



OPEN SPACES DEPARTMENT

City Commons

Divisional Plan 2011

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Superintendent's Foreword

The City of London Corporation has protected and managed parks, gardens and open spaces in and around London for over 130 years. In 1883 the City Corporation acquired the Coulsdon Commons, beautiful woods and downs located close to Croydon in South London. Later these four Commons were joined by Spring Park and West Wickham Common near Bromley and more recently Ashted Common near Leatherhead in Surrey.

The City Commons are high quality, accessible and thriving open spaces that are managed and maintained for present and future generations to enjoy. This success is achieved thanks to the dedication of our employees, volunteers, contractors and partner organisations.

Management plans are written for a number of reasons. Some of the Commons have protected status and therefore plans are required to explain how important cultural and natural heritage features are maintained. However, we add value to this basic requirement by producing plans that reflect the full range of our activities. In this respect our management plans define the public service we provide, the quality standards we aspire to and explain how our activities will be delivered in a safe, efficient and sustainable way.

Our plans demonstrate the active contribution that the Division makes in achieving the City Corporation's community strategy and corporate plans. Together our plans provide guidance, ensure continuity, help allocate resources and deliver high quality services with value for money.

Our management plans explain to others what we want to achieve and why we want to do it, taking a long-term view of the opportunities and challenges facing us. This analysis translates into annual work programmes for each open space.

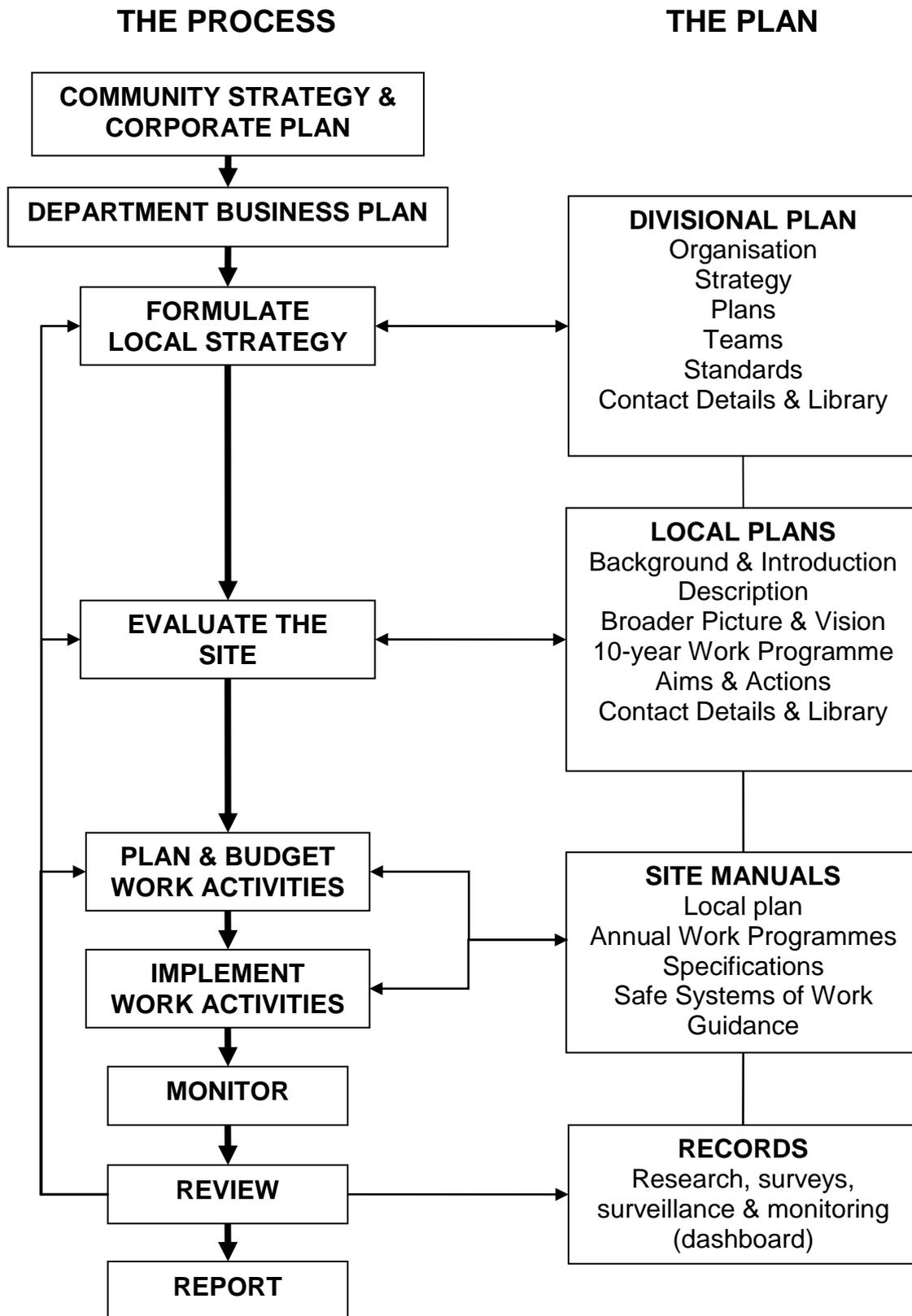
Our plans will encourage greater knowledge and understanding of the importance of the Commons, their management and use.

We welcome your comments and would very much like to get your input into the management planning process. Please write to me, or send an email with your views to the address at the end of this document. Thank you.

Bob Warnock

Superintendent of the City Commons

Diagram of our planning process



OUR ORGANISATION

The City of London Corporation

The City of London Corporation is a uniquely diverse organisation with three main aims: to support and promote the City as world leader in international finance and business services; to provide high quality local government services and policing for the Square Mile; and to provide valued services to London and the nation as a whole.

Among local authorities the City Corporation is unique. It is the oldest in the UK, combining its ancient traditions and ceremonial functions with the role of a modern and efficient organisation delivering local authority services. The City Corporation funds its activities from three main sources:

City Fund

This fund is made up of business rates (of which we only retain some 10% as the remainder is redistributed by the government to local councils across the UK), council tax and various government grants along with income from our own investments. It provides resources for the local government functions of the City of London.

In addition to these usual local services, the City Corporation performs a number of special functions for the benefit London as a whole. For example, through the Court of Common Council it is the police authority for the City of London and Port Health Authority for the River Thames.

City Bridge Trust

The Bridge House Estates was originally set up through bridge taxes, rent and private bequests to deal with the upkeep of London Bridge (this now includes Tower, Southwark, Blackfriars and Millennium Bridges). The funds have been effectively managed over the centuries so we can now also help charitable causes across London through the City Bridge Trust.

City's Cash

This is a private fund built up over the centuries from money originally donated by individuals, legacies and the like, which has been invested in assets such as property. The income or interest generated allow us to pay for key activities – such as the work of the Lord Mayor, three City Markets, four independent Schools and numerous parks, gardens and open spaces – at no cost to the taxpayer.

More information about the City of London Corporation can be found on it's web site and corporate literature available from the Guildhall.

the National Trust Act) confers legal protection to ensure the land is maintained in perpetuity as open space for the recreation and enjoyment of the public.

The City Commons are historic landscapes containing a mosaic of semi-natural habitats that support diverse communities of native species. Some contain Scheduled Monuments and are Sites of Special Scientific Interest. All these special places are unique and important for their cultural and natural heritage, which is a result of their continued use from pre-Roman times up to the present day.



City Commons Division was formed in November 2006 by merging two management units, based at the Ashtead Estate Office (Divisional Headquarters) and the Merlewood Estate Office in Caterham-on-the-Hill.

Most of the land in our holding has charitable status and are registered as follows:

- **Ashtead Common** (Registered Charity No. 1051510)
- **Coulsdon & West Wickham Commons** –Farthing Downs & New Hill, Coulsdon Common, Kenley Common, Riddlesdown, Spring Park and West Wickham Common (Registered Charity No. 232988)

Ashtead Common 202ha (500 acres)

This National Nature Reserve is located in the Mole Valley District of Surrey close to the communities of Ashtead, Leatherhead and Chessington. It is a wooded common with over 2,300 ancient oak pollards and has two Scheduled Monuments. It is part of the Epsom and Ashtead Commons SSSI.

Farthing Downs & New Hill 95ha (235 acres)

Located close to Purley and Coulsdon in the London Borough of Croydon this site is chalk downland with a patchwork of old woods, fields and hedges. It is a Scheduled Monument and is part of the Farthing Downs & Happy Valley SSSI. It has views on a clear day towards the City of London and provides a 'gateway' into Surrey.

Coulsdon Common 51ha (126 acres)

This site, like all the four Coulsdon Commons, is located in the London Borough of Croydon. It is a wooded common with areas of ancient woodland, wood pasture and meadows of chalk, neutral and acidic grassland.

Kenley Common 56ha (139 acres)

This neighbouring common serves the local communities of Caterham, Kenley and Coulsdon. It comprises chalk downland on its steep slopes with areas of woodland and meadows of chalk, neutral and acidic grassland on the top. The steep slopes provide views across the valley of nearby Riddlesdown Quarry.

The site surrounds Kenley Aerodrome, the most intact Battle of Britain fighter station in the southeast, and has several Scheduled Monuments.

Riddlesdown 43ha (106 acres)

Lying close to Purley and Kenley it is an area of chalk scrub and open grassland with wooded edges and views out across Surrey. The majority of it is a SSSI and it has a Scheduled Monument.

Spring Park 21ha (21 acres)

The last two commons lie within the London Borough of Bromley and this park is in fact a broadleaf coppice woodland and wildflower meadow. Together with nearby Sparrows Den it forms part of a larger recreational area for Addiscombe.

West Wickham Common 11ha (11 acres)

Located close to Coney Hall this small area of broadleaf woodland with 16 ancient oak pollards and remnant heath was part of the much larger Hayes Common.

More detail about each of these seven open spaces can be found on the City Commons web site and within their respective Local Plans.

OUR STRATEGY

We formulate our local strategy and write our plans in the context of a *'golden thread'* that links the vision, strategic aims and objectives of the City of London Corporation to the management of the City Commons.

Our starting point is **The City Together Strategy** 2008-2014, which was prepared by the Local Strategic Partnership for the City of London, on behalf of everyone who works in, lives in or visits the City. Their vision of a sustainable plan for the future is represented by five themes:

- **Quality** – be competitive and promote opportunity
- **Inclusion** – support our communities
- **Environment** – protect, promote and enhance our environment
- **Promotion** – be vibrant and culturally rich
- **People** – own sites that are safer and stronger

The City's **Corporate Plan** is our main strategic planning document, providing a framework for the delivery of our services both within and outside the City of London. It is a statement of our organisation's objectives, methods and priorities for the next three years. The Corporate Plan lays out core values, which inform the way we work, what we do and how we do it –

- **The right services at the right price** - We seek to provide services that our varied communities need in an efficient and sustainable manner, as established through dialogue and consultation.
- **The best of the old with the best of the new** - We aim to secure ambitious and innovative outcomes that make a difference to our local communities whilst respecting and celebrating the City's traditions and uniqueness, and maintaining high ethical standards.
- **Opportunity and prosperity for all** - We demonstrate our commitment to equality and diversity of opportunity for those within and beyond our boundaries and seek to increase social capital and economic wellbeing through investment in people, services and infrastructure and responsible management of natural resources.

The Open Spaces Department's **Business Plan** sets out our Director's vision, her improvement objectives and the key performance indicators, which link to the themes and core values set out above. It also describes *'key projects'* for each Division that help deliver the objectives of the Business Plan and our Local Plans.

Our Vision

Our approach to conserving the City Commons is to recognise the influence of the past but to apply modern good practice to managing open spaces. This is reflected in our five-strand vision, which links the themes of the City Together Strategy and our Department's strategic aims and improvement objectives.

A quality open space

We will use current knowledge and good practice to provide a high quality and accessible open space, delivering our service on the City Commons safely, efficiently and fairly.

An inclusive service

The City Commons will be part of a larger '*green grid*' of parks, gardens and open spaces in and around London. We will work in partnership with others so that the Commons are part of a broader living landscape.

A sustainable future

We will apply a modern perspective to traditional methods as we restore and maintain landscapes and habitats on the City Commons to a favourable condition.

An opportunity for all

People will enjoy and appreciate the cultural and natural heritage associated with the City Commons, promoted as an outdoor environment for health, learning and relaxation.

A place for people and wildlife

Employees, volunteers and visitors will be motivated and empowered to protect and conserve the City Commons in the face of economic, environmental and social change.

Our Aims & Objectives

Our vision is currently delivered through a set of nine objectives whereby we aim to:

1. Protect our boundaries and important features in order to keep the City Commons as open spaces for the future.
2. Manage access, facilities and opportunities for recreation so that people continue to enjoy the City Commons.
3. Include local communities in all aspects of our work, thereby promoting greater knowledge and understanding of the City Commons.
4. Maintain the important physical features (geology, soils and water) so that we preserve natural resources on and around the City Commons.
5. Safeguard the archaeological features and historic landscape so that we conserve the cultural heritage of the City Commons.
6. Improve habitats and the natural environment for wildlife so that we enhance biodiversity on the City Commons.
7. Care for people's health, safety and welfare to ensure that City Commons are safe, secure and accessible places for all.
8. Use our resources efficiently so that we continue delivering excellence and value on the City Commons.
9. Follow good practice to encourage the sustainable economic, environmental and social development on and around the City Commons.

These aims and objectives, their links to the '*golden thread*' and the various strategy and policy statements influencing our work activities are described in more details in the table at the end of this report.

OUR PLANS

Together our Divisional Plan, Local Plans and Site Manuals combine to formulate our strategy, define our aims, set out our methods and standards, describe our sites and identify our annual work programmes. Our integrated approach to planning adds value to this, reflecting the public service we provide, assessing the quality standards we aspire to and explaining how our activities will be delivered in a safe, efficient and sustainable way.

Integrated plans

Our primary role is to achieve excellence and value in delivery of our service. We carry out a public service by protecting our sites and visitors; providing facilities for recreation; and including our local communities. On our open spaces we conserve important features of physical (geology and landscape), cultural (archaeology and history) and biological (habitat and species) interest.

In addition to our public service and conservation duties we must deliver our activities in a way that meets our statutory obligations and other organisational responsibilities. Consequently, we aim to maintain health, safety and welfare; manage resources effectively; and encourage sustainable management. We monitor and review our divisional, team and individual performance achieving our aims.

This broader approach to open space management is reflected in developing a set of plans that integrate all aspects of our work and don't just focus on the practical estate management and conservation tasks.

Planning with others

The City of London Corporation is responsible for parks, gardens and open spaces that mainly lie outside its local authority boundaries. The management of our sites potentially has an impact on the local authorities within whose boundaries they lie. We are actively engaged with a number of partners and other authorities to develop and implement plans for green infrastructure in and around London.

The City Commons Division works in partnership with the Downlands Countryside Management Project and Lower Mole Countryside Project. We are represented at both the Surrey and London branches of the GreenSpace forums thereby ensuring engagement in this local arena. Contributing to local planning frameworks, green infrastructure planning, and green initiatives is an area of our work has become increasingly important during the life of this plan.

Drivers for active management

The Commons are not museums containing relics of the past, merely to be preserved for posterity, but are dynamic systems subject to a range of external and internal pressures. Three key factors were considered when originally preparing our plans and they remain relevant today:

- First, the natural aspect that people enjoy today on the Commons is in fact the product of past human activity, which created landscapes containing semi-natural physical, cultural and biological features.
- Secondly, being located in the urban fringe, the Commons are heavily influenced by the activities of people, both in positive terms and detrimental impact of urban development and the impact of visitors to the sites.
- Finally, these landscapes and ecosystems were actively maintained using ‘*traditional*’ techniques. Replicating these old methods in a modern context will help restore and maintain effective stewardship on our open spaces.

The City Corporation must respond to pressures and where appropriate drive change so that we can continue to manage open spaces as thriving components of the local environment. Our aim is to conserve rather than preserve these special places as living landscapes for present and future generations to enjoy.

A legal duty to manage

The City of London’s open spaces are protected under their own Acts of Parliament, brought in to acquire land for the recreation and enjoyment of the public and to protect these sites from development and enclosure. The Corporation of London (Open Spaces) Act 1878 empowers us to raise funds and appoint people to protect and manage our open spaces.

As a public body the City Corporation is required by law to comply with certain duties relating to conservation, as set out in the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006. These require us to take reasonable measures to enhance the aesthetic, cultural, historic and biological interest of its open spaces.

Where appropriate we will restore traditional practices such as coppicing, pollarding and grazing, or find new methods such as mowing to produce similar favourable conditions. We will monitor our open spaces and review our management to ensure success and develop our employees and volunteers to ensure best practice.

Our management plans

Our plans are modular in format to allow flexibility necessary to write and maintain consistent plans for seven geographically separate and diverse sites.

Department Business Plan

This explains about the City of London Corporation and Open Spaces Department; as well as detailing the vision, aims and objectives set by our Director under the five themes of the Community Strategy for the City. It includes an improvement plan for the Directorate, Senior Management Team and local management teams.

Divisional Plan

This explains about the Open Spaces Department and City Commons; as well as detailing our strategy, policy and procedures. It formulates our aims, objectives and methods of working, including the quality standards we strive to achieve.

Local Plans

There is a Local Plan for each of the seven City Commons. They describe important features on each site and set out a vision for their future management. They explain how the aims, objectives and methods turn a vision into reality on each site.

Conservation plans

The Commons have protected status and require plans to explain how important cultural and natural heritage features are maintained and restored. We therefore prepare Biodiversity and Heritage Conservation Plans for each of our sites to reflect the Farm Environmental Plans (FEPs) and the Historic Environment Records (HERs) associated with our Environmental Stewardship Scheme Agreement (ESS).

Site manuals

They contain annual work programmes supported by specifications, maps and guidance used to set the standards for our work and seek relevant permissions and consents. The Site Manuals are held at each open space and maintained by the local ranger team as a working file for themselves, their volunteers and local contractors. The Manuals are designed to allow regular updating of the component parts and are supported by our electronic filing system.

Each Site Manual contains copies of the following documents:

- Divisional Plan
- Local Plan
- Heritage Conservation Plan (incorporating HER & Wessex Survey)*
- Biodiversity Conservation Plan (incorporating FEP & NVC Survey)*
- Annual work programme
- Specifications & maps
- Safe Systems of Work
- Guidance (incorporating GAECs & SMRs from Cross Compliance)
- Other information – JCA Statements, Nature Conservation Statements etc

**Please note these plans will be prepared during 2012.*

Project plans and specifications

The main tool for achieving our aims is the development and use of project plans or specifications, which link our strategy with the annual work programmes. They are supported by maps, drawings and photographs to interpret the information contained within them to the reader.

The project plans and specifications set clear standards for maintaining the quality of work and set out indicators of success (targets), legal constraints and describe how the work activities should be carried out to comply with our ESS agreement and the protected status of the site. They describe reasonable measures for encouraging the safe working practice necessary to protect people and environment from harm.

Therefore, the specifications guide our work activities; provide sufficient information for government agencies to consent to work activities on protected sites; and provide comprehensive documentation for issuing contracts. They are a key component of our Site Manuals, and together with other guidance they explain in more detail what takes place on our open spaces.

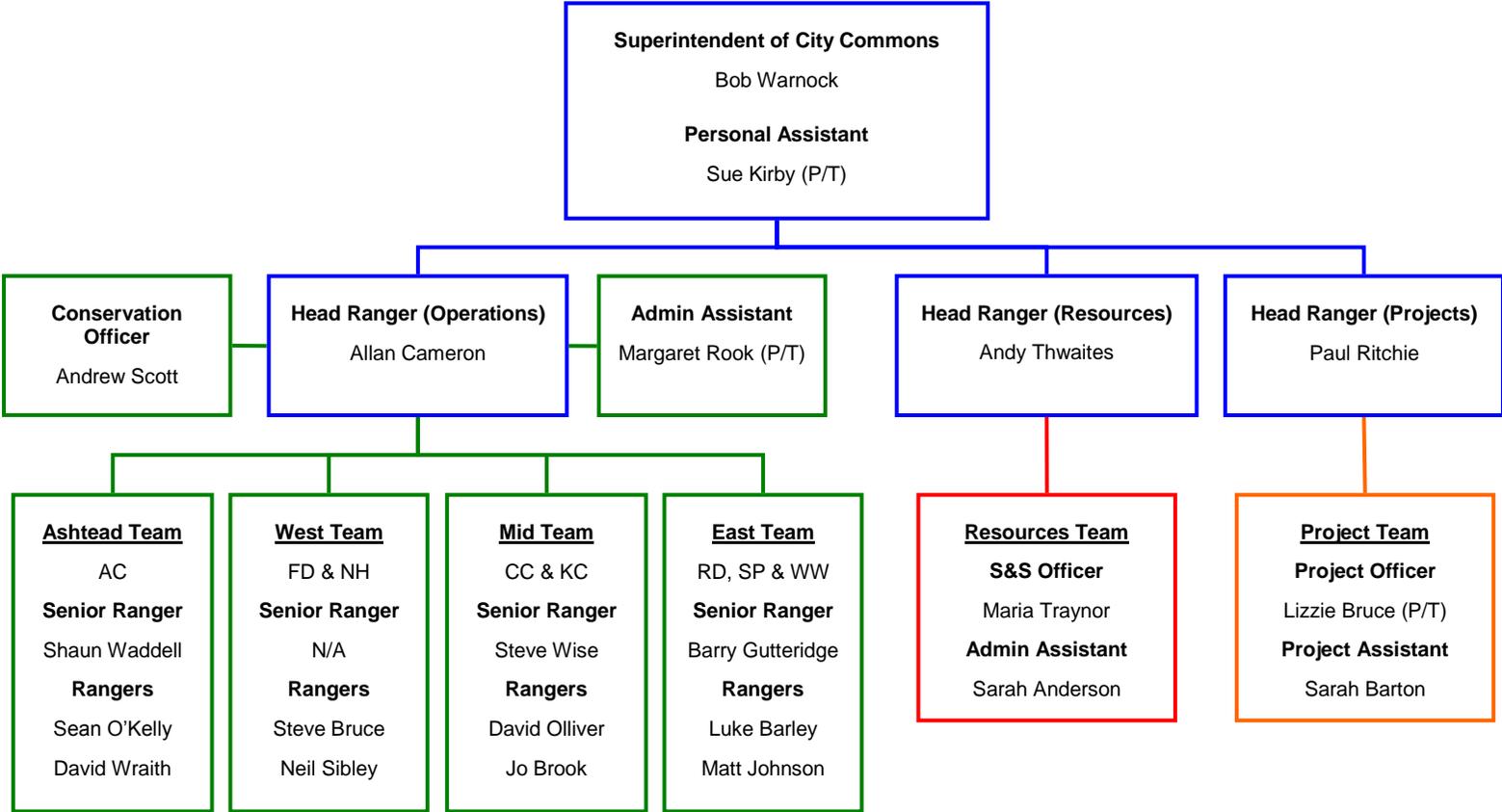
Key Projects

Key projects are identified by the local management team as part of our annual review and update of the Department Business Plan. Generally they derive from the departmental improvement objectives but also seek to deliver significant change and/or improvements in our delivery of projects from our Local Plans.

They by definition involve a significant investment in resource, including time and personnel and are generally funded from our local risk budget. To deliver they often require cross-team working both within the Division and with colleagues from the Open Spaces Department and elsewhere in the organisation.

They maintain the '*golden thread*' between the OSD Business Plan and our own Divisional and Local Plans.

Organisational structure for the City Commons



OUR TEAMS

A key aspect of our working arrangements is the need to work effectively in teams and in partnership with local communities, key stakeholders, neighbours, other landowners, other authorities and agencies. We deliver our annual work programmes and other activities using teams of employees, trainees and volunteers.

Organisational structure

The Superintendent, who is based at the Ashted Estate Office, is in overall charge of the Division and leads a Management Team of three Head Rangers. He reports to the Director of Open Spaces and is a link between the City and teams responsible for managing the Commons. The Superintendent maintains contact with our own elected Members and those from other local authorities; meets regularly with colleagues on working groups; and works with officers from the Directorate and those from other Departments of the City of London Corporation.

The Head Ranger responsible for the Operational Team is based at the Merlewood Estate Office and leads a team of 12 uniformed Senior Rangers and Rangers. They fulfil a protective role and provide a uniformed presence on the open spaces through a rota for seven days a week. They carry out practical conservation and estate work with teams of local volunteers and contractors. The Head Ranger makes sure work activities are delivered safely and efficiently.

The Project Team, based at the Farthing Downs Office, is led by a Head Ranger who works with a Project Officer and Project Assistant in partnership with volunteers and consultants. They provide advice and support on conservation management, as well as co-ordinating strategic planning, community involvement, communication and sustainable development. The Project Team has a protective role contributing to local development frameworks and assessing our environmental impact. They also help develop policy, procedures and guidance to meet our quality standards.

Located at the Ashted Estate Office the Head Ranger who manages the Resource Team is responsible for ensuring that we deliver our work activities efficiently and sustainably. The Resources Team provide the Operational and Project Teams with resources necessary to undertake their work activities. The Head Ranger also supports the Superintendent by maintaining close working relationships with the Directorate, the City Corporation and Members.

Volunteers

In the past the City fulfilled its responsibilities under the 1878 Act by '*appointing reeves, assistant reeves, keepers, bailiffs and other officers for the due preservation and management of the said lands*'. In a modern world even dedicated and skilled employees need the support of local communities. A key aspect of our '*community approach*' for City Commons is to work with local people.

Members of the local community are encouraged to get actively involved in various roles, including practical work, wardening, wildlife monitoring, educational activities and recreational events. Each of the seven open spaces has a group of dedicated volunteers supervised by the locally based rangers. They meet on a regular basis to

deliver a programme of practical work publicised in the City Commons Newsletter, providing an opportunity for local people to meet and socialise with others.

Our volunteers are recruited, trained and resourced using funds from the local risk budget. Acting as *'agents'* of the City Corporation they are supported by and subject to our policies, procedures and insurance cover. They are briefed before work starts and their health, safety and welfare is catered for during the work activity. We provide personal protective equipment, tools and light refreshments, while volunteers are expected to wear old clothing and bring packed lunches, bundles of enthusiasm and a sense of humour.

They are supported by other groups from British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV), Lower Mole Countryside Management Project (LMCMP), Downlands Countryside Management Project (DCMP) and corporate volunteers. These groups function independently and they are provided with a briefing and specification for the work activity. They recruit, train, supervise and resource their own volunteers, although the City Corporation currently provides annual financial contributions to the groups from our local risk budget.

A wide variety of local residents, user groups and organisations give time, experience and support as representatives on our consultative committees and working groups. In addition to the invaluable practical work undertaken each year by these volunteers the City of London receives a lot of support behind the scenes from a variety of local residents' associations and friends groups linked to each open space. This includes helping with recreational activities, public events, consultation and fund raising. This involvement is a fundamental aspect of our *'community approach'* and significantly contributes to our success.

Local contractors

Another aspect of our approach is to work with contractors and consultants to support the daily work of employees and volunteers. Although our rangers are qualified and competent at delivering their work activities there are always activities that require specialist skills and experience or machinery and equipment not readily available to them. Such activities include tree safety works, hay making, servicing vehicles and machinery, and engineering work.

Wherever possible we employ contractors and consultants from local small or medium enterprises in accordance with our policy for sustainable development and local purchasing directive. On occasions the need for specialist skills or machinery and equipment requires us to search further afield.

The City's members and officers

We seek approval of our elected members who sit on the committees of the City of London Corporation when we are formulating policy, deciding strategy and allocating resources. We also discuss our plans for the open spaces with members of our consultative committees, which include representatives from the local communities, neighbouring landowners, user groups and other interested stakeholders.

The Superintendent has a key role to play in co-ordinating our contact with members of the following committees:

- Open Spaces Committee
- Epping Forest & Commons Committee
- Consultative Committees for Ashted Common, the Coulsdon Commons and the West Wickham Commons

Working with other people

Our involvement with the officers and elected members of other authorities and agencies includes seeking advice and guidance; practical help on projects; approving our annual work programmes; and funding our work activities. Our employees, volunteers and contractors maintain close working relationships with their counterparts within various local agencies, organisations and groups.

We work in close partnership with the following organisations:

- Downlands Countryside Management Project
- English Heritage
- Environment Agency
- Lower Mole Countryside Management Project
- Natural England

Close links are also maintained with the following local authorities:

- Bromley Council
- Croydon Council
- Epsom and Ewell District Council
- Mole Valley District Council
- Surrey County Council
- Tandridge District Council

OUR STANDARDS

If we are to achieve our vision and deliver our mission effectively we must set quality standards for all our working practices. We actively seek external and independent accreditation or awards to recognise the quality and commitment of our work. Such standards require us to set appropriate indicators and targets for measuring our divisional, team and individual performance.

Encouraging continuous improvement

Central Government requires local authorities to make continuous improvements in the quality of service and to ensure the efficient use of available resources as part of a commitment to Best Value. Fundamental to the principles of challenge, compete, consult and compare is a need to monitor and review performance regularly. The City Corporation has consistently scored an excellent rating across our services during past Comprehensive Area Assessments.

In addition to being a requirement placed upon it by Central Government monitoring and reviewing performance is a key aspect of good management practice. Regular assessment of divisional, team and individual performance, including evaluation of activities, equipment and materials, underpins our success in delivering excellence. By making improvements to performance, we support the Corporate Plan and help deliver the Business Plan for the Open Spaces Department.

Our performance is also evaluated by a number of independent assessors, including:

- Investors in People
- Green Flag Awards/Green Heritage Awards
- Natural England
- Rural Payments Agency
- Environment Agency
- Open Spaces Health & Safety and Sustainability Audits

Investors in People

The Investors in People Standard follows good practice and is based on three key principles of business planning and delivery.

Planning:

- A strategy for improving performance clearly defined and understood
- Learning and development is planned to achieve the organisations objectives
- Strategies promote equality of opportunity

- The capabilities needed by managers are clearly defined and understood

Taking Action:

- Managers are effective in leading, managing and developing people
- People's contribution is recognised
- People are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility
- People learn and develop effectively

Reviewing:

- Investment in people improves performance of the organisation
- Improvements are continually made

Green Flag awards

The Green Flag Award is the national standard for parks, gardens and open spaces and recognises and rewards the best green spaces in England and Wales. It is a way of encouraging site managers to achieve high environmental standards, creating a benchmark of excellence for green areas against the following criteria:

A welcoming place – the overall impression for a visitor to a park, garden or open space should be positive and inviting, regardless of the purpose of the visit.

Healthy, safe and secure - a park, garden or open space must be healthy, safe and secure for all members of the community to use.

Clean and well maintained – for aesthetic as well as safety reasons, the issues of cleanliness and maintenance must be adequately addressed.

Sustainability – methods used in maintaining the park, garden or open space and its facilities should be environmentally sound, relying on best practice.

Conservation and heritage – particular attention should be paid to the conservation and appropriate management of our cultural and natural heritage.

Community involvement – management should actively encourage the involvement of members of the community who represent as many user groups as possible.

Marketing – there should be a strategy in place to promote the park, garden or open space as a community resource and provide information to users.

Management – there must be a Management Plan or Strategy, which reflects the aspirations of Local Agenda 21 and other relevant aspects of the site.

Our integrated approach to management plans reflect these criteria and our nine aims drive work activities to meet the requirements of the Green Flag Award for the City Commons. The sites are also managed in accordance with the other quality standards set out in this Plan.

Condition assessments

Our three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) at Ashted Common, Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown all have conservation statements and objectives set by as part of their designation. Natural England inspect these sites on a six-year rotation to assess their condition with regard to those statements and objectives.

Where a site, or compartment within that site, is found to be in an unfavourable condition Natural England will advise on a programme of work to ensure that these targets are met and biodiversity is enhanced.

Cross compliance

Changes to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) meant that the Single Payment Scheme (SPS) replaced most previous crop and livestock subsidy payments in the European Union from 1st January 2005. Farmers are now expected to show they are meeting '*cross compliance*'. This requirement has three elements:

- Maintain land in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) – the CAP Regulations set out a framework for the GAEC standards and the UK decides its own detailed rules,
- UK must maintain a minimum of 90% of the 2003 level of permanent pasture but there is no specific requirement for individual farmers, and
- Farmers must comply with the Statutory Management Requirements (SMRs), which are UK domestic provisions that implement certain EC Directives and Regulations.

The GAEC standards for England include soil management and the protection and maintenance of habitats and landscape features. Many SMRs reinforce existing UK legislation for protecting the environment; public health; plant and animal health and welfare; and livestock identification and tracing. Farmers must fulfil these standards and requirements on the whole agricultural area of their holding, including land over which the farmer exercises or holds rights of common.

We are periodically inspected by the Rural Payments Agency and the Environment Agency to ensure cross compliance with the Single Payment Scheme, Entry Level Stewardship (ELS), Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) and English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS).

Our key team performance indicators

The priorities and challenges that lie ahead for the Open Spaces Department are set out by the Director in the Business Plan together with the targets and standards to be achieved. Key projects and improvement measures show what the department is doing to deliver the City Corporations strategy and plans. The Business Plan sets out the current key performance indicators being used by the organisation.

Completing the planning process

We must complete the planning process and close the cycle of plan, do, monitor, review and report. We use the following systems to review performance:

- Undertake a programme of surveys, surveillance and monitoring
- Maintain monthly statistics in a '*dashboard*', files and data bases
- Review annual work programmes bi-annually
- Review the Business and Divisional Plans annually
- Review Local Plans every five years
- Assess team and individuals with a Performance Development Framework

We currently communicate our intentions, raise issues, report progress and celebrate successes using the following methods:

- Formal reports – to members of City of London & consultative committees
- What's New – monthly updates put on web site and emailed to stakeholders
- City Commons Newsletter –sent bi-annually to stakeholders
- Annual reports – Open Spaces Department & others
- Notices – ad-hoc information placed on wooden notice-boards on site

The Director and Superintendent circulate quarterly and annual progress reports to members of the various Committees; representatives of local friends, residents and consultative groups; employees, other Departments, agencies and the public.

Contact details:

Superintendent
City of London Corporation
Ashtead Estate Office
Woodfield Road
Ashtead
Surrey
KT21 2DU

Tel: 01372 279083

Fax: 0207 710 8630

Emergency: 01372 279083

Email: city.common@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Website: www.cityoflondon.gov.uk

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Living library:

Service:

Corporation of London (Open Spaces) Act 1878
Open Spaces Business Plan

Conservation:

NERC Act
Site Condition Assessments

Delivery:

Open Spaces Annual Report
City Commons Health & Safety Improvement Plan
City Commons Sustainability Audit Report & LIP
The Guide to Cross Compliance in England
Green Flag Award Recommendations

Quality We will provide safe, high quality & accessible open spaces in accordance with nationally recognised standards for the benefit of London & the Nation.	Inclusion We will celebrate a sense of place by involving communities in the care & management of our sites.	Environment We will adopt sustainable working practices, promote the variety of life & protect the open spaces for the enjoyment of future generations.	Promotion Promote opportunities to use & enjoy the outdoor environment for recreation, health, learning & inclusion & ensure the value of the open spaces is recognised.	People Manage, develop & empower a capable & motivated work force to achieve high standards of safety & performance.
<p>OSD Objective 1 Achieve high standards & deliver value for money in all improvement objectives. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Integrating the 20-year property maintenance plan into charitable trust requirements & securing funding to deliver works. b. Producing & implementing work programmes linked to the site management plans, ensuring that revised plans are produced on time. c. Achieving external accreditation (Green Flag Award) for all sites, exploring further benchmarking opportunities with other organisations, including Towards An Excellence in our business planning. d. Delivering revised corporate Service Response Standards. 	<p>OSD Objective 2 Extend partnership working within the community & continue to develop closer links with local authorities, particularly in relation to planning & transport. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Encouraging responsible use of the Open Spaces by under represented groups. b. Developing initiatives to improve community partnerships at each site. c. Targeting new user surveys to get feedback on key local issues. 	<p>OSD Objective 3 Ensure that measures to promote sustainability & biodiversity are embedded in the Department's work. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reducing our use of non-renewable energy - electricity, gas, liquefied petroleum gas, petrol, diesel & water. b. Implementing the recommendations of the Phase 1 Departmental Improvement Plan. c. Promoting nationally the importance of biodiversity in the work carried out by the Open Spaces. 	<p>OSD Objective 4 Market our services & adapt events & education programmes to deliver opportunities particularly for young people. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Developing the education programme at all sites to encourage broader involvement in Open Spaces activities. b. Promoting strategies and initiatives for the protection and conservation of green space through regional partnerships e.g. All London Green Grid and Green Spaces Forum. c. Developing marketing to improve the high profile of the Open Spaces, taking into account the City of London's Cultural Strategy. d. Producing quality publications to promote our work to a wide range of users and potential users. 	<p>OSD Objective 5 Provide focused opportunities for staff and volunteers to feel confident in meeting the changing requirements of the organisation. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Encouraging learning and development opportunities for staff and volunteers in response to business needs. b. Ensuring all front line staff receive comprehensive training in personal safety and awareness and enforcement as appropriate. c. Continuing to improve sickness absence levels. d. Developing volunteering opportunities at all sites and encouraging corporate volunteering.
<p>CC Objective 1: Protection Protect boundaries & important features, in order to keep the City Commons as open space for the future. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Patrolling & enforcing byelaws. b. Reporting incidents, accidents & dangerous occurrences. c. Managing boundaries & entrances. d. Keeping the site cleaned & well maintained. e. Installing & maintaining gates, fences & posts. f. Controlling development. g. Issuing licence agreements. h. Working with emergency services. 	<p>CC Objective 3: Inclusion (consultation) Include local communities in all aspects of our work, thereby promoting greater knowledge & understanding of the City Commons. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consulting local committees, groups and associations. b. Working with local countryside management projects. c. Liaising with statutory agencies, authorities and utility companies. 	<p>CC Objective 4: Geodiversity Maintain the important physical features (geology, soils & water), so that we preserve natural resources on & around the City Commons. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Maintaining ditches and banks. b. Creating and maintaining ponds and scrapes. c. Maintaining and restoring watercourses. d. Surveying and monitoring geology, soils and water. 	<p>CC Objective 3: Inclusion (information) Include local communities in all aspects of our work, thereby promoting greater knowledge & understanding of the City Commons. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Gathering information by research and surveys, b. Sharing information about the site. c. Facilitating educational activities and school visits. d. Attending seminars, conferences and forums. 	<p>CC Objective 7: Health & safety Care for people's health, safety & welfare, to ensure that the City Commons are safe, secure & accessible places for all. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Implementing the annual Health and Safety plan. b. Identifying hazards and reducing risks. c. Inspecting buildings, yards, roads and boards. d. Inspecting surfaces, facilities and countryside furniture. e. Inspecting trees for hazards and managing risks. f. Checking livestock and stock fencing.

Quality	Inclusion	Environment	Promotion	People
<p>CC Objective 2: Recreation Manage access, facilities & opportunities for recreation, so that people continue to enjoy the City Commons.</p> <p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Keeping rights of way open. b. Providing and maintaining facilities. c. Constructing and maintaining surfaced tracks as access for all. d. Installing and maintaining countryside furniture. e. Maintaining amenity grassland. 		<p>CC Objective 5: Cultural heritage Safeguard the archaeological features & historic landscape, so that we conserve the cultural heritage of the City Commons.</p> <p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Looking after the archaeological and historic environment. b. Maintaining other historical features. c. Surveying and monitoring veteran trees. d. Maintaining and restoring veteran trees. 	<p>CC Objective 2: Recreation Manage access, facilities & opportunities for recreation, so that people continue to enjoy the City Commons.</p> <p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Keeping rights of way open. b. Providing and maintaining facilities. c. Constructing and maintaining surfaced tracks as access for all. d. Installing and maintaining countryside furniture. e. Maintaining amenity grassland. 	<p>CC Objective 8: Resources Use our resources efficiently, so that we continue delivering excellence & value on the City Commons.</p> <p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Investing in people’s performance at work. b. Inspecting and servicing vehicles, machinery and equipment. c. Managing livestock husbandry and records. d. Controlling local risk budgets and income.
		<p>CC Objective 6: Biodiversity Improve habitats & the natural environment for wildlife, so that we enhance biodiversity on the City Commons.</p> <p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Maintaining and restoring woodland. b. Maintaining and restoring wood pasture. c. Maintaining and restoring species-rich grassland. d. Cutting and laying hedgerows. e. Managing vegetation in freshwater and wetland habitats. f. Controlling undesirable species. 		
<p>CC Objective 9: Sustainable development (economic) Follow good practice to encourage sustainable economic, environmental & social development on & around the City Commons.</p> <p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Preparing and reviewing business and management plans. b. Preparing and reviewing project and contract specifications. c. Applying for Green Flag and Green Heritage Awards. d. Monitoring and reviewing our performance. 	<p>CC Objective 9: Sustainable development (social) Follow good practice to encourage sustainable economic, environmental & social development on & around the City Commons.</p> <p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Providing volunteer opportunities to individuals and groups. b. Providing apprenticeships and work experience. 	<p>CC Objective 9: Sustainable development (environment) Follow good practice to encourage sustainable economic, environmental & social development on & around the City Commons.</p> <p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Implementing the Sustainability Audit System. 		

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<p>COLC/OSD Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Audit System • SAS Department Improvement Plan • Dog Strategy • 	<p>COLC/OSD Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Audit System • SAS Department Improvement Plan • 	<p>COLC/OSD Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Audit System • SAS Department Improvement Plan • 	<p>COLC/OSD Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COLC Publication Scheme 2003 • Web Site & Branding Report 2011 • Olympics & Paralympic Green to Gold Plan 	<p>COLC/OSD Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H&S Audit System • OSD H&S Improvement Plan • COLC Performance Development Framework
<p>CC Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Monitoring & Review (Dashboard) • Habitat Fire Plan • Divisional Budget Strategy • 	<p>CC Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Value Review – Countryside Management Projects 2011 • 	<p>CC Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAS Local Improvement Plan • Biodiversity Conservation Plan • Heritage Conservation Plan • Grazing Plan • Research, Survey & Monitor Plan • 	<p>CC Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Plan • 	<p>CC Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divisional H&S Improvement Plan • Performance Development Reviews •
<p>COLC/OSD Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability • Data Protection • 	<p>COLC/OSD Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability • Corporate Volunteer Scheme • Volunteers • Statement of Community Involvement 2010 • 	<p>COLC/OSD Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability • Biodiversity • 	<p>COLC/OSD Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filming Policy & Charges • 	<p>COLC/OSD Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety (various) • Learning and Development • Attendance •
<p>CC Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stray Dogs • Licences & Permissions • Enforcement • Reporting Incidents, Accidents & Dangerous Occurrences • Lost Property • 	<p>CC Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers • Work Experience • 	<p>CC Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pollution • Firewood • Waste Management • 	<p>CC Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events • Educational activities • 	<p>CC Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H&S Policy • Tree Risk Management • Learning & Development • Attendance • Lone Working •