

Committee(s): Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	Date(s): 9 <sup>th</sup> July 2012	Item no.
Subject: 'Wild About Hampstead Heath' project application update	Public	
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Information	
<p><b><u>Summary</u></b></p> <p>This report reviews the main aims and background informing the 'Wild About Hampstead Heath' project and the current progress of the Heritage Lottery Fund Application to support this project.</p> <p>The RSPB-led 'Wild About Hampstead Heath' project aims to engage new and under-represented audiences with the natural history and ecology of Hampstead Heath through innovative engagement techniques. The project directly supports the strategic aims of Hampstead Heath and addresses key challenges in engaging with and increasing the diversity of our visitor profile.</p> <p>The project is ambitious and aims to engage with 33,000 new and existing visitors over three years. The main areas of work in the project are; developing a team of 'interpretation' volunteers, providing increased opportunities for environmental education at Golders Hill Park, and creating new habitat areas for house sparrows and kingfishers. The RSPB is seeking to secure £440,640 of funding through an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund submitted in March 2012 and to be considered in June 2012.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">That the committee notes the aims of the 'Wild About Hampstead Heath' project, being led by the RSPB and the progress of the Heritage Lottery Fund application to support this project.</p>		

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. In 2007, the City of London entered into a partnership with the RSPB to secure Heritage Lottery Funding for a science and outreach programme aiming to engage with local schools. The success of Hampstead Heath Education Centre in providing learning opportunities for over 5,500 students per year, in a variety of topics including science, is a legacy of this successful project.

2. In 2011, the RSPB approached Hampstead Heath regarding a second partnership opportunity, building on the previous successful relationship. A first stage Heritage Lottery Funding Application was produced and submitted in June 2011. The first stage application was well received and the project was invited to submit a second stage application in March 2012. The proposed project put forward for funding is entitled 'Wild about Hampstead Heath'. The RSPB are leading the application with the City of London acting as the major partner. English Heritage, Heath Hands, and the Camden Community Consortium are also listed as project partners.

### **Current Position**

3. 'Wild About Hampstead Heath' has been submitted to the HLF London Committee for consideration at their June 2012 meeting. The main goal of the project is to engage new audiences with the natural history of Hampstead Heath including under-represented communities, young people and local visitors. This project compliments the HLF bid made by English Heritage for Kenwood which will focus on the built heritage.

### *Consultation and Project Need*

4. In 2007, Hampstead Heath commissioned research on the demographic profile of visitors. This research demonstrated that there is a significant underrepresentation of young people under the age of 25 and individuals from BAME (Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic) groups visiting the Heath. However, 46% of the population living within a 2.5 miles radius of Hampstead Heath are from BAME groups.
5. Signage and physical interpretation is kept to a minimum on Hampstead Heath in order to maintain its aesthetic as an encapsulated piece of countryside. However, this creates a barrier to engaging visitors with the natural history and ecology of the Heath. Project consultation demonstrated that 88% of visitors consulted wanted to learn more about the natural history of the Heath.
6. The Hampstead Heath Education Centre delivers school sessions to over 5,500 students per year. However, only 17% of these students are from Barnet state schools. Further, only 2% of visits occur at Golders Hill Park. Project consultation indicated a desire from local teachers in Barnet to visit Golders Hill Park more regularly for environmental education opportunities.

### *Project Delivery*

7. The main goal of the project is to engage new audiences with the natural history and ecology of Hampstead Heath, in particular; under-represented BAME groups, young people and local visitors. A detailed explanation of

the new audiences targeted and the proposed level of engagement is outlined in **Appendix 1 – Pyramid of Engagement**.

8. A main delivery mechanism of this project will be the development of 50 ‘interpretation’ volunteers. The volunteers will be equipped with a variety of mobile, multi-media engagement tools such as interactive tablets, webcams, and underwater cameras. Consultation with visitors, and under-represented communities, highlighted that nature was often **not** a key reason for visiting the Heath. The purpose of these engagement tools is for the volunteers to be able to ‘bring nature to the visitors’, as a first step in engaging new audiences with nature. The interpretation volunteers will offer a unique solution to engagement without the use of static signage.
9. ‘Interpretation’ volunteers will be recruited from our target audiences, specifically young people and individuals from BAME groups. Successful community engagement projects rely on engagement being led by the community. These interpretation volunteers will be essential ambassadors for the project in the wider community.
10. The project will also aim to engage with young people and their families in Barnet through the development of an education programme at Golders Hill Park. A new pond dipping platform will be constructed in the Swan Pond and a classroom area will be developed in the disused glasshouse adjacent to the Butterfly House. Further, an in-depth ‘Heath Friendly’ schools programme will be delivered to 4 schools in areas of deprivation, aiming to engage with teachers, students and their families.
11. Two new house sparrow meadows will be constructed near the Parliament Hill, specifically behind the bandstand and next to the Tumulus. A third will be constructed at the Heath Extension. The aim of these sparrow meadows will be twofold: to engage local people who use the Parliament Hill area with the natural aspects of the Heath; and provide refuge for the invertebrate population which are essential for young house sparrows, a species in decline in London.
12. A kingfisher bank will be constructed at the Viaduct pond. While kingfishers are not species of concern currently, they are excellent ambassadors for wildlife. The kingfisher bank will be constructed to offer stunning views of these charismatic birds to help engage and inspire local visitors about the Heath’s natural history.

#### *Volunteer and Education Facilities*

13. The Parliament Hill Changing Room which has been under-utilised for many years facility will be partly converted into a new volunteer base for the interpretation volunteers. This facility will also house the RSPB project staff.

14. A new education base will be developed at Golders Hill Park, using a disused glasshouse adjacent to the Butterfly House. This facility will also serve as a second volunteer base for the project. Further, a pond dipping platform will be constructed on the Swan Pond for use with school groups.

*Key dates and deliverables*

15. If successful it is envisaged that ‘Wild about Hampstead Heath’ will begin on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012 and finish on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015. A full list of activities and dates are provided in **Appendix 2 – Implementation and Activity Delivery Programme**. The HLF application aims to secure £440,640 of funding to support the project.
16. The project will result in the creation of 3 new roles managed by the RSPB, based on Hampstead Heath. Recruitment will begin in July 2012 and staff will be appointed for the project start of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012.
17. The conversion of the Parliament Hill Changing Room facility, the development of the Golders Hill Park Classroom, the pond dipping platform and the kingfisher bank will occur between 1<sup>st</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> December 2012.
18. The project activities will begin in October 2012 with small scale recruitment of volunteers and consultation events. The volunteer and education programmes are designed to build slowly through the first year as the project is implemented, and more quickly in the second and third years. In total, the project aims to engage directly with 33,000 new and existing Heath visitors (a full breakdown of engagement targets can be found in **Appendix 1 – Pyramid of Engagement**).
19. All project expenditure is scheduled to occur in the first year of the project (September 2012-13). All costs in the following two years are related to salary, activity and maintenance costs.

**Financial and Risk Implications**

20. This project is being led by the RSPB who have engaged a number of partners to support the project. The HLF application aims to secure £440,640 of funding to support the project. Whilst the City will be required to support the project, primarily through staff time, the proposed management arrangements allow for RSPB to appoint two senior project staff and an apprentice.
21. The City Corporation has agreed to contribute £13,000 towards the development of the education/volunteer base at Golders Hill Park. The recent contributions secured through the work associated with gas pipelines on the Heath, will assist in off-setting the Superintendents local

risk budgets. The other project elements, including the conversion of the Parliament Hill Changing Rooms forms part of the HLF bid.

22. As part of the project management proposals RSPB together with the City Corporation have developed a Risk Register that has identified the key risks associated with the project. These range from a lack of interest from target groups, health and safety of children and management issues with volunteers. RSPB have proposed that a Project Board be convened for monitoring the progress with City Corporation representation.
23. This project was considered at an early stage under the new project management arrangements. It was agreed that as the project was being managed by the RSPB who will be responsible receiving and administering any grant funding there would be no requirement to follow the City project management arrangements.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

24. The project directly supports the Open Spaces Business Plan Strategy Aim 4: 'Promote opportunities to value and enjoy the outdoors for recreation, learning and healthy living .' The project also directly supports the Strategy Aim 2: 'Involve communities and partners in developing a sense of place through the care and management of our sites.'
25. The project also contributes to the Improvement Objective 4: 'Market our services and provide events and opportunities to learn for all within our communities.' and the Improvement Objective 2: 'Extend partnership-working within the community and continue to develop closer links with local authorities, to improve the way we involve people in decision making.'

### **Conclusion**

26. 'Wild About Hampstead Heath' is designed to engage with new and existing audiences regarding the importance and significance of the natural history of Hampstead Heath. The project addresses some our key challenges; engagement with underrepresented audiences in our visitor profile, and interpretation without the use of static signage. Through innovative engagement techniques such as; community-led interpretation volunteering, increased environmental education, and habitat construction with a dual aim of conservation and engagement, the project will engage directly with 33,000 visitors. The project, led by the RSPB, has been

submitted for consideration by the Heritage Lottery Fund London Committee in June 2012.

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Pyramid of Engagement

Appendix 2 – Implementation and Activity Delivery Programme

**Contact:**

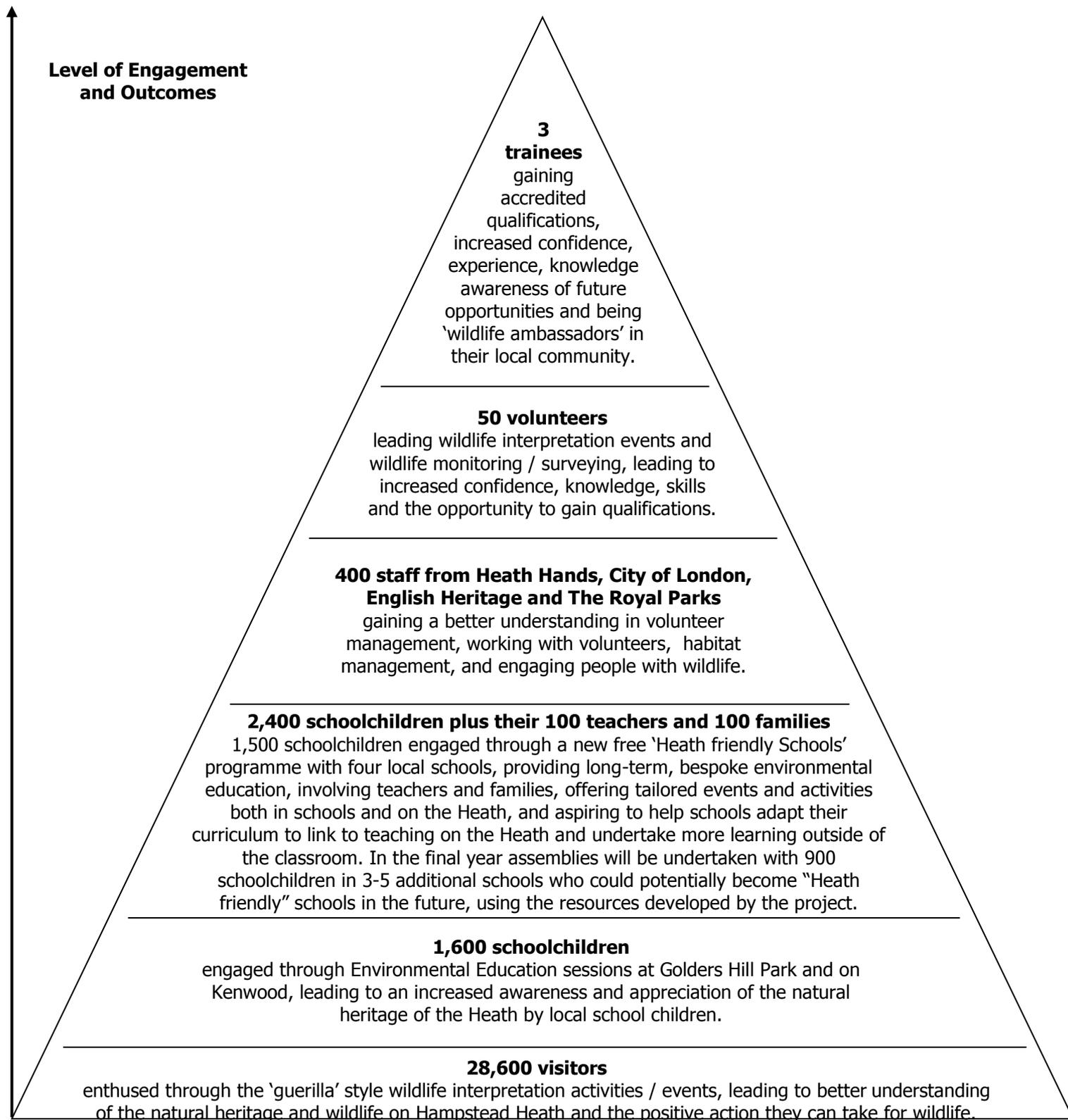
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## Appendix 1 – Pyramid of Engagement

### 'Wild About Hampstead Heath'

#### Engagement and Outcome Pyramid

**Over 33,000 people engaged**



**As the level of engagement deepens, the level of outcome increases.**





