Policy 36: 'The existing ponds, streams, ditches and wetlands will be managed to protect and enhance their nature conservation importance'.

Policy 43: 'Wet or seasonally wet ditches and streams will be maintained and restored where appropriate. No further ditches or streams will be piped unless it is absolutely necessary for safety or access reasons or in order to prevent excessive erosion'.

Conclusion

19. A ten-year Management Work Plan is presented for the Hampstead Fleet Stream compartment area of the Heath.
20. The establishment of the aims and practices for managing these areas will feed into the Annual Work Programmes for the appropriate years. The Management Work Plans are subject to review at the end of the ten-year period, or sooner if unforeseen events occur.

Adrian Brooker

Assistant Ecologist

Open Spaces

T: 0778 9094 584

E: Adrian.Brooker@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Jonathan Meares

Highgate Wood & Conservation and Trees Manager

Open Spaces

T: 0750 0786 067

E: Jonathan.Meares@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft ten-year Management Work Plan for the Hampstead Fleet Stream compartment.