



FEEDBACK REPORT: 2022-23

Name of Site	Railway Fields Local Nature Reserve
Managing Organisation	London Borough of Haringey
Date of Assessment	1

OVERALL RESULT	Pass <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fail <input type="checkbox"/>
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NOTES ABOUT THIS REPORT
<p>Strengths and recommendations are provided for each criteria.</p> <p>Photographs are included, where appropriate, to support the feedback from the judge(s) in relation to both strengths and recommendations.</p> <p>Please refer to the Raising the Standard guidance manual here for further information on the criteria.</p>

DESK ASSESSMENT

(Management plan and supporting documentation)

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
Presentation	<p>The management plan is well set out, easy to navigate through the indices.</p> <p>There are good descriptive introduction, habitats, flora and fauna and analysis sections.</p> <p>There is an excellent conservation action plan that guides the site's biodiversity management and maintenance.</p>	<p>It would be good to have the date on the footnote to show when it was last updated.</p> <p>The index could be titled e.g., contents page.</p> <p>The preface is useful as it puts the management plan in context of Local Government funding and how these challenges have</p>

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
		<p>been addressed however it would probably be better placed as an appendix and the Management Plan started with a statement by one of the trustees who has responsibility for the TCV and the site o show the support and vision.</p> <p>The introduction could be enhanced by a location plan and the geology, topography and soils. There could be a site plan showing the areas described.</p> <p>Figure 2 would be better placed within the section describing the compartments so it can easily be referred to and it should be cited with the page number and figure number rather than “map attached” at the beginning of the habitat descriptions.</p> <p>Figure 2 does not give the location of anything within each compartment for example in compartment 1, woodland 1, woodland 2, hedgerow 1, grassland 1 etc.</p> <p>It would be good to have the aerial photos mentioned on page 20 in the management plan.</p> <p>There is no vision for the site followed by clear objectives.</p> <p>The management objectives on page 20</p>

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		<p>could be numbered and then linked to the same numbers in the action plan to ensure clarity.</p> <p>The wording of the management plan could be changed to be more proactive. For example, rather than say “All the boundaries are intact and should be inspected regularly” (page 22) it would be better to say they “are inspected regularly”. Then the reader is certain this task is being done.</p> <p>It would be useful to have the website links in the document for example the Haringey Website on page 22.</p>
<p>Health, Safety & Security</p>	<p>Safety and security are addressed in the management plan. The site is locked when staff are not there. The nearby houses give some safety through their surveillance.</p> <p>Appropriate changes have been made to give access to children and adults with disabilities with an access ramp, disabled toilets and a flat resting place on the incline from the site entrance.</p>	<p>Prescription for the play area inspection should say how often it is inspected and whether it gets a yearly RoSPA check.</p> <p>“Check dipping platforms, to make sure it is safe” page 31 is not sufficient a description it should include the timing of these checks.</p> <p>No risk assessments have been mentioned.</p>
<p>Maintenance of Equipment, Buildings & Landscape</p>	<p>Only the responsibility for any vandalism of the training building is mentioned.</p> <p>There is excellent management of the landscape detailed in the Conservation Action Plan.</p>	<p>There should be section in the management plan on the infrastructure and buildings. There is no mention of the regular management and maintenance of the stench</p>

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		pipe, training building, fences or gates.
Litter, Cleanliness, Vandalism	<p>The site has little vandalism protected by locking the site when staff are not there and the surveillance of the nearby houses.</p> <p>Responsibility for litter is the TCV staff.</p>	<p>This section could be enhanced to say how often the litter is collected from the site, are there any litter bins or dog bins that need to be emptied? Is there any dog mess on site (it was mentioned by one Green Flag Judge) and if so, how is this managed?</p>
Environmental Management	<p>Excellent management with no peat or chemical use.</p> <p>All maintenance on site appears to be by hand.</p>	<p>No mention of the recycling of litter or waste from events and training.</p> <p>No mention of the heating and lighting for the building.</p>
Biodiversity, Landscape & Heritage	<p>The 1892 stench pipe and the railway features are described and the granite sets now used as an access path.</p> <p>Good recording of most species across the site. Excellent regular butterfly transects.</p> <p>Excellent conservation action plan for biodiversity.</p> <p>Fabulous botanical records 1990 – 2005 and bird records for 1985 – 1987, with links to the London Biodiversity Action Plan. Good records of mammals and amphibians.</p>	<p>It would be useful to have some more up to date information on the changes in the birds on page 17 Table 3.</p> <p>The monitoring and evaluation section on page 45 does not detail the species data to be recorded for example, mammals, birds, reptiles, specific slow worms etc. It also does not give the timescale for doing these.</p>
Community Involvement	<p>The number of school children visiting the site is exceptional, especially for such a small site.</p> <p>Excellent training centre to support friends' groups and volunteers.</p> <p>There is a Friends Group for the site than meet monthly and do maintenance</p>	<p>The site is closed at weekends other than for special events and therefore this limits some people's (particularly working people's) access.</p>

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	on site. In addition, volunteers work on the site.	It would be good to see an event timetable 2022 in the Management Plan
Marketing & Communication	It is noted that there is more demand than capacity for school visits so the marketing is very effective.	There is not enough detail in the plan about this. It would be good to see a list of how the site, the training days, and school visits etc are marketed.
Overall Management	There are excellent management objectives for the site on page 20. There is monitoring and evaluation of the key criteria for the nature area – the biodiversity and visitor experience.	The management objectives should be linked to the action plan. This would transform the plan. Although the monitoring and evaluation concentrates on the biodiversity and visitor experience there is no monitoring and evaluation of the majority of the Green Flag criteria or of the management objectives on page 20.

FIELD ASSESSMENT

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
<p>A Welcoming Place</p>	<p>This is a wonderful green haven just beside a very busy London road and with great public transport routes including the Tube.</p> <p>The lovely woodland gates with the name give a wonderful feeling of going into somewhere special.</p> <p>There is a good blackboard saying welcome and when the site is open.</p>	
<p>Healthy, Safe & Secure</p>	<p>The site is made safe by locking it every night.</p> <p>Rough sleepers are dealt with appropriately but there was none there on the day of the site visit.</p> <p>There is a good partnership with the police.</p> <p>Legionella and electric testing is done appropriately.</p> <p>Dogs are only allowed on leads on the site.</p>	
<p>Well Maintained & Clean</p>	<p>Vegetation is cut back from the paths to make access easy around the site.</p> <p>The swing is kept in good order.</p> <p>Bark chip is used well throughout the site to keep paths and areas well maintained.</p> <p>Litter is not a problem on the site as people seem to respect the special area and the volunteers pick up everything. The ethos is to take what you bring home to recycle rather than to leave it on site. Any litter collected is recycled.</p> <p>The cobbled setts up the entrance drive are clean and well maintained.</p>	<p>Some of the lovely old mosaic signs could do with some renovation work to the woodwork surrounds.</p>

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<p>Environmental Management</p>	<p>There is an exceptionally good bike park with rosemary and herbs ensuring you get a lovely perfume as you lock up your bike.</p> <p>Dead wood is left on the site and other green material composted.</p> <p>The knotweed has a separate compost heap.</p> <p>No herbicides or peat are used on site.</p>	
<p>Biodiversity Landscape & Heritage</p>	<p>The old railway site has a wonderful mosaic of ground conditions on which a rich and diverse secondary woodland is developing. The TCV and the Friends Group do a wonderful job keeping a wide range of habitats including meadowland through careful maintenance.</p> <p>The Education Team always complete a species survey at the end of each session so there is an excellent record of the changing species on the site.</p> <p>Every school child in Harringay has an opportunity to come to the site during their school years.</p> <p>The team on site work closely with the Council's biodiversity officer.</p> <p>There is a wonderful outdoor teaching area and protective hides to view the birds in shrub areas and over the New River.</p> <p>Only the swing is left in the playground and it is visually checked daily and has an annual RoSPA check. A play area may not be very appropriate on the site as there is so much natural play and other traditional play areas nearby on other sites.</p>	<p>Options for the old pond area adjacent to New River should be included in the management plan.</p> <p>Keep progressing the access to New River for educational programmes.</p> <p>It would be good to have more interpretation on the history of the site including the built heritage.</p>

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	<p>Lovely to see the Harringay Knotweed on site (kept under control as well).</p> <p>A new education building is being built and has been carefully designed to fit in with the railway heritage. It has good sustainable building materials and methods and is made substantially of wood to reflect the existing buildings on site.</p> <p>Dead hedges are used to direct people and keep some areas protected.</p> <p>There is a great “bug skyscraper” made out of a dead standing tree.</p> <p>The built heritage is evident on the site with the old chimney, and railway heritage features.</p> <p>Around every corner is something relating to the biodiversity of the site to enjoy and each has good conservation plans.</p>	
Community Involvement	<p>The Friends of Railway Fields are a wonderful group of dedicated volunteers. They open the site once a month on Saturdays and twice a month for 2 hours on Sundays for practical volunteering tasks and for an art group. They help out with a multitude of tasks including conservation maintenance, education programmes events and funding.</p> <p>There are many events and education programmes on the site including evening walks, dawn and dusk chorus walks, art, conservation walks, activity days with Mud Kitchen, wellbeing walks, Flow Saturday with drawing and craft and a choir singing for Spring.</p>	
Marketing and Communication	<p>The marketing is working as there are more applications to come to the site than can be sustained.</p>	

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	<p>There are some good information boards on site for example about the whole site near the entrance, the wildlife pond, the stag beetle loggery, and what birds to see on New River.</p> <p>There is good engagement with a blackboard asking people what they have seen on the site and one pointing out the foxes' den.</p>	
Management	The management of the site surpasses the management plan.	

Summary and additional comments:

(Highlighting the result, and the main areas of strength and recommendation)

This is a wonderful imaginative site making the very best of the small area in the heart of a very busy London. It is the jewel that it is because of the good and hard work of the TCV staff and Friends Group. Volunteers are key to keeping up the standard.

The management plan could be improved to ensure that all aspects are covered and a partnership with the water company and Environment Agency made so that the access to water wildlife on the New River could be included in the learning opportunities for the site. Options for the old pond area could be included in the management plan.

The conservation management of the natural heritage on site is excellent but more could be made of the built heritage.

The site is Green Flag Standard.