

Committee(s):	Dated:
Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queens Park Committee Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	18 th March 2016 16 th May 2016 27 th June 2016
Subject: Oak Processionary Moth Plan 2016	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Information
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Summary

This report provides Members with a briefing on the plans for Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) management across London and the South East in 2016. It explains the implications for the management of OPM on City of London Open Spaces. The report advises on the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) plans for a review following their three year management pilot. A further report will be presented to Members later in the year to advise on both the outcome of the review and actions taken to manage OPM on City of London Open Spaces in 2016.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Background

1. Members will recall noting the 2015 management of Oak Processionary Moth at their meeting on 27th July 2015. This report describes the main elements of the 2016 plan and the implications for our sites, including Hampstead Heath and Queens Park.

Current Position

2. During the autumn/winter of 2015/16, three new outbreaks have been discovered in London and the South East. The largest new outbreak is in the Guildford, Surrey area (Appendix 1) together with outbreaks in Newham and Barnet.
3. In the autumn of 2015, the Forestry Commission and Defra decided to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the pilot control programme which began in 2013.
4. Defra have committed a further one year's funding for 2016, to enable the current pilot to continue whilst the evaluation work is completed. It is expected that the outcome of this review will be known by the autumn of 2016.

5. Spraying of affected trees will start during April on sites outside of the core zone (see Appendix 1). Statutory Plant Health Notices (SPHNs) have been issued to the City of London Corporation in respect of Hampstead Heath. The precise timing of spraying depends on the emergence of caterpillars from egg plaques, which varies depending on the temperature and previous winter's climate.
6. For areas within the core zone, the Forestry Commission will not be issuing SPHNs unless an infestation is likely to pose a significant threat to the buffer zone. With regard to Queens Park, which is in the core zone, officers will need to determine the action required, based on risk assessment. It is likely that spraying will be undertaken on the few oak trees again this year.
7. In addition to action to control caterpillars and nest removal, the programme of pheromone trapping will continue. 1,500 traps were deployed in 2015 and the City of London assisted with some of these and their monitoring. It is our intention to continue this in 2016. On City of London Open Spaces where no infestation exists at present, staff will continue to monitor our oak trees, looking for any signs of caterpillar infestations and, if found, will take appropriate action. Further information about the plan for 2016 is provided in Appendix 2.
8. The Chamberlain has confirmed that, if control works place undue pressure on local risk budgets, then additional support will be found.
9. A further report will be presented later in the year on the outcome of OPM management for our Open Spaces and explaining the results of the Defra evaluation.
10. The three-year pilot has not managed to stop the development of OPM across London, although it has reduced the rate of spread. Defra are challenged by the need to deliver eradication as required by the Protected Zone status i.e. for the area outside the core zone. The evaluation will no doubt assist in determining how OPM will be managed in England and the future of the Protected Zone.

Conclusion

11. The management of OPM, led by the Forestry Commission, has required a range of local authorities and private landowners to work in partnership and this has been of varying success. The City of London Corporation has been recognised for its support in the partnership. The year 2016 will in effect be, a holding year whilst discussion and planning for the future takes place.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – 2016 Map of Treatment Areas and Core Zone
- Appendix 2 - 160330 OPM Control Plan

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