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Tooting Common

Heritage Project



Final Evaluation & Completion Report January 2020



Abbreviations used in text

AVC	Activities and Volunteer Co-ordinator	SLSC	South London Swimming Club
ELC	Enable Leisure and Culture Ltd	TCHP	Tooting Common Heritage Project ('the scheme')
ESL	Employment, Skills and Learning	TCMAC	Tooting Commons Management Advisory Committee
FoTC	Friends of Tooting Common	THG	Tooting History Group
GIGL	Greenspace Information for Greater London (Environmental Records Centre)	TWP	The Woodfield Project
HF	National Lottery Heritage Fund	WHS	Wandsworth Historical Society
IE	Independent Evaluator		
LBW	London Borough of Wandsworth		
LWT	London Wildlife Trust		
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation		
MDR	Mid-delivery Review/ Report		
M&M/M&MP	Management and maintenance/ plan		
NEET	Not in employment, education or training		
S1, S2	The Stage 1 (development) and Stage 2 (delivery) of TCHP		
SG	The TCHP Steering Group		

Notes:

- 1) Prior to 'rebranding' in February 2019 the National Lottery Heritage Fund (HF) was known as the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and most materials relating to TCHP use this initialism.
- 2) The area known as Tooting Common formally consists of two commons – Tooting Bec Common and Tooting Graveney Common. They are together referred to as the Commons in this report.

Codes used to identify respondents to survey & interviews


PL = Project lead or Partner representative; **V** = Volunteer; **PA** = Participant in one or more TCHP events or activities; **NP** = Aware of TCHP but not involved in activities; **NA** = Unaware of the TCHP scheme until approached as part of this evaluation.

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Cover: (Clockwise from top right): Damp acid grassland; the newly replanted Lime Avenue; the Fossil Tree; The Common Story in print; ESL students in protective clothing; the drinking fountain restored to use; the opening ceremony for the Woodfield Pavilion; marginal vegetation rafts on Tooting Bec Lake; restored poolside changing cubicles in the Lido.

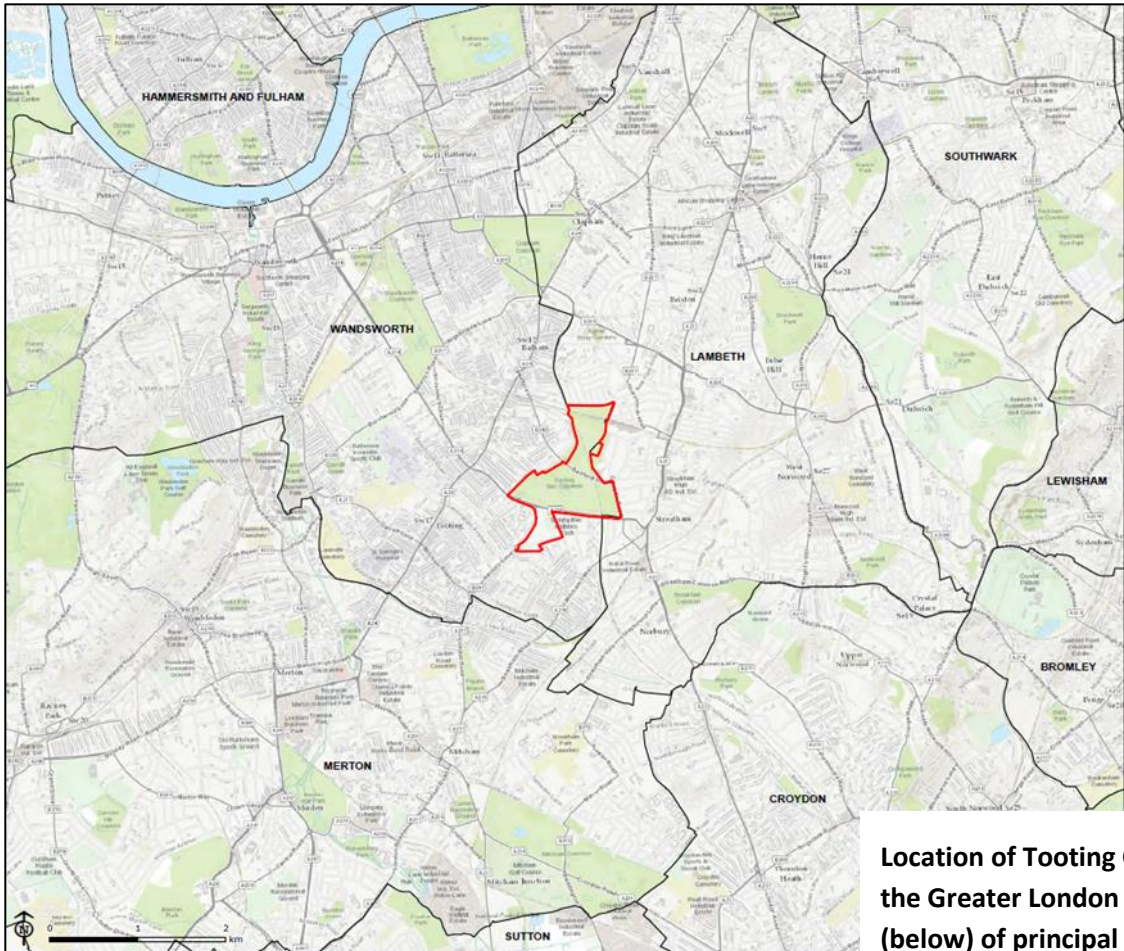
Tooting Common Heritage Restoration Works

- 1 Restoration and refurbishment of the Woodfield pavilion
- 2 Restoration of the 1930s drinking fountain
- 3 Restoration of the fossil tree enclosure
- 4 Expansion and enhancement of two acid grassland areas
- 5 Creation of marginal aquatic vegetation parcels on Tooting Bec Common lake
- 6 Restoration and improved interpretation of Tooting Bec Lido
- 7 New avenue of lime trees planted to replace avenue of horse chestnut trees
- 8 Traffic calming measures on Dr Johnson Avenue



EC 446 (2/19)

Location of key TCHP natural and cultural heritage restoration projects



Location of Tooting Commons within the Greater London area (above) and (below) of principal features of the Commons. Source: Tooting Commons Conservation Plan.⁽¹⁾



Tooting Common Heritage Project

Final Evaluation & Completion Report

January 2020

Summary

Introduction

Tooting Common Heritage Project (TCHP) is a £1.908m multi-element scheme which commenced delivery in early 2016, supported by a National Lottery Heritage Fund (HF)ⁱ grant of £1.372m (as 72% of total approved costs). The Accountable Body is the London Borough of Wandsworth (LBW) working through Enable Leisure and Culture alongside other local delivery partners, including the South London Swimming Club (SLSC), idverde Ltd (formerly Quadron Services Ltd), The Woodfield Project (TWP), (who have all committed significant match funding in cash or kind), Tooting History Group (THG) and Wandsworth Historical Society (WHS). Day-to-day co-ordination is through a small team working to the Head of Parks, comprising a TCHP Manager (working part-time for much of delivery) and an Activities and Volunteer Coordinator. Overall coordination and leadership is provided by a Steering Group (SG) on which all delivery partners are represented. HF funding ended in December 2019.

The mission of TCHP was:

‘to explore, restore, conserve and enhance the historic and natural heritage of Tooting Common. To this end, the project will work in partnership with local community groups to improve and monitor biodiversity and habitats, to conserve and restore heritage landscape and architectural features, [...] and to uncover the hidden history of the Common, as well as teaching people about its rich past and biodiversity. In the process it will provide new volunteering opportunities and skills that people can use in the future while engaging them in the improvement of the Common.’⁽²⁾

The evaluation context

HF requires all its funded projects to conduct an evaluation of their work and to embody the results in a completion report to be submitted to HF at the end of their scheme in order to secure release of the final instalment of grant monies. HF guidance however is that evaluation should be much more than a retrospective summative exercise to enable it to sign off its grant. Evaluation should be planned during development and start early in delivery, engage all partners, project leads and participants and focus on ‘improving’ as well as ‘proving’. HF guidance includes provision for external input by an Independent Evaluator (IE).

ⁱ Note: Prior to ‘rebranding’ in February 2019 the National Lottery Heritage Fund (HF) was known as the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and most materials relating to TCHP use this initialism



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This Final Evaluation Report is intended to take stock of (and celebrate) what has been achieved, identify weaknesses, draw tentative conclusions about lessons learnt and contribute to legacy planning and activities following the end of HF funding.

Preparation of this Final Report has been a collaborative process drawing on all the work undertaken by partners and project leads in stages 1 and 2 of the evaluation, including work conducted as part of the mid-delivery review, as well as our own assessments as IE. It follows HF's relevant guidance^(3,4) and has regard to a review of Heritage Grant final reports.⁽⁵⁾

This Report is addressed not just to HF but to all those who have been involved in delivery of TCHP or affected by it. It focuses primarily on outcomes and legacy. It includes brief case studies, graphics and other illustrative material which should help serve as a permanent public record of what has been achieved, of lessons that have been learnt and what remains to be done.

Methods

This final evaluation is the final stage of the IE's work. Earlier stages involved:

- Work with the TCHP delivery and team to produce a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework 'owned' by the partnership as a whole.
- A Mid-Delivery Evaluation and Report (MDR) offering an independent assessment of what TCHP had achieved to date in relation to output targets and value for money including recommendations for changes during the second half of delivery.

Work in this final stage has included:

- Assessment of **quantitative and qualitative monitoring data** collected by TCHP project leads and partners and of the operation of the M&E framework in particular regarding:
 - *Outputs* relating to project targets and progress
 - *Wider outcomes* and the effectiveness of mechanisms for capturing these, relating to individual projects and to the project as a whole.
- **Desk research** including examination of a wide range of documents relating to TCHP and its partnership.
- A second **on-line survey** addressed to a wider audience including project participants and the public who may have been engaged in whatever capacity in TCHP activities.
- **Semi-structured interviews** (on-site and by telephone) with key individuals including funders, delivery partners, volunteers, project participants and respondents to the survey, above.
- **Site visits** to all project locations on the Commons and **participation** in key TCHP activities.

Principal conclusions to date, following the structure laid down in TCHP's Stage 2 application to HF⁽⁶⁾ are as follows:

Achievements

Some key indicators of activity (outputs) include:

- The Woodfield Pavilion restored with new facilities and now in regular use by five local groups, hosting a toast and brunch café and growing in popularity for private hire.
- Key heritage areas restored in the Lido including the iconic changing room doors, a new recreational terrace with commemorative plaques and a new cycle park.
- Almost 4.5 ha of acid grassland habitat restored.
- Marginal aquatic vegetation established in the Lake, improving habitat quality and nesting opportunities for birds over a total area of 64m².

- Two notable features of the Commons have been conserved: the Fossil Tree has been protected but also made more accessible with new interpretation and the 1930s drinking fountain has been restored to working order.
- Volunteers have contributed a total of approximately 20,000 hours to TCHP's delivery.
- 163 separate community activities were delivered by the scheme, engaging over 4,650 participants. These included: 34 activities with schools, 41 nature and historical themed walks, 11 professional seminars in wildlife or heritage open to the local community, 13 activities with disability and inclusion charities, and 30 Minibeast hunts (primarily for schools) over the life of the scheme.
- Over 250 individuals have benefitted from training in biological recording, environmental conservation or heritage/history research during the scheme.
- In addition, 38 local Wandsworth NEET residents on the Employment Skills and Learning programme gained their Level 1 City and Guilds Diploma in Land Based Studies (Environmental Conservation) and most have subsequently secured employment, apprenticeships or have proceeded to further education. In the process they contributed a total of 140 unskilled volunteer days (worth over £80,000 in match funding), helping to conserve areas of the Commons.
- Lido archives publicly available on-line and transferred to the Wandsworth Heritage Service for physical access by anyone.
- 250 copies of the local history booklet *The Common Story* sold and a reprint in progress; the volunteer research team with enhanced skills and confidence.
- An increase in biological monitoring activity, particularly for butterflies, for which 27 butterfly species have been recorded on the Commons compared to 16 species known prior to 2015.
- Four new interpretive panels explain key aspects of the restored heritage to Commons users.

Conservation enhancement of Tooting Bec Lake has increased the extent and diversity of marginal habitats, with potentially significant benefits to invertebrate as well as plant diversity. Topsoil removal and habitat recreation of acid grassland on key areas appear to have been successful although part of the largest parcel has been disturbed by repairs to water mains carried out by Thames Water plc who have undertaken to restore the acid grassland now that work is complete.

The success of these works will be dependent on on-going maintenance and monitoring, prescriptions for which have been written in to revised Commons Management and Maintenance plans. Both works have been generally well received by Commons users though not without qualification, mainly relating to disturbance and visual impacts during execution.

Restoration of the 1930s drinking fountain and the conservation enhancement of the Fossil Tree are relatively minor but nevertheless significant enhancements to the public facilities and heritage of the Commons and have been important in securing awareness of the wider TCHP scheme by Commons users.

Physical restoration of the Woodfield Pavilion is complete following initial delays due to technical issues involving some changes to design and successful applications for additional match funding. Following a well-attended and successful launch in June 2019 the Pavilion is now in regular use as a community hub. All concerned, and in particular TWP's trustees, are to be congratulated on their hard work, persistence and dedication over at least a decade; their on-going commitment is the best guarantee that the Pavilion will continue to be a valued community resource for years to come.

Major conservation and recreational improvements to Tooting Bec Lido — notably the restoration of iconic poolside cubicles and construction of the western recreational stepped terrace sun trap (with a set of commemorative plaques) and a new cycle park — exist alongside complementary works funded from other sources and are complete with the exception of the re-erection of the original southern

entrance arches. Due to unforeseen works required to the pump house the arches will be reconstructed on the north side of the site by the children's pool, where they should present an interesting heritage 'feature'. The South London Swimming Club (SLSC – itself a body of notable historical as well as current recreational significance) has undertaken to find the additional funding for this. The completed works to date have already resulted in a significant enhancement to the Lido's recreational use alongside the preservation of an important historic asset.

One major project – the 'greening' of Dr Johnson Avenue - which was conceived as a central (and one of the most visible) elements of the TCHP re-connecting Tooting Bec and Tooting Graveney Commons, had to be significantly modified following protests by local residents who feared an increase of traffic in (or lengthier car journeys to their homes via) surrounding roads. The Avenue remains a dividing line between the two Commons. However traffic calming measures including three raised 'tables' intended to reduce traffic speed will hopefully make crossing the Avenue easier for pedestrians.

Another project — the replacement of the Horse Chestnut Avenue trees by small leaved lime — has proved contentious. Differences of opinion remain in relation to the need to replant the Avenue and it remains the cause of ill-feeling and resentment among sections of the local community. In our opinion as IE, replanting was justified in the context of restrictions on local authority spending. The alternative - continued selective felling and replacement of individual diseased trees - would have involved more complex monitoring particularly in regard to disease and safety issues, would have been significantly more costly in the long term, would not have been eligible for HF funding and would, arguably, have been unlikely to secure visually or environmentally satisfactory results. However any single species assemblage carries an increased risk of disease. There are also lessons to be learnt relating to the consultation process. It is to be hoped that the replanted Avenue will be seen in due course as successful in its own right and part of the future heritage of the Commons.

Both the Lido restoration and The Woodfield Project involve a significant element of community engagement, volunteer activity and/or training. In the case of The Woodfield Project this has involved local residents in recreational activities and conservation management on the Commons. In the case of the Lido, physical restoration has been accompanied by a parallel programme of digitising and archiving historical records of the Lido, its users, founders and supporters, by members of the SLSC. This took place alongside 'The Common Story' a wider independent volunteer based programme of historical research relating to the Commons, including documentary research and the capture of oral testimony from local residents, resulting in the publication of an illustrated and informative booklet, now entering its second printing.

These, and indeed most of TCHP's volunteer and community-related activity include a significant element of skills acquisition from archival research to scything. In addition a programme of team-delivered biodiversity monitoring will hopefully result in on-going commitment by competent biological recorders (including bird, butterfly and botanical monitoring) to assess the legacy of nature conservation works.

These activities complement a focused employment, skills and learning (ESL) programme engaging young (and not so young) local NEET (not in employment, education or training) residents. This involved short 4 to 5 week courses including both theoretical understanding and practical skills. It has yielded significant – and above target - results, not least for the individual participants who have attained formal accreditation a good proportion of whom have subsequently secured employment (some with the lead body, idverde) as a result.

Contribution to HF goals and aspirations of partners and the local community

TCHP projects exist amongst, and complement numerous other projects and initiatives promoted both by TCHP partners and by other bodies in the area. While the outcomes and legacy of individual projects are important, their significance in relation to the aims of TCHP is as part of a wider mosaic of activities. The achievements of the TCHP scheme seem likely to have secured a significant legacy alongside the 'noise' of other activities connected with the Commons in this socially diverse area of London.

The abandonment of original proposals for Dr Johnson Avenue following public consultation is disappointing. There remains a significant view that an opportunity has been missed and some retain the hope that the two parts of the Commons can be 're-integrated' at some point in the future. The divided opinion amongst partners and the local community with regard to the replanting of Chestnut Avenue is likely to remain for some time. However the opportunity exists to promote the Lime Avenue as an amenity in its own right and a legacy for future generations.

The Woodfield Project is to be commended for persisting in its commitment to restoring and realising the potential of its Pavilion – including additional fund-raising and maintaining a limited programme of 'people' activities throughout the process of commissioning and implementing restoration works. Now complete, the Pavilion already contributes significantly to the amenity value of the Commons.

Physical restoration and enhancement works to the Lido have significantly increased its value as a facility, appear already to have led to an increase of public use and, together with the associated programme of historical recording (now available on-line) have certainly boosted the public profile and activity of the Lido's guardians, the SLSC.

The parallel programme of archival research and oral history recording by volunteer researchers on The Common Story has produced a booklet which has already proved itself as a valuable introduction to the history of the Commons. The first edition sold out and a revised and expanded edition has been reprinted for sale.

All projects have contributed significantly to awareness and understanding of the Commons and its natural and/or human heritage and to the skills and competencies of those involved. The Employment Learning and Skills project in particular has produced important personal benefits to many of its participants, in particular to those who have secured employment as a result.

In all of the above it seems likely that the longer-term legacy will have amply justified HLF's support and stand as an enduring tribute to the commitment and competence of all involved.

Efficiency and effectiveness of the project delivery team and project partners

The TCHP team, working to the Steering Group and to the LBW/ Enable Officers, has applied effective project oversight, and this has been done in a way which has been open and accommodating. This perception is broadly supported by the responses to interviews and to the two on-line surveys. It has been achieved despite the fact that TCHP's Project Manager was employed only part-time, and that a second team member, the full-time Activities and Volunteer Coordinator (AVC) was not appointed until March 2017 and secured other employment before the formal conclusion of the scheme.

Despite the small central team, office procedures have worked well. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) based on a Framework agreed early in delivery has integrated with quarterly reporting to HF.

Most delivery partners have conducted their own end-of-project evaluations against updated output targets and intended outcomes and have worked well together over a disparate set of activities.

Lessons learnt and recommendations for the future

TCHP has been led by organisations with a significant presence in the area alongside LBW and its delivery partner Enable Leisure and Culture. The relatively small number of TCHP projects, the majority of which are led by ‘established players’ has facilitated management and delivery. This has had potential advantages for some projects in terms of continuity, as well as in arrangements for those projects’ legacy. But it has also made it more difficult to secure a collective vision for the area although improved communication between the different organisations involved will hopefully contribute to a determination to deliver legacy beyond the outcomes of individual projects.

The high initial response to both on-line evaluation questionnaires seems related to the on-going controversy relating to Chestnut Avenue which has also featured prominently in some of our own in-person interviews. Lime Avenue will hopefully in time be valued as part of the Common’s ‘future heritage’ - indeed as seen now it appears much as it must have been at the turn of the last century when the avenue was first planted. The experience of this and the abandonment of proposals to ‘green’ Dr Johnson Avenue, emphasises the importance of detailed community consultations in the development stage of such multi-project schemes. The experience of both projects emphasises the changing role of lottery funding within the wider political context of imposed austerity on local authorities. Initially focused on additionality, HF project funding has (as with renovation of the 1930s Drinking Fountain and conservation of the Fossil Tree) been increasingly called upon to substitute for what might earlier have been regarded as the routine maintenance function of elected local authorities.

Alongside these setbacks there have been positive and supportive comments about the work of the project team and about the scheme as a whole. This can be attributed in no small measure to several factors. These include the motivation and enthusiasm of project leads and volunteers who have delivered the project outputs identified above, the competence and focus of the TCHP delivery team, the support provided by LBW and Enable and the commitment and energy of all partners represented on the Steering Group who have overseen delivery.

While it is still too early to judge the longer-term benefits of major capital works, it seems probable that HF funding will have (and will be perceived as having) produced genuine ‘value added’ and will not be seen merely as another funding stream to progress institutional priorities. A challenge for all partners – which they are well-placed to meet - is to sustain the benefits of activities of TCHP and to generate a sense of common purpose within and beyond the partnership capable of ensuring that its legacy is greater than the sum of individual project outcomes.


Congratulations are due to all partners, volunteers, project participants and the delivery team for a successful scheme which has proved to be ‘more than the sum of its parts’ and which will leave a lasting legacy for Commons users and the wider public.

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Toothing Common Heritage Project Final Evaluation & Completion Report January 2020

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1 Introduction

The Tooting Common Heritage Project (TCHP) is a multi-element scheme^a funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (HF).^b The Accountable Body is the London Borough of Wandsworth (LBW) working through Enable Leisure and Culture (ELC)^c alongside other local delivery partners, including the South London Swimming Club (SLSC), idverde Ltd (formerly Quadron Services Ltd),^d The Woodfield Project (TWP) all of whom have committed significant match funding in cash or kind; Tooting History Group (THG) and Wandsworth Historical Society (WHS).^e

The aim of TCHP is:

‘to explore, restore, conserve and enhance the historic and natural heritage of Tooting Common.’

This is to be achieved by working:

‘in partnership with local community groups to improve and monitor biodiversity and habitats, to conserve and restore heritage landscape and architectural features, [...] and to uncover the hidden history of the Common, as well as teaching people about its rich past and biodiversity. In the process it will provide new volunteering opportunities and skills that people can use in the future while engaging them in the improvement of the Common.’¹²⁾

In January 2014 LBW was awarded a Stage 1 (S1, development) grant of £273,200 to develop a full proposal for a programme of natural and cultural heritage conservation, community engagement and training and skills delivery on Tooting Commons. A successful Stage 2 (S2, delivery) proposal was submitted in autumn 2015 and HF’s grant of £1.372m (as 72% of a total £1.908m approved costs) was confirmed in December. Delivery commenced in June 2016. Day-to-day co-ordination was through a small team comprising a TCHP Manager (part-time) and an Activities and Volunteer Coordinator working to ELC’s Head of Parks (Operations). Overall coordination and leadership is provided by a Steering Group (SG) on which all delivery partners are represented. HF funding ended in December 2019.

In September 2016, the authors of this report were appointed as Independent Evaluators (IE) to work with the TCHP delivery team, partners and project leads to advise and assist on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in three stages. One output of the first stage was the production of an M&E Framework agreed by the SG and Board in November 2016. Work in the second stage included production of a Mid-Delivery Report (MDR). This summarised the progress of the scheme to date,

^a ‘TCHP’ or ‘scheme’ are used interchangeably in this Framework to refer to the Tooting Common Heritage Project as a whole, in contrast to the multiple individual and separately costed ‘projects’ of which TCHP is composed.

^b Note: Prior to ‘rebranding’ in February 2019 the National Lottery Heritage Fund (HF) was known as the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and most materials relating to TCHP use this initialism; HF is used here for consistency.

^c Enable Leisure and Culture is a staff mutual management organisation established in late 2015 to deliver LBW’s community, cultural and recreational services under contract.

^d Quadron Services, a company focused on outsourced local authority grounds maintenance, were taken over by the French grounds management corporation idverde (Europe’s largest) in March 2016.

^e An initial partner – Groundwork London – did not continue beyond the development phase following a failure to deliver a pilot training element of the programme, which was subsequently transferred to Quadron/ idverde.

made recommendations for the final phase of the scheme and fed in to discussions on legacy – what happens after the end of HF funding.

This Final Evaluation Report fulfils the requirement of HF for TCHP to conduct a final evaluation of its work and report to HF on what has been achieved. However it is intended to do more than enable HF to ‘sign off’ its grant. It is the culmination of an on-going evaluative process initiated early in delivery, manifesting a commitment to evaluation as a process of ‘improving’ (providing feedback to enhance delivery) as well as ‘proving’ (that activities have delivered the intended outputs and that public monies have been properly spent).⁽⁴⁾ This Report is intended to take stock of (and celebrate) what has been achieved, identify weaknesses and gaps in delivery, draw tentative conclusions about lessons learnt and contribute to legacy planning and activities following the end of HF funding. In particular it aims to:

- ‘Tell the story’ of TCHP, its origins, aims, development and delivery.
- Assess what has been achieved; where the original ambitions and targets have been met (or exceeded), and where (and why) there may have been a shortfall.
- Identify the benefits that TCHP has delivered, the lasting difference that it has made for the area’s heritage and communities and the arrangements in place to ensure this legacy is carried forward.
- Review the effectiveness of governance and project management structures and identify any administrative weaknesses.
- Examine the extent to which TCHP’s vision, aims and objectives have been realised, identify what has been less successful or might have been done differently and the lessons that may be drawn from this.
- Provide an input to plans for future work including funding applications.

Preparation of this Final Report has been a collaborative process drawing on all the work undertaken by partners and project leads in stages 1 and 2 of the evaluation, including work conducted as part of the mid-delivery review, as well as our own assessments as IE. It follows HF’s relevant guidance^(3,4) and has regard to a recent review of Heritage Grant final reports.⁽⁷⁾

This Report is addressed not just to HF but to all those who have been involved in delivery of TCHP or affected by it. It focuses primarily on outcomes and legacy. It includes brief case studies, graphics and other illustrative material which should help serve as a permanent public record of what has been achieved, of lessons that have been learnt and what remains to be done.

2 The evaluation context

This section starts with a summary of HF's requirements and guidance in respect of evaluation. It then introduces the purposes of this Report and presents the approach and methods adopted in our work in relation to the TCHP Evaluation Framework agreed by the TCHP SG in December 2016.⁽⁸⁾

2.1 HF evaluation guidance

HF requires that every grantee should conduct a Final Evaluation towards the end of its scheme and submit a satisfactory report embodying the results of the Final Evaluation, 'telling the story of the scheme, its achievements and lessons learned' before it can 'sign off' the scheme and release the final 10% of grant money.⁽⁴⁾ The Final Report must be an objective evaluation of what has been achieved. Recommended practice for larger schemes is for independent consultants to be engaged in the process, to a greater or lesser degree.

TCHP was conceived and developed under HF's fourth (2013-18) Strategic Framework within which HF has placed increasing emphasis on effective monitoring and evaluation, embodied in its current generic guidance.⁽⁴⁾ This includes:

- An increasing emphasis on benefits (to heritage and for people) alongside monitoring of project implementation and expenditure.
- Looking beyond **outputs** (as measures of activity) to **outcomes** (longer term benefits to heritage and for people) in particular those which endure beyond the end of HF funding (**legacy**).
- Working with all partners, seeing evaluation as a participative process which enhances delivery rather than primarily an external assessment of achievement.
- Utilising a wide variety of evidence including qualitative as well as quantitative indicators.

2.2 Methods

Our work as Independent Evaluator (IE) comprises three stages. Each stage included working with the TCHP team and project partners to deliver principal outputs as follows:

Stage 1 (Aug – Dec 2016, 12 days) Development and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation framework. Produced in collaboration with partners represented on the TCHP and agreed by the SG in December 2016⁽⁸⁾ this was seen as a working document, to be 'owned' by the partnership as a whole, implemented in monitoring and evaluation at a project level, and modified in the light of experience. The Framework went beyond output monitoring and project evaluation and began to address the issue of legacy, through a tentative table of intended outcomes (and corresponding evidence) at scheme level. The table was reviewed at the December 2016 and September 2019 SGs and is presented as Appendix 1 of this report.

Stage 2 (Jan – Dec 2017, 14 days) A Mid-Delivery Evaluation and Report followed by input into the project's legacy planning. Intended primarily as an internal document, the MDR offered an independent assessment of what TCHP had achieved to date and of what remained to be done — what has worked well and what has worked less well and why — in relation to output targets and value for money. It reviewed the effectiveness of TCHP governance and of its management and administrative procedures, made some recommendations for changes and provided a further impetus to project partners as they enter the second half of the scheme

Stage 3 (Jan 2018 – December 2019, 20 days) End of scheme evaluation and production of this Final Evaluation Report. Quantitative data in this Report is based primarily on information supplied by the TCHP team. Our own work has focused primarily on outcomes and legacy. Methods have included the following elements all of which have been conducted in liaison with TCHP team, project leads and partnership members, who have provided invaluable information, advice and assistance.

Desk research

This has included a wide range of material feeding in to, related to or produced by TCHP and partner organisations. The starting point has been the aims and objectives of TCHP as contained in a series of key documents which comprise TCHP’s Stage 2 application to HF⁽²⁾, including the including the Individual Project Plans⁽⁹⁾ and TCHP Activity Plan⁽⁶⁾; HF’s Offer Letter⁽¹⁰⁾ and the individual project outputs and outcomes identified in project specifications as modified by subsequent agreement with the HF Monitor and Case Officer.

Document	Notes
TCHP Stage 2 application to HF⁽²⁾	Provides a summary outline and justification for TCHP; identifies key activities to be funded, and the broad outcomes of TCHP (including those achieved in the development stage (S1) under HF’s own strategic aims (for heritage, people and communities); outlines TCHP’s governance and delivery arrangements; includes a summary timetable for all delivery activities; a risk analysis, sections on legacy, evaluation and itemised costs.
TCHP Individual Project Plans⁽⁹⁾	Describes each of TCHP’s component projects in a standard format, including its title, aims, background and justification, anticipated allocated budget & funding, timescale for delivery, project lead and delivery partners target outputs and anticipated outcomes and legacy. These provide valuable contextual information. However details of delivery together with revised target outputs and outcomes agreed with HF need to be incorporated in individual project specifications prepared as part of the M&E Framework.
Tooting Common Conservation Plan⁽¹⁾	Summarises the historic, ecological and social background and context of Tooting Common, its heritage significance and current condition; identifies key management issues in relation to built features and infrastructure, the natural environment, local communities and recreation; advances a ten-year conservation strategy and policies, to be implemented though an itemised action plan (with allocated responsibility and timetable) and includes a short bibliography.
Tooting Common Management and Maintenance Plan⁽¹¹⁾	Summarises the contextual material presented in the Conservation Plan, reviews the existing management and maintenance arrangements, summarises the results of tree surveys, presents an ecology baseline review, discusses the Common’s hydrology, visitor accessibility, visual aspects, its built structures and land use, presents the results of resident and stakeholder consultation, advances a ten-year management and maintenance strategy, to be implemented though an itemised action plan (with allocated responsibility and timetable). Includes a number of appendices including summary results of a householder survey, a stakeholder workshop and an infrastructure audit.
TCHP Activity Plan⁽⁶⁾	Intended to provide the Activities and Volunteer Coordinator with a handbook of essential information (including local communities and a summary of ‘people’ surveys to date) and a programme of work for the three years of the post.
HF Offer Letter⁽¹⁰⁾	Awards TCHP’s grant of £1.372m as 72% of £1.908m total approved costs under 11 ‘approved purposes’ allocated under HF cost heads and specifies additional grant conditions.

Other materials include those specific to capital works projects such as condition surveys and design specifications for the Woodfield Pavilion,⁽¹²⁾ the Heritage Conservation and Interpretation Plan for Tooting Bec Lido,⁽¹³⁾ and the Drinking Fountain, the 2015 baseline habitat assessment,⁽¹⁴⁾ the Fossil

Tree Assessment,⁽¹⁵⁾ a Tree Condition Survey,⁽¹⁶⁾ Heritage Tree Survey,⁽¹⁷⁾ the commissioned survey of Chestnut Avenue⁽¹⁸⁾ and tree strategy for the Commons⁽¹⁹⁾ and the results of community consultations, resident surveys and stakeholder workshops.

Together with the Stage 1 Evaluation Report⁽²⁰⁾ these all provide useful supplementary information including baseline data against which the progress and achievements of TCHP have been assessed. In addition we have had regard to other documents produced during the life of TCHP by the project itself and by other interested organisations and stakeholders including a further survey of Chestnut Avenue.⁽²¹⁾

Key Informant and participant Interviews

An on-going programme of (telephone and on-site) interviews with individuals who might reasonably be considered to have expert or 'inside' knowledge of TCHP and its impact has included the following categories:

- TCHP team members and project leads
- 'Experts' including those involved in local cultural and natural heritage works
- Representatives of funding and partner bodies including the HF Monitor and Regional Grants Officer.

In addition the evaluation has been informed by interviews with project participants, volunteers and attendees at TCHP events including members and officers of TCHP's partner organisations and volunteers. Informal discussions have also taken place with park users and potential beneficiaries of TCHP including users of the Lido, patrons and staff of the Tooting Bec Common Café and individuals (met informally on the common) who have had little contact with TCHP.

Participant surveys

Two participant surveys were conducted as part of the evaluation of TCHP, both focused on the achieved or expected outcomes of all TCHP projects. The first was conducted between mid-August and the end of November 2016 and fed into the mid-term review (MTR). The second, conducted between mid-June to early September 2019 was conducted specifically to feed in to this Final Report. Questionnaires were similar, designed in sections each of which commenced with a closed question designed to elicit perceptions of or attitudes to aspects of TCHP's projects, but which importantly then provided the opportunity for (what were sometimes extended) open, narrative responses on the perceived strengths and weaknesses of delivery to date in regard to each area. A total of 161 valid responses were received to the FR survey and 118 to the earlier MTR survey. Both were a rather larger number than anticipated and included a higher proportion than expected of individuals who had not been involved (as event participants or volunteers) in TCHP activities, probably reflecting mobilisation around the replanting of Chestnut Avenue. Detailed results of the final survey, including quantitative data and responses to open-ended questions are presented as Appendices 2 and 3 to this Report and summarised where appropriate in the sections that follow. For simplicity in the remainder of this Report, no attempt has been made to identify categorical or narrative responses with an individual project unless this appears particularly relevant.

Site visits and event participation

A programme of site visits to all TCHP project locations and participation in key events throughout the scheme's delivery has provided valuable supplementary information to the above and enabled us to conduct informal interviews and to 'ground truth' information secured from other sources.

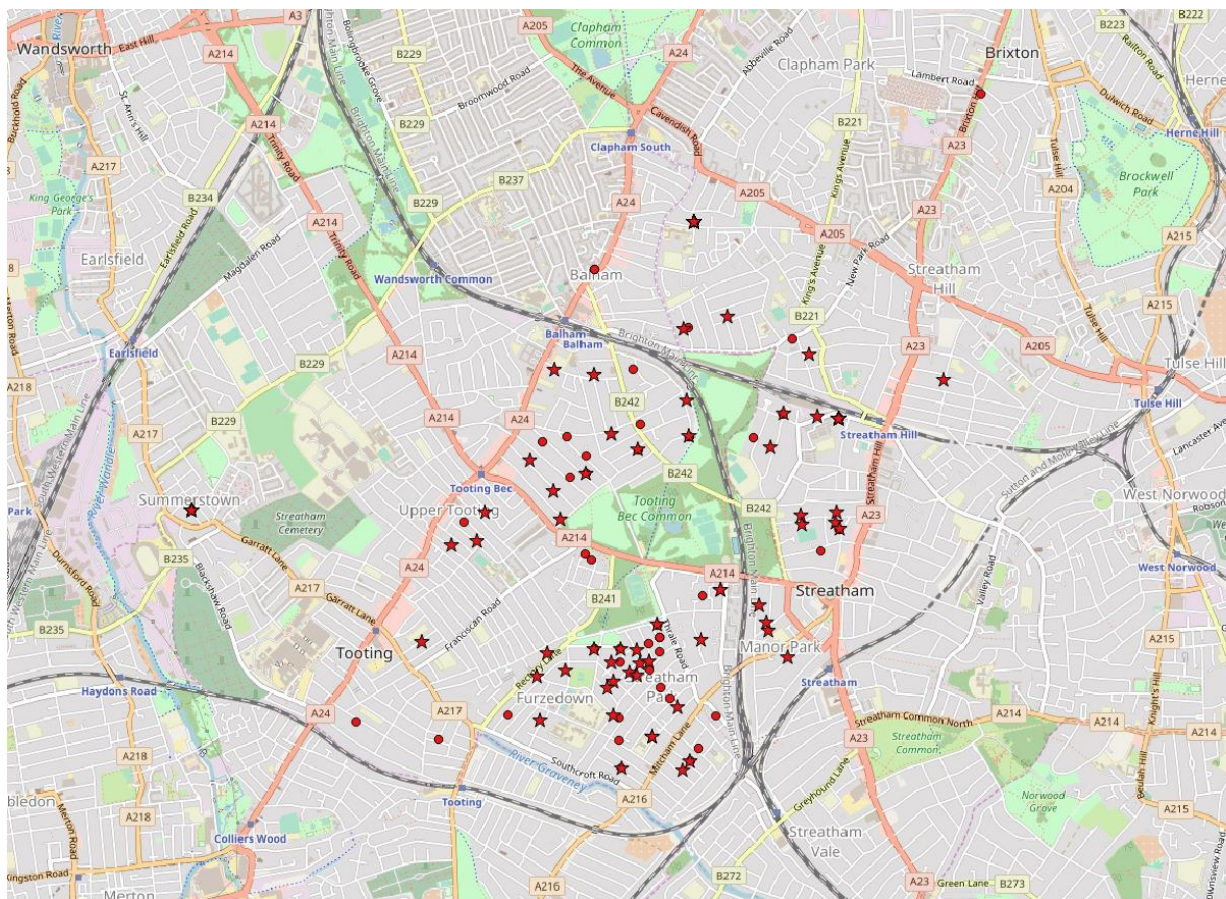


Figure 1 Distribution of survey respondents who provided their postcodes. 83 individuals responded to the mid-term review (circles) and 102 to the final evaluation (stars). Around half opted to provide only the first part of their postcode and the map does not discriminate between locations of single individuals and those of many.

3 Projects, outputs and outcomes

TCHP is made up of a number of separately costed projects. A summary of each project is provided in Table i, overleaf.

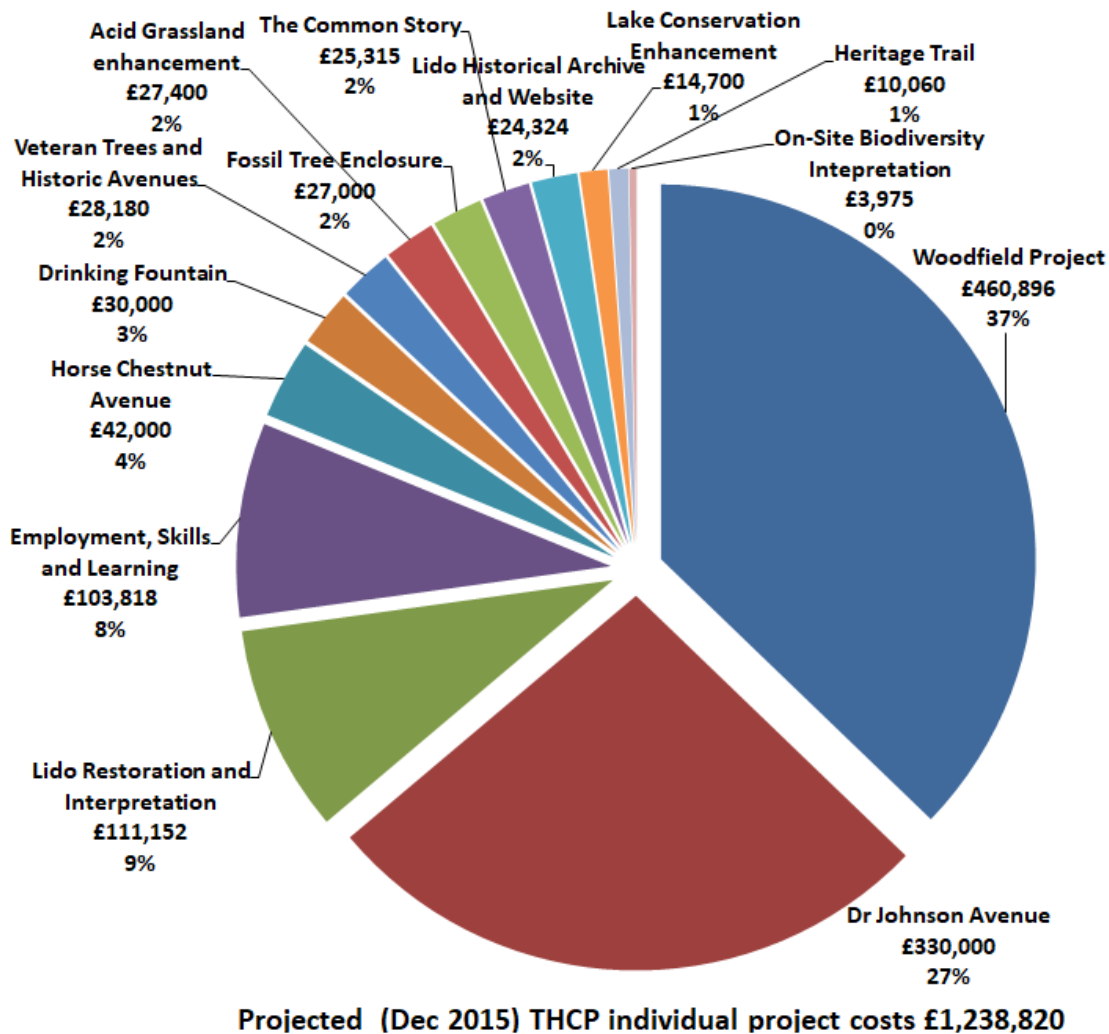


Figure 2 Initial proposed project costs (from the S2 application 2015 including match funding and contingency but excluding volunteer time) of all TCHP projects.

Figure 2 presents initial projected costs of the projects contained in TCHP’s S2 application.⁽⁹⁾ The Woodfield Project is the largest, accounting for over one-third of total direct costs. This was followed in the original proposal by the ‘greening’ of Dr Johnson Avenue at just over a quarter; then the Tooting Bec Lido capital works and an Employment, Skills and Learning programme at 9% and 8% respectively of total costs. The remaining nine projects account for fewer than 20% of projected costs. In the event, resident concerns over the proposal to ‘re-Common’ Dr Johnson Avenue meant that this project was abandoned at an early stage.

Information on final project spend is not yet available.

Table i List of TCHP projects with brief description

Ref # ^a	Title	Brief description	Project lead	£ total ^b
1	Drinking fountain restoration	Conservation of the fountain's fabric and restoration to working order	Enable	£30,000
2	Acid grassland restoration	Expand the area of acid grassland on Tooting Commons – nutrient stripping, possible reseeded on Lido Field and in Tooting Graveney Wood	Enable/ idverde	£ 24,979
3	Heritage Trail and on-site activities	Enhance intellectual access & understanding of the Common's historical and ecological significance through static and personal interpretation (leaflet, app, guided walks)	TCHP team / Enable	£10,060
4	Tooting Bec Common Lake restoration	Enhance lakeside habitats & biodiversity through the creation of marginal aquatic vegetation parcels and a hedge impeding access	Enable/ idverde	£9,118
5	Fossil Tree	Restore enclosure and conserve tree; add plaque and display board	Enable	£27,400
6	The Woodfield Project - Capital works - Community engagement and activities	Restore and refurbish the Woodfield pavilion as a low-energy and multipurpose building Establish as a community hub, including use and volunteer management of the surrounding grounds	The Woodfield Project	£460,896
7	Employment, skills and learning.	Accredited training and learning opportunities in horticulture and conservation for local residents especially NEETs	Quadron/ idverde	£103,818

^a Numbering as per the S2 submission to HF⁽⁷⁾ * = project added subsequent to S2 approval.

^b Initial estimates including match funding and contingency but excluding volunteer time.

Ref # ^a	Title	Brief description	Project lead	£ total ^b
8	Veteran trees and historic avenues	Safeguard existing trees and conserve avenues* and their landscape	Enable	£28,180
9	Horse Chestnut Avenue	Removal of all chestnut trees and replant with <i>Tilia cordata</i>	Enable/ idverde	£42,000
10	Lido Heritage - capital works	Restore original 1906 arches to external south terrace wall, & infill to accommodate 6 interpretation panels; renew/ refurbish cubicles; extend W terrace; install new cycle park; viewing windows to Pump House (exists alongside the (non-HF) Pavilion project)	South London Swimming Club	£111,152
11	Lido Heritage – historical archive & website	Historical recording, interpretation panels, dedicated website, community engagement and events	SLSC	£24,324
12	On-site biodiversity interpretation	Interpretation panels for the lake, veteran trees, acid grassland	TCHP team / Enable	£3,975
13	The Common Story	Volunteer archive research and oral history recording leading to an outdoor museum (portable panels), publication and web pages	Wandsworth Historical Society	£25,315
14	Dr Johnson Avenue	Original proposal to de-urbanise the Commons by closing highway to traffic and revert to common land was replaced by a traffic calming scheme under the auspices of TfL with TCHP contributing part of the cost	LBW	£80,000

One of the potential strengths of TCHP as a multi-project scheme is synergism between different elements and the way in which individual projects may contribute across a number of HF's programme aims. The remainder of this section considers the achievements of the projects comprising the TCHP scheme under the principal thematic HF programme aims as follows:

- Benefits to heritage:
 - natural heritage
 - historic and built heritage.
- Benefits for individuals and communities:
 - access, engagement and participation
 - learning and understanding
 - volunteering training and skills
 - wider benefits and impacts.

Almost all projects produce outputs in more than one programme area and several deliver in all of them. For example, physical conservation works ('natural' and 'built'), have all involved significant community and/ or volunteer engagement; several also include an important training component or feature events for the general public. Each section below therefore focuses on outputs and outcomes under that head across all TCHP project activity. More focused assessments of the outcomes of individual projects have been omitted from this Report for reasons of length but have been submitted separately in draft for partners and the TCHP team. In contrast to the MTR which contained a representative selection of extracts from interviews and from the on-line survey, quotations are presented here only where they serve to emphasise a point or to illustrate different perspectives or opinions.



Figure 3 Work-release volunteers removing topsoil and creating a bund, May 2017 (above) and (below) a revegetated area of acid grassland June 2018.

3.1 Benefits to natural and historic heritage

Natural heritage – landscape, species and ecosystems

Five projects involve physical works focused on improving the biodiversity and landscape of the common:

- Acid grassland restoration
- Renovation and habitat creation to the lake
- Veteran avenues and tree survey
- Chestnut Avenue removal and replanting
- ‘Greening’ of Dr Johnson Avenue.

Outputs

Outputs below relate to what has been delivered under this head by projects across the whole of the scheme.

- 2,500m² of acid grassland on the Lido Field together with approximately 1850m² in Tooting Graveney Woods restored and an additional 971m² on the Lido Field reclaimed through the creation of a bund bank – a total of almost 4.5 ha in all.
- Enhancement of habitat quality including nesting opportunities for birds along the Sanctuary on the east side of Tooting Bec Lake has involved removal of submerged and overhanging trees and scrub causing shading and nutrient enrichment together with the creation of marginal aquatic vegetation parcels by installing 4 planted rafts 2m wide x 8m long giving a total area of 64m².
- All mature trees on the Commons surveyed with 15 new trees planted across the common at Dr Johnson Avenue, Tooting Bec Road & Garrads Road.
- Additionally, removal of 51 mature horse chestnut trees and their replacement by 64 small-leaved lime trees along either side of Chestnut Avenue has created a potential heritage asset for the future albeit at the loss of a much-loved feature of the Commons.
- An appendix has been produced to the 2015 Management and Maintenance Plan and associated Action Plan for the commons incorporating prescriptions for continued future management of those areas subject to habitat works.
- Biological monitoring has included records for 27 butterfly species compared to 16 species known from the Commons prior to 2015. These include a regionally important population of White-letter Hairstreaks associated with Elms and Marbled White and Brown Argus Butterflies associated with acid grassland.



Figure 4 Planted rafts of marginal vegetation (left) and the result (right) a year later in Tooting Bec Lake.

Outcomes

All physical works to the Commons' natural heritage will require continued management and monitoring if the benefits are to be secured. Prescriptions for this are now part of a revised draft Management and Maintenance Plan for the Commons.

Contention still attends the replacement of the Chestnut Avenue trees with small leaved lime; this is the principal cause of negative assessments by on-line questionnaire respondents (at least in relation to physical works) throughout the latter stages of the evaluation. In our opinion as IE the decision was appropriate and justified in the context of local authority spending cuts (discussed further in Section 4, below). All cultural landscapes are palimpsests – accretions of human activity over time – and their biological components in particular, are dynamic. Management decisions require balancing economic and aesthetic as well as scientific and technical considerations. The alternative - continued selective felling and replacement of individual diseased trees - would have involved more complex monitoring particularly in regard to disease and safety issues, been significantly more costly in the long term, would not have been eligible for HF funding and would, arguably, be unlikely to secure visually or environmentally satisfactory results. As seen now the Avenue appears somewhat as it must have been at the turn of the last century when it was first planted and like it, as a single species assemblage, has a potentially increased risk of susceptibility to disease. There are also lessons to be learnt relating to the consultation process.



Figure 5 Chestnut Avenue in early 2018 (above left) with (right) a felled tree infected with bleeding canker disease. A campaign leaflet (below left) with (right) the Avenue following replanting with small leaved lime.

It is to be hoped that the replanted Avenue will be seen in due course as successful in its own right as a valued part of the future heritage of the Commons.

Other projects have been well received although some negative comment was received regarding visual aspects of the acid grassland habitat recreation. Responses regarding works to Tooting Bec Lake were all positive in relation to the habitat enhancements undertaken, albeit sometimes accompanied by suggestions for further works. In all cases the long-term success of all these works will be dependent on continuing maintenance and monitoring which will be the responsibility, through Enable, of WBC.

The implementation of tree and biodiversity monitoring was deferred by the delay in appointing an Activities and Volunteer Coordinator; this eventually took place in March 2017. Biodiversity data and condition reports on the habitat improvements are not yet available and it would be premature to form a judgement about their success. However it seems likely that all will have a significant and positive impact.

Cycle through the common each day, so it's good to see it getting attention and restoration. [PA]

Acid grassland regeneration has worked well and will hopefully lead to the improvement of habitat for invertebrates and vertebrates on the Common. [PA]

when I first moved here the Common was a far less beautiful biodiverse space with trees and bushes severely cut back regularly and the pond - ugly dirty space. [PA]

Replacement of defunct chestnut avenue with a new avenue of small leafed lime. A lasting avenue for future generations. [PA]

Disenchanted that a "heritage" scheme could actually lead to damaging the natural environment.[NP]

I wish there had been a more sympathetic way to deal with chestnut Avenue. [PA]

Lake looks beautiful, and gives pleasure to all. And hopefully provides a healthy environment for the creatures which live in or around it. [PA]

Horse Chestnut Avenue [...] was reaching the end of its life, and the new trees will be a gift to future generations. [PA]

My suspicion is that the removal of the trees was more cost effective for the council given that NHLF funding doesn't cover ongoing maintenance of such existing assets. [PA]

One thing I have definitely noticed is that there appears to be an increasing level of bio-diversity in terms of bird species and numbers, ditto butterflies, moths and other insects. That is a great and good thing.[PA]

The only benefit of the destruction of Chestnut Avenue is that it has brought the community together - 6,000 signatures, many events and rallies. It's made people really aware of the beauty around them [NP]

Historic and 'built' heritage

Two projects fall under this head, both involving major restoration works conducted by TCHP partners:

- Restoration and improvement works to the Tooting Bec Lido (South London Swimming Club).
- Restoration of the Woodfield Pavilion (The Woodfield Project).

In addition two smaller projects have been managed directly by LBW/ Enable:

- Restoration of the 1930s Drinking Fountain.
- Conservation and restoration of the Fossil Tree and enclosure.

Outputs

- The fabric of the Woodfield Pavilion has been conserved and restored with a new first-floor meeting area, storage, kitchen, toilets, and is already in regular use as a community hub.
- Major improvements to the Tooting Bec Lido have included restoration of iconic poolside cubicles and the construction of a Western Terrace with recreational ledges and plaques commemorating significant figures and viewing windows installed into the Lido plant rooms so that the machinery which provides clean water to the pool can be seen and appreciated.
- A significant local landmark/ facility (the 1930s Drinking Fountain) is restored and working.
- The Fossil Tree is now conserved in a new enclosure which both protects and facilitates safe public access.



Figure 6 Tooting Bec Lido during works (above) to the cubicles (left) and (right) Western Terrace and (below) completed mid-2019. In addition to commemorating notable individuals associated with SLSC the plaques remember two children who drowned in the pool.



Figure 7 Clockwise from top left: The opening of the Woodfield Pavilion in May 1933, the empty building in May 1918 prior to the start of works, renovation in progress and the opening of the restored Pavilion in June 2019.

Outcomes

The results of physical works to the Woodfield Pavilion are a tribute to the hard work and dedication of the trustees of The Woodfield Project (TWP). Commissioning the pavilion restoration works was significantly delayed, in part due to planning consent and difficulties in liaison with Lambeth Borough Council. The delays required a re-application to the Veolia Environmental Trust which has increased its match funding (from £67k to £75k) supplemented by additional sums from the Western Riverside Environmental Fund and the Bernard Sunley Foundation. The completed works now provide a facility on two floors suitable for a variety of uses. Already the pavilion has regular bookings for yoga, exhibitions, corporate meetings and craft sessions. A community café is open on key occasions and TWP has had an increase of at least 100 members since the Pavilion opened. Private hire by local groups and individuals has also started well, including topical talks, cinema evenings and birthday celebrations. These should provide an income stream for the pavilion helping TWP to ensure that it remains in good condition.

Refurbishment and enhancements to the Lido are similarly a tribute to the commitment of the South London Swimming Club (SLSC). Restored cubicles provide a cultural/ historic complement (as well as a changing facility) for swimmers. The functionality of the new Western Terrace is enhanced by the

memorial plaques which celebrate notable individuals associated with SLSC's history – and remember also some of the less prominent swimmers who enjoyed the pool. Windows providing a view of the filtration machinery together with an interpretive board have added to the 'deep end' facilities associated with separately funded works to the Pump House and Pavilion. The initial proposal to re-erect the original entrance pool arches near the site of the original entrance was changed following completion of the separately funded pavilion facilities and the monies reallocated to sorting and cleaning the bricks. Subject to planning consent, the arches will now be reconstructed as a 'stand-alone' feature in a meadow area behind the childrens' pool with the costs met by SLSC.



Figure 8 The Fossil Tree in 2017 (left) and (right) the opening of the conserved Tree and newly accessible enclosure in September 2019. The Tree, taken from the Purbeck Jurassic beds, has been a notable heritage feature of the Commons for over a century.



Figure 9 The Drinking Fountain before restoration (top left); replacement machined parts (bottom right) and (centre) opening of the restored fountain in February 2018.

Two projects — the restoration and repair of the 1930s Drinking Fountain and the conservation of the Fossil Tree in a way which both protects and provides access — have significantly enhanced both the amenity and heritage interest of the Commons. Responses to these works have been wholly positive and often linked to comments about the associated historical and archive recording which they have complemented in a visible and accessible way.

Both the Lido and Woodfield projects are a great success in particular the Pavilion- so nice to see this historic building renovated to a high standard and brought back into community use. [PA]

...It's lovely to see the fossil tree publicised and looked after. [PA]

Improvements at lido which had been tatty. Gives pleasure to many [PA]

Fossil tree is now more of a feature and can be seen. Lido area is greatly improved. Pavilion looks good but I haven't been in it yet. [PA]

Wood field pavilion restoration is an excellent use of public funds to try and establish public areas to get people outside.[PA]

ACID GRASSLAND



A DELICATE RECOGNISABLE LANDSCAPE

Often associated with heath landscapes and commons, lowland acid grassland develops on low-nutrient, acidic soils (pH 4 to 5.5) overlying acidic rocks or on free-draining gravelly and sandy soils. It is made up of different species of fine-leaved grasses, including common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*) and red fescue (*Festuca rubra*). Wildflower species most commonly found on acid grassland include sheep's cornel (*Rumex acetosella*) and birds foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*). Areas of infertile soil unsuitable for growing crops were often used by our ancestors as common grazing land, supporting a mixture of heath and acid grassland rich in wildlife found in many parts of London.

A NATIONALLY IMPORTANT HABITAT IN LONDON

Lowland acid grassland is an important habitat for conservation in the Greater London area. It is extremely variable in terms of species richness. The tussock vegetation and bare ground that characterise this habitat allow a wide range of invertebrates to thrive including solitary wasps, butterflies and grasshoppers. Many of the invertebrates that occur in acid grassland are specialists such as mining bees (*Andrena fulvipes*), the common green grasshopper (*Chorthippus viridulus*) and the wolf spider (*Pardosa amentata*).

ACID GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT

The conservation of acid grassland depends on appropriate management. A lack of grazing by livestock or cutting/mowing results in the grassland becoming dominated by coarse grasses and shrubs, with the eventual loss of the characteristic acid grassland species. Acid grassland is cut once a year in late summer, the later the cut is left, the more stems will start to die and be eaten. Cut

A HABITAT UNDER THREAT

It is estimated that fewer than 30,000 hectares of lowland acid grassland now remain in the UK. In London, important concentrations occur on Wimbledon Common, Mitcham Common, Hadley Green and Richmond Park. Due to increased public use the existing acid grassland areas on Tooting Common are at risk because they are quite small and isolated, and have been adversely affected by dog faecal coating enrichment and trampling which leads to compaction and erosion of the soil.

The existing areas of dry acid grassland has been expanded through targeted habitat restoration aimed at making the population of acid grassland species larger and less vulnerable. Vigorous vegetation has been cleared from two areas on the Common, the Lido Field on Tooting Bec Common and opposite the entrance to the Athletics Track on Tooting Greenway Common. The entire layer of topsoil has been scraped from these two areas to expose the nutrient poor subsoil beneath. The excess earth from this restoration has been used to form banks which will provide warm conditions for hibernating and nesting areas for bees, wasps and ants.

ACID GRASS TOOTING COMMON

Tooting Common is London Authority an Important Area for Biodiversity (IAIB) because it supports local priority habitats. Features of Tooting 1 but much loved here.

TOOTING BEC COMMON LAKE



HOW WE LOOK AFTER THE LAKE

WATER

Main water is regularly used to top up the lake level as evaporation and wetland plants remove it constantly. A number of operators are used continuously monitoring oxygen levels in the water, which helps us to manage water quality.

FISH

The lake supports several species of fish including carp, bream, pike, perch and roach. The lake is surveyed once every three years to ensure all fish are in good, healthy condition. We operate a close season from 15th of March to the 15th of June (included) to allow an undisturbed breeding time for the fish. All anglers must be able to show a valid permit and Environment Agency Rod Licence and are expected to abide by annually reviewed terms and conditions.

INVERTEBRATES

The invertebrates that live in or around the water are both beautiful to look at (dragonflies and damselflies) and are a food source for birds (swallows), fish and bats.

WETLAND VEGETATION

Vegetation around the lake edges provides a home for aquatic invertebrates both below and above the water. It also provides cover for nesting and rearing birds or water leaf (higher up in trees Egyptian geese).

DUCKS, SWANS, GEESE

The lake supports many different species of wetland birds. The choice of fish in the lake provides them with sufficient natural food and good places to nest and breed.

You can see a wide range of both resident and migratory wetland such as Canada geese, Egyptian geese, tufted duck, mallard, pochard, mute swan, great crested grebe, common grebe and shoveler.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

PLEASE DO NOT FEED BREAD TO THE WILDLIFE (birds, geese, swans, squirrels). It is best for their digestion and it attracts rats. Should you wish to feed the wetland birds then use recommended amount of pellets, sprouts or bird seeds.

KEEP DOGS OUT OF THE WATER (and on a lead or off-leash around the lake edge) and the Sanctuary. The disturbance they cause by being in the lake damages the breeding success of wetland birds, they trample vegetation and disturb water quality.

TAKE ALL YOUR LITTER HOME


THE TOOTING COMMON FOSSIL TREE

The Tooting Common fossil is the remains of the base or stump of a tree from the Jurassic-Purbeck Fossil Forest of Southern England, which formed about 145 million years ago.

The fossil is significant because it represents the major element of the tree canopy of a forest that formed in Southern England at a time when dinosaurs roamed the Earth.

It is 1.4m high and about 2.2m wide at the base and is likely to belong to the common wood of the Purbeck Fossil Forest called *Platanocerasmoxleyi purbeckensis*, a type of extinct conifer. In Purbeck times these grew in an arid, Mediterranean-like environment bordering a shallow lagoon.

The stump became petrified through natural infiltration of the wood by silica to form microcrystalline quartz. The grain of the wood is visible on parts of the stump, but in some areas other matter appears to have softened and become cemented to the surface during fossilisation.



THE LAKE A FOSSILISED TREE, TOOTING COMMON

Originally, the tree stump would have been fossilised in an upright position, and it had a slightly flared base. This is partly missing now, as are the roots. Some of these features were undoubtedly lost when the stump was originally excavated, but comparison with a photograph taken in the 1920s indicates that some damage has been incurred since the specimen was placed on the common.

Fossilised tree trunks of this type are commonly found during the excavating of building sites, notably the Fortnash Stone, which was widely used in many London buildings such as Buckingham Palace and St Paul's Cathedral. They have been collected and placed in parks and gardens since the early 19th century.

The fossil tree was originally put on display here in 1895. It was the gift of local stonemason builder and property developer, Alfred Haver (c.1841-1901).

Funding raised by The National Lottery




Figure 10 Interpretation panels provide information to commons users about key heritage features of the Commons.

3.2 Benefits to individuals and communities

All projects – including those focused on the natural, historic and built heritage, above, - were designed to deliver benefits to individuals and communities. In addition the following projects were directly intended to produce clear outcomes in this area:

- Employment, skills and learning (ESL).
- The Common Story - archive research and oral history of the Commons.
- Lido Heritage – historical archive & website.
- The Woodfield Project community engagement and activities.
- On-site biodiversity interpretation.
- Heritage Trail and on-site activities.

Overall, 164 separate community-focused activities were delivered by the scheme, engaging over 4,650 participants. Principal outputs below are presented under HF's prescribed categories.

Access, engagement and participation

Outputs

A total of 47 separate activities focused on increasing community access, engagement and participation, including:

- A wildlife fine art event at the Woodfield Pavilion as part of the Streatham festival with 23 children, 18 adults, a nocturnal animal hunt with 16 families and a leaf art events with 51 children and carers.
- The official launch of The Common Story: A History of Tooting Common⁽²²⁾ with 6 volunteers and 85 attendees. The Tooting History group also signed up 26 new members as a result of the day.
- Visits to year 4 pupils in primary schools to discuss the environment and speak at the assembly about the project to 240 pupils.
- SLSC's Open house event at the Tooting Bec Lido where an interactive virtual heritage app was launched to the public.
- Launch party of the Woodfield Pavilion with 16 volunteers, both mayors (of Wandsworth and Lambeth) and at least 450 people in attendance.
- 13 separate activities with disability and inclusion charities.

Learning and understanding

Outputs

Activities designed primarily to promote learning and understanding included:

- 34 activities conducted with schools.
- 41 nature and historical themed walks delivered.
- 11 professional seminars in wildlife or heritage were given to the community.
- 30 Minibeast hunts were delivered to local schools.

In addition informal learning will be facilitated by:

- Inspection windows and adjacent interpretation panels at the Lido Pump House and the commemorative plaques on the Western Terrace.
- Four new interpretive boards on the Commons, including the Fossil Tree, Tooting Bec Lake and areas of acid grassland.
- The Common Story booklet⁽²²⁾ already revised and in its second printing, and archived material together with the SLSC historical records and website.

Volunteering, training and skills

Outputs

- 48 separate activities were designed to increase volunteer training and skills.
- Over 250 people engaged in some capacity with training in biological recording, environmental conservation or heritage/history research during the scheme.
- Volunteers have contributed a total of approximately 20,000 hours to TCHP's delivery.
- In addition 38 local Wandsworth NEET residents on the Employment Skills and Learning programme gained their Level 1 City and Guilds Diploma in Land Based Studies (Environmental Conservation). Most have subsequently secured employment, apprenticeships or have proceeded to further education. In the process they contributed a total of 140 unskilled volunteer days' (worth over £80,000 in match funding), helping conserve areas of the Commons.



Figure 11 ESL participants 'learning' (above) and 'doing' (below).

Outcomes for individuals and communities

The TCHP team and partners have done well to secure 'buy-in' from volunteers and the public. Those who commented approvingly on capital works also perceived multiple 'people' benefits. No separate information is available on what percentage of participants in TCHP activities and events have been new to the Commons, however a majority of respondents to both evaluation surveys declared themselves to have been actively engaged with the Commons in some way prior to the

commencement of TCHP. 34% of respondents to the final survey said that they were aware of the Commons, but not involved in any way; the corresponding figure for the MTR survey was 38%.

The primary beneficiaries in terms of access, engagement and participation would appear to be users and future users of the heritage assets (the Woodfield Pavilion, Tooting Bec Lido, the Drinking Fountain, Fossil Tree, Tooting Bec Lake and the acid grassland areas) that have been secured or enhanced by TCHP funding and importantly (as attested to by their teachers), schoolchildren who have been introduced to the Commons for the first time. Over the four years of the TCHP scheme, visitors to the Commons increased from around 2.6 million to an estimated 3 million. While it is impossible to attribute this increase to TCHP, the increasing pressures on the area highlight the importance of the Commons and of the legacy of TCHP to these potential beneficiaries.

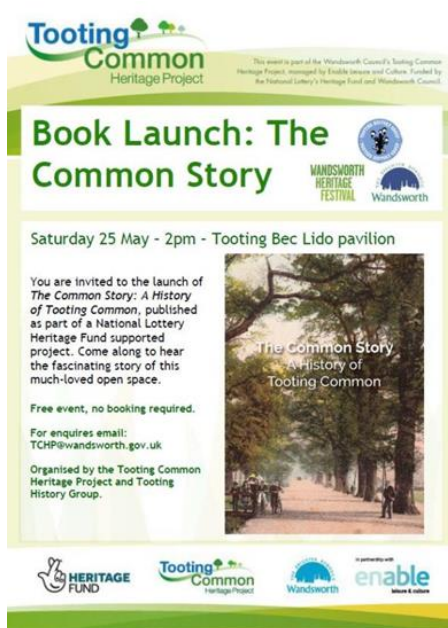


Figure 12 The Commons' history is now available in an accessible booklet.

The associated historical recording, in parallel with the archive research and oral history recording of The Common Story have engaged a significant number of volunteers. The resulting booklet⁽²²⁾ is a valuable introduction to the history of the Commons. The first edition has sold out and a revised edition has been reprinted for sale. THG have already given 3 talks about The Common Story project with more to come and the book itself has been reviewed positively on The Historical Association website. The project's 'Toolokit'⁽²³⁾ remains a valuable resource.

TCHP has also led to an increase in biological recording. A successful annual recorders conference was held at the end of the project where volunteers were able to talk to the general public about their experiences volunteering on the Commons and the changes the project has made. One recorder commented that as a direct result of the new acid grassland, he has noted a new species of butterfly that has never before been recorded on the common. New bat detectors purchased for TCHP monitors will continue to be

used by FoTC on their regular bat walks.

These, and indeed most of TCHP's volunteer and community-related activity include a significant element of skills acquisition — from archival research to scything. Participants in the informal learning events (including guided walks) have also reported positively on their experience, as have those interviewees who have commented on the interpretive panels (most of which were installed towards the end of TCHP).

In parallel with the above, a focused employment, skills and learning (ESL) programme engaged young (and not so young) local NEET (not in employment, education or training) residents. This involved short 4 to 5 week courses focused on both theoretical understanding and practical skills. Though less publicly visible, the ESL scheme has been amongst the most worthwhile in terms of direct benefit to individuals and has yielded significant – and above target - results, not least for the individual participants who have attained formal accreditation, a majority of whom have found employment or are in further training. These include one candidate who secured a full time job in

Lambeth's Streatham Common and another who has been accepted onto an apprenticeship at Kew Gardens. Four more candidates have secured posts with idverde in Kingston, Bromley and Wandsworth. Good links have been made with The Woodfield Project and it is hoped the relationship will grow to offer future opportunities. The programme has been delivered by idverde (the lead body in TCHP's formal accredited training provision) who are to be commended on the delivery of the ESL programme following the failure of Groundwork to deliver on its pilot project in the development phase.



Figure 13 Not initially part of TCHP, the Tooting Bec Café (here celebrating its 120th anniversary in August 2018) is part of the historic heritage of the Commons and has also benefitted from TCHP.

Encouraged me to find out more about an area I have lived next to for many years. [PA]

Schools' involvement in the park has been amazing, all the classes I sent to the common with Andy Flegg have thoroughly enjoyed them and learnt so much more about their park and engaging with nature. [PL, Local schoolteacher]

came across the exhibition one Sunday whilst walking & called in, great to see the new building inside & better still to see all the old historical maps etc. of Tooting Common, lovely to talk to the knowledgeable people involved.[NA]

Doing The Common Story has brought the area to the attention of more local and visiting people, and engaged the local history groups too [PA]

Overall, there are more people and families out on the common. I see/hear people discussing different things in the common that are now more visible following restoration.[PA]

Wider benefits and impacts

HF's programme aims include improvements to local environmental quality, more resilient organisations and local economic benefits.

All lasting impacts to natural and historic heritage can be considered to have provided benefits to local environmental quality, as can improved access. One of the intended consequences of the closing of Dr Johnson Avenue to vehicular traffic would have been an improvement in air quality. It is likely that the replacement traffic calming measures will yield some benefit in terms of accessibility and safety but as with other outcomes, the situation needs to be kept under review.

The two voluntary organisations most directly concerned with the delivery of TCHP are SLSC and TWP. The former is a long-established organisation, however the Lido improvements have undoubtedly given it a boost, and have already resulted in a significant increase in membership (as

well as in wider public use of the Lido). TWP is a relatively new organisation formed specifically to promote the restoration and community use of the Pavilion. It can take great satisfaction from (and its profile and local support has been boosted by) its completion.

The ESL project has been an important element in idverde's community-related provision and will have significantly increased its public standing in the area.

Economic benefit was not a focus of TCHP however the Tooting Bec Café (which has been newly refurbished, not as part of the TCHP scheme) celebrated its 120th anniversary in 2019 and now acts also as an information hub and reports some benefits in terms of custom.



As a regular user of the common it feels that there is more being done to look after it. There seems to be more wildlife and people showing more interest [PA]

4 Administration, delivery and governance

The governance structure for TCHP is illustrated in Figure 14 below. The Accountable Body for the scheme is the London Borough of Wandsworth (LBW) working through Enable and a small Steering Group (SG) comprising representatives of all delivery project partners as well as local interest groups, Enable staff and Wandsworth Council officers.

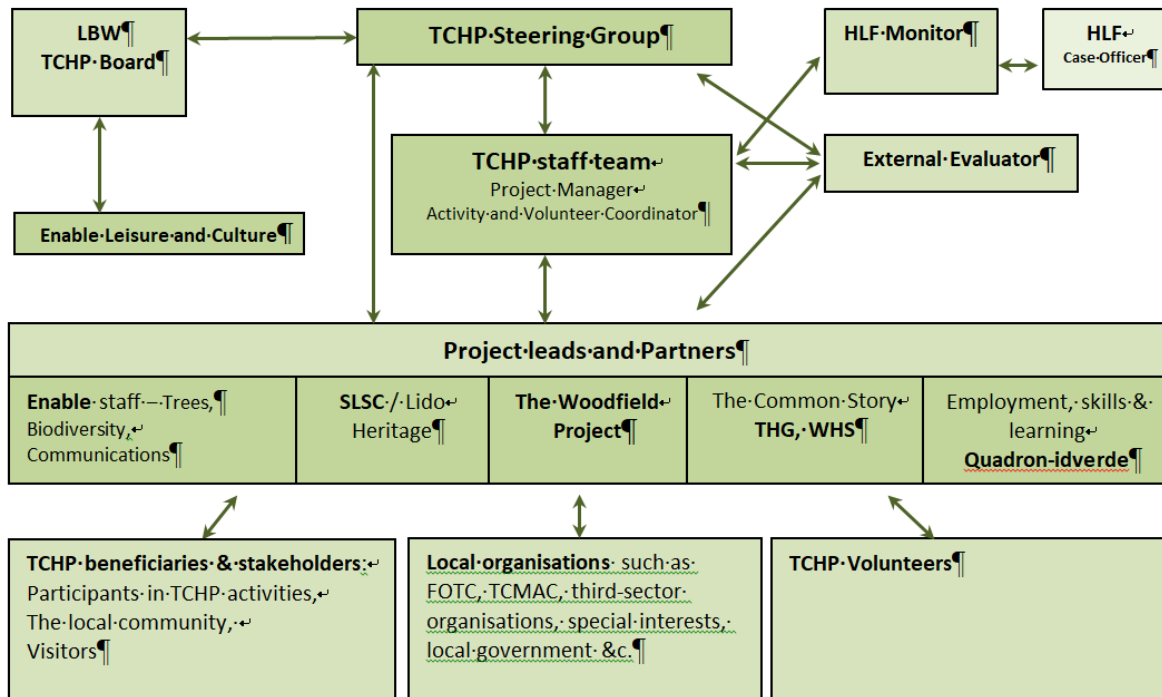


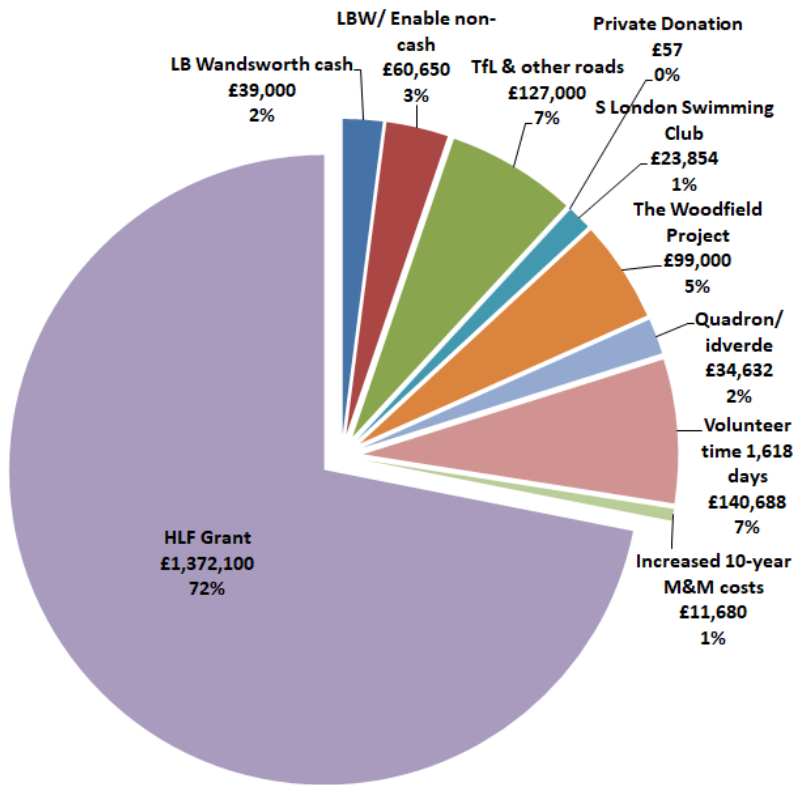
Figure 14 Governance structure for TCHP.

Day-to-day co-ordination has been through a small team comprising an (initially part-time) Project Manager and an Activities and Volunteer Co-ordinator (AVC) appointed on fixed term contracts. Both posts were employed by Wandsworth Council and were overseen by LBW's Leisure Contract Manager but reported to the Head of Parks (Operations) in Enable Leisure & Culture as the lead on TCHP.

Overall and in terms of day-to-day administration and delivery, this arrangement has worked well, despite the delay in appointing to the AVC post which placed additional burden on TCHP's manager. However, there has been some public confusion around the roles of the different bodies involved with TCHP which is seen as a LBW 'owned' (as well as led) scheme.

Projected sources of delivery income (as contained in HF's grant letter) for the TCHP scheme are presented in Figure 4. Final data are not yet available.

LBW and the TCHP delivery team have done well to cope with a number of challenges in relation to financial management. The first has been the progressive tightening of public sector finance and in particular the loss of central staff and/or pressure on officer time.



Projected (Dec 2015) THCP delivery phase income £1,908,661

Figure 15 Initial projected (S2 application) sources of delivery income for THCP overall.⁽¹⁰⁾ Final financial data is not yet available.

tightening of public-sector budgets. This has impacted on the whole of HF’s activity not least in relation to local government as HF project funding, originally predicated on additionality, has increasingly been called upon selectively to substitute for what might earlier have been regarded as the normal maintenance function of elected authorities, particularly regarding their non-statutory responsibilities. The replanting of Chestnut Avenue must be seen in this context (as indeed must the

During the life of the scheme there have been significant reorganisation of two key delivery agencies.

Early in delivery, LBW’s own leisure services team was restructured and ‘spun out’ from the council as Enable, Leisure and Culture, a staff mutual social charity.

Subsequently, and in mid-delivery, Quadron Services, the principal contractor for LBW’s outsourced grounds maintenance, was acquired by the French company idverde. It is to the credit of all those concerned that neither of these changes have impeded TCHP’s own delivery arrangements.

TCHP was developed and delivered against the background of a progressive

renovation of the 1930s Drinking Fountain and the conservation of the Fossil Tree).

The significant number of negative or ‘average/ unaware’ survey responses received in relating to project design and management, to overall co-ordination and delivery and to representation of local needs, seem primarily related to Chestnut Avenue. The issue has demonstrated the high level of affection and regard for the Commons amongst local residents on both ‘sides’ of the debate.



Figure 16 Contention around the replacement of Chestnut Avenue reflects local affection and concern for the Commons and its heritage.

A related challenge has been to secure match funding. This has been exacerbated by a change in HF policy whereby contributions in kind by public bodies (in particular staff time) can no longer be counted as match funding. The TCHP delivery team and partners have done well both to secure additional monetary contributions (as in the case of the Woodfield Pavilion) and to exceed targets for volunteer input and other in-kind contributions.

Delays to commissioning the Woodfield Pavilion restoration required renegotiation of the largest element of match funding from Veolia Environmental Trust which was significantly increased. TWP was also able to secure additional funding to cover planning advice which it had hoped initially to obtain free of charge. Future delivery of activities will depend on the continued enthusiasm and commitment – including fund raising – of the highly able and committed trustees of The Woodfield Project.

In like manner, securing a continued legacy for capital works to the Lido will depend significantly on the continued ability of the leadership of the SLSC to secure funding for the activities – including restoration of the entrance arches, initially provided for within HF’s grant which has been allocated to sorting and storage of the bricks. We have confidence in SLSC’s ability here and would wish to pay tribute to the energy, commitment and determination of both the SLSC and TWP’s trustees.

Volunteer input has been critical to the success of all projects, including capital works. Estimates currently suggest that volunteers have contributed a total of approximately 20,000 hours to TCHP’s delivery with a value of over £250,000 against an initial target of c. £140,000 due largely to ESL and TWP (Figure 5).

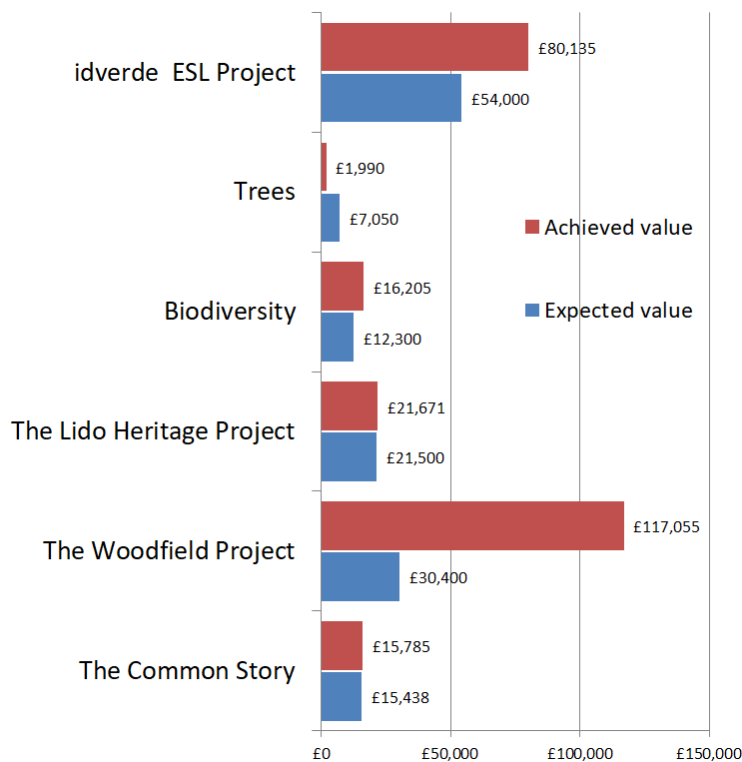


Figure 17 Volunteer time as match funding – targets and achieved value.

Our assessment of the management and delivery of the programme is that administration and delivery have been competent and efficient. The TCHP team, working to the Steering Group and to LBW/ Enable Officers has applied good project oversight, and this has been done in a way which has been open and accommodating. One lesson learnt is that public perception could have been improved by more comprehensive engagement activity immediately prior to and alongside the consultation process. However this would have been difficult to secure given the relatively small core TCHP team. At the time the consultation followed agreed WBC protocols which have since been revised.

This perception is broadly supported by the views of all those we have interviewed in person. The TCHP team are to be particularly congratulated on the scheme's delivery and administration, the more so because the TCHP Project Manager was employed part-time for much of the scheme's delivery and was without dedicated support for a significant part of this. The eventual appointment of the Activities and Volunteer Co-ordinator significantly improved the situation though his departure for a permanent position some months before the formal end of the scheme has caused problems in relation to the collection and assembly of monitoring data.

Delays in the start of the Woodfield Pavilion refurbishment – a major project in the scheme – also occasioned some negative comments. Other criticisms relate to particular activities and may reveal a lack of knowledge of provider responsibility, or to difficulties in communication and in particular in securing public awareness and recognition of the TCHP scheme amongst the 'noise' of other Commons-related activity. This was exacerbated by the fact that the website did not come on stream until mid-way through the project, prior to which it was a page on LBW's main website.

Overall, all partners as well as the TCHP delivery team have done well to accommodate unforeseen difficulties and to deliver on a scheme which should leave a positive legacy in the years to come.

[The TCHP delivery team] 'have been really responsive to the public and altered their approaches according to the needs and priorities of the public. They have also been resilient and pushed ahead with difficult elements of the project and kept it on track.' [PL]

'Very impressed with the work, commitment and enthusiasm of the delivery team.' [PL]

Organisation of the activities that I have participated in has been good. [PA]

I would like to thank Wandsworth Borough Council for all the good work it has done on Tooting Common over the past two decades. [PA]

Thanks for all the hard work you have done to date, and thanks for caring. [PA]

5 Conclusions: legacy, landscape and the future

This section considers the legacy of the TCHP scheme – the enduring benefits it has delivered and what will happen now the scheme is formally at an end. Our assessment of the achievements and legacy of the TCHP scheme as a whole is framed in terms of the degree to which they help to secure the broader vision embodied in the TCHP S2 application and aims, and in engaging local voluntary organisations and communities.

All project outcomes count as ‘legacy’ to the extent that they endure beyond the end of HF funding. Outputs and outcomes in the S2 Project list⁽⁹⁾ were revisited and revised during delivery for each project in conjunction with TCHP team and partners as a basis for assessing progress against targets. Partners and project leads have had a sense of ownership over the targets and indicators and have actively engaged in identifying longer-term benefits and the evidence needed for these benefits to be demonstrated.

The TCHP SG agreed early in delivery that it would be helpful to identify a limited number of whole-scheme legacy outcomes against each of HF’s programme priorities, each together with the associated evidence, indicators and baselines by which their achievement might be judged. These were embodied in a working document intended to be a stimulus for creative thinking about the actual legacies that TCHP should leave in relation to each of its declared aims, and about the evidence that might be assembled (or indicators developed) to demonstrate its success. It would be modified during delivery and would feed in to TCHP’s Final Evaluation. It could also assist the development of legacy activities, including those requiring further funding beyond the formal end of the HF scheme. The document was modified following the MTR in January 2018 SG and again at the September 2019 SG. The result is presented as Appendix 1. It identifies the anticipated enduring benefits of TCHP (column 2, outcomes and legacy) as specified in its Stage 2 (Delivery) application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and what evidence exists — or could be secured — to demonstrate these (third column, evidence, indicators and baselines) in relation to each of HF’s current generic programme aims^(3,24) (column 1).

TCHP has been led by established organisations with a significant presence in the area alongside LBW and its delivery partner Enable Leisure and Culture. The relatively small number of TCHP projects, the majority of which are led by ‘established players’, has facilitated management and delivery. This has had potential advantages for some projects in terms of continuity, as well as in arrangements for those projects’ legacy. But it has also made it more difficult to secure a collective vision for the area although improved communication between the different organisations involved should contribute to a determination to deliver legacy beyond the outcomes of individual projects.

TCHP projects exist amongst, and complement, other projects and initiatives promoted both by TCHP partners and by other bodies in the area. So while the outcomes and legacy of individual projects are important, they are part of a wider mosaic of activities. Beyond the enduring benefits of physical works to natural and cultural heritage, prospects for legacy depend ultimately on the enthusiasm and engagement of individuals. Over 50% of respondents to the on-line survey stated that they were likely to participate in TCHP legacy activities (Appendix 1 Figure 4).

The abandonment of proposals for ‘greening’ of Dr Johnson Avenue must necessarily be considered a disappointment. While divided opinions relating to Chestnut Avenue have inevitably coloured public perceptions of TCHP overall they have also meant more people are aware of the value and

importance of the Commons and its heritage. The high response to both on-line questionnaires seems related to this latter project which has also featured prominently in some of our own in-person interviews.

Alongside this we have received praise for other elements of the scheme, particularly in relation to The Woodfield Project and to the works at Tooting Bec Lido (both major projects) but also in relation to smaller physical works to the Commons' natural and historic heritage. We have received praise too for the programme of community activities and educational work of TCHP and although the ESL project has been less publicly visible it has been no less worthwhile, particularly for the individuals involved.

All the above has been coupled with very positive and supportive comments about the work of the project team and about the scheme as a whole. This can be attributed in no small measure to several factors. The first is the motivation and enthusiasm of project leads and volunteers who have delivered the outputs listed in Section 3 above and the outcomes identified in Appendix 1. Another is the energy and focus of the TCHP delivery team, the support provided by LBW and Enable staff and the goodwill and commitment of all partners represented on the Steering Group who have overseen delivery. Tooting Commons, their users and the local community as a whole have benefitted significantly from TCHP's activities over the past four years and there is determination to build on this success.

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7 Appendices

[Supplied as separate documents]

Appendix 1. Whole-scheme outcomes and legacy evidence against NLHF programme aims

Appendix 2. Summary of on-line survey methodology and results

Appendix 3. On-line survey narrative responses

