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Sent by email to peter.smith@lbhf.gov.uk on 3rd July 2017

Dear Peter

Hammersmith and Fulham Biodiversity Commission – Call for Evidence

My colleague Julie Cox passed your recent call for evidence letter to me to respond to on behalf of Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC (GiGL). GiGL is the authoritative source of data on London's natural environment. It offers a range of services, from curating data to providing insights that support evidence-based action, compliance, research and discovery.

Our response to each of your questions relevant to our remit is as follows:

1. What can be done to enhance the biodiversity of a densely populated urban environment such as Hammersmith & Fulham?

The first step towards enhancing biodiversity is to understand what is present in the borough. This is something we can assist you with as we hold species, habitat, open space and designated site data for the whole of Greater London - <http://www.gigl.org.uk/our-data-holdings/>, but it is also something that Hammersmith and Fulham can contribute to, for instance through commissioning new borough-wide habitat surveys, or targeted species surveys to improve your understanding and knowledge of particular sites or species in your area. A data visualisation (*Hammersmith&FulhamVis*) from 2015 is also provided separately to give an overview of the species data we hold specifically for your area.

It is also important to comply with national and regional policy and legislation pertaining to the natural environment, and this is also something we can help with via services developed for this purpose. A copy of a recent letter (*biodiversity evidence*) sent to all heads of planning in London is attached separately to this email, and sets out relevant policy and the current performance generally of the planning system in relation to nature.

2. What examples of good practice can we draw upon? (We are especially interested in examples of creating green corridors and of involving local people).

A number of London Boroughs are refreshing and relaunching their biodiversity action plans, a proven mechanism for engaging London experts and local people in the design of projects and also in the decision-making process.

3. How best can we monitor improvements?

There will be examples in local and regional biodiversity action plans, but suggestions specific to our remit include:

By establishing a baseline for habitats, species, and designated sites, and resurveying them on a regular basis to detect changes due to site management, development and other external factors.

By monitoring changes in the number of planning applications submitted with evidence of a background data search being undertaken by GiGL (see the Biodiversity Evidence letter for further details)

4. Where should responsibility lie for delivering such improvements?

This is outside our remit.

We would be more than happy to meet with members of the Commission to discuss this further. We have many examples from our work with other London Boroughs that may be of interest but are too numerous to detail in this letter.

Yours sincerely



Mandy Rudd
GiGL Chief Executive