

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2580

Title: London Nature Trail

Executive summary:

Footways' London Nature Trail is an environmental public engagement campaign, curating four new green walking routes across the city. The new routes will promote the health and wellbeing benefits of spending time in nature, and form an integral part of the Environment and Energy Unit's 'rewilding' agenda, as well as tying in with Transport for London's Leisure Walking Plan and the Walk London Network.

Routes will navigate lesser-known nature sites in the city, and take users through "green corridors" in areas lacking large parks and open spaces. The routes will be advertised locally to reach under-represented audiences (including lower-income and Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities) through faith groups and civil society organisations. The project will launch during the August bank holiday weekend (27-29 August 2022) and over this weekend, the GLA will work with stakeholders, community organisations and grantees to run family-friendly activities in areas close to the main walking routes.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Environment and Energy approves expenditure of:

- up to £35,000, by way of the award of grant funding, to Footways as a contribution to the costs of its London Nature Trail programme, which include: curation of four new walking routes across the capital; and associated project management, design and distribution
- up to £15,000 towards marketing and events to support the launch of the new routes.

AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Catherine Barber

Position: Assistant Director,
Environment and Energy

Signature:



Date: 06 June 2022

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

Introduction

- 1.1. The London Recovery Board's programme for recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic seeks to build back better, and make London a greener, fairer and safer place to live and work. Accelerating the delivery of a cleaner, greener London is one of the Board's five core aims.
- 1.2. As part of the recovery programme, the Green New Deal mission – jointly coordinated by the Mayor of London and London Councils – aims to tackle the climate and ecological emergencies, and improve air quality, by doubling the size of London's green economy to accelerate job creation for all. This mission has four overarching objectives:
 - improve London's natural environment; improve air quality; and tackle the climate and ecological emergency
 - promote and incentivise activities that sustain and grow London's green economy
 - prioritise interventions reducing health inequalities and social injustices
 - engage Londoners and businesses in the journey to become a zero-pollution and greener city.
- 1.3. Given the work the GLA is doing to put London at the forefront of global green policy, and the Mayor's new role as Chair of C40, 2022 represents a major opportunity to engage Londoners in environmental issues.
- 1.4. Key themes for the GLA's engagement work are: equity; protecting the most vulnerable; and inspiring younger generations for change.

Background

- 1.5. The Mayor has made manifesto commitments to: 'improve London's network of green corridors and open spaces that connect with town centres, public transport, places of work and people's homes'; and 'develop a new plan for connecting [parks and green spaces] with local communities, making sure these green routes are accessible for everyone'.
- 1.6. Green spaces are integral to our health and wellbeing.¹ Visiting parks can help reduce obesity, diabetes and heart disease; and visits to green spaces support mental wellbeing and stress relief.
- 1.7. There is evidence, however, that the quality of parks and green spaces is worse in lower-income areas. Minorities are often marginalised in terms of access to green space.²

Project overview

- 1.8. Footways' London Nature Trail will comprise four new green walking routes across the city. The new routes will promote the health and wellbeing benefits of spending time in nature; and form an integral part of the Environment and Energy Unit's 'rewilding' agenda, as well as tying in with TfL's Leisure Walking Plan and the Walk London Network.

¹ Heritage Fund, [Space to Thrive report](#), January 2020

² Heritage Fund, [Space to Thrive report](#), January 2020

- 1.9. Routes will be developed alongside the Environment and Energy Green Infrastructure team, the Transport team and TfL to align objectives. Routes will navigate lesser-known nature sites in the capital, and take users through “green corridors” in areas lacking large parks and open spaces.
- 1.10. At the time of writing, routes are planned within some of London’s most climate-vulnerable areas: Newham, Brent, Lewisham and, to a lesser extent, Camden.
- 1.11. The routes will exist online (via TfL’s existing partners Footways and Go Jauntly), as well as through physical printed maps distributed locally to reach under-represented audiences (including lower-income and Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities) through faith groups and civil society organisations.
- 1.12. The routes will launch during the August Bank Holiday weekend (27-29 August 2022). Over this weekend, the GLA will work with stakeholders, community organisations and grantees to run family-friendly activities in areas close to the main walking routes. These events may include nature activities, habitat creation and food growing, as well as open days at projects funded by Grow Back Greener (approved under cover of MD2827 and DD2561) and the Greener City Fund Community Green Space Grants (approved under cover of MD2141 and MD2285).

Project partners and stakeholders

- 1.13. Footways, a social enterprise with a mission to get people walking more, will lead the programme, with support from the GLA’s Green Infrastructure team, the Transport team and TfL.
- 1.14. The GLA will convene the network of organisations close to the new routes for activities and events, as detailed in 1.12.

Budget

- 1.15. Up to £35,000 of grant funding will be awarded by the GLA to Footways in accordance with the GLA Contracts and Funding Code. This will be a contribution to its project management costs, map curation, design and distribution.
- 1.16. Up to an additional £15,000 will cover marketing and events to support the launch of the new routes, organised and administered by the GLA.
- 1.17. The Footways grant budget breaks down as follows:
 - £3,000 – project management
 - £2,000 – route curation and auditing
 - £1,500 – researching and copywriting
 - £1,500 – photography
 - £2,500 – digital map creation and developer support
 - £23,000 – printed map design, licensing, layouts, etc
 - £1,500 – printing and distribution.
- 1.18. The GLA marketing and events budget breaks down as follows:
 - £5,000 – marketing and promotion

- £10,000 – activity activation subsidies (including health and safety, audits and evaluation).

Legacy and learnings

1.19. The London Nature Trail routes will exist well beyond the initial launch and can be used and promoted for future events such as Car Free Day and Clean Air Day.

1.20. The London Nature Trail will work towards the following aims:

- In the short term, it will encourage thousands of Londoners to explore routes close to their homes, and enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits that contact with nature can provide.
- It will encourage under-represented communities to enjoy green spaces and nature through targeted marketing and promotion.
- In the long term, it will promote greener behaviours where Londoners are more likely to spend time in nature, and consider walking as a viable means of travel.
- It will continue to promote these new routes as inner-city nature trails that exist on platforms such as Footways and Go Jauntly, and help to boost the Walk London Network.

1.21. This programme forms part of an integrated public engagement campaign on climate and biodiversity, which includes climate justice project Greener Together (approved under cover of ADD2484) and Grow Together (approved under cover of DD2572); and the London Schools' Climate Kick-Start (approved under cover of MD2832). It builds on the successes and learnings of the National Park City Festival (approved under cover of MD2285).

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1. The objectives for the London Nature Trail project align with the Environment Communications and Engagement Strategy, plus the Green New Deal objectives. The programme content also corresponds with the five principles of the Green New Deal and the Mayoral strategies and priorities as outlined in sections 4.2 to 4.9, below. The objectives and expected outcomes are as follows:

- equity: engage and empower under-represented groups with environmental programmes as part of environmental justice – giving a voice to the worst affected but least engaged, and ensuring a 'just transition'
- support and trust: raise awareness of environmental impacts in London, building support and trust for the Mayor's environmental action through local, tangible and positive examples
- promoting greener options: using the Mayor's platforms to promote greener behaviours, including spending time in nature and active travel.

2.2. We aim to attract at least 10,000 participants to take part over the launch weekend, and will monitor activity via the Footways and Go Jauntly applications.

2.3. Of these who take part, we aim for 80 per cent to have a better understanding of the health and wellbeing benefits of nature, and 30 per cent to use one of the routes again in the future.

2.4. We will also create a number of video case studies and social media assets to create a broad reach across London, targeting under-represented communities.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority, the Mayor of London must have 'due regard' of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not. This involves having due regard to the need to remove or minimise any disadvantage suffered by those who share a relevant protected characteristic; taking steps to meet the different needs of such people; and encouraging them to participate in public life or in any other activity where their participation is disproportionately low.
- 3.2. It is proposed that our engagement work focuses on equity, protecting the most vulnerable and inspiring future generations for change.
- 3.3. Lower-income and Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups continue to be some of the worst affected by environmental impacts in London and the wider UK, as well as being disproportionately affected by Covid-19.³ However, these groups are often under-represented in environmental programmes and groups (i.e., the worst affected have the least visibility).
- 3.4. We will reach out to engage under-represented groups via civil society and faith organisations local to the routes. Engagement will be delivered through effective partnerships; designing tools and resources effectively; placing less administrative burden on communities; and incentivising communities to take part through free map distribution. The launch timing in August has been chosen to coincide with the summer holidays and to encourage families to take part.
- 3.5. We will also use mapping data to plan some routes in areas most at risk of the impacts of climate change, air quality, access to green space and health inequalities.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. The key risks and issues are set out in the table below:

³ The following findings have recently been made:

- Ethnic minority groups disproportionately live in areas with higher levels of air, noise and light pollution; lower levels of green spaces; and higher exposure to urban heat island effects (Centric Lab, [COVID-19 & Biological Inequality; a London Data Study](#), 2020).
- People living in parts of London with high income deprivation, and high proportions of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups are disproportionately affected by air pollution (GLA, [Updated Analysis of Air Pollution](#), February 2017).
- Children from BAME groups and lower-income groups are less likely to frequently visit the natural environment. (Natural England, [Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment: a pilot to develop an indicator of visits to the natural environment by children](#), 10 February 2016).
- Half as many people from BAME groups regularly cycle compared to White groups (Sustrans, [Bike Life report](#), March 2020).
- Ethnic minority households are 35 per cent more likely to be fuel-poor than White households (BEIS, [Fuel poverty detailed tables 2021](#), 4 March 2021).

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation	RAG rating
Lack of engagement from public	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use effective partnership engagement to reach appropriate audiences (via established existing networks such as previous GLA grantees, faith groups and civil society organisations) Provide the routes on a number of convenient platforms and make processes easy and streamlined 	A
Potential for future lockdown caused by Covid-19	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking routes should be able to continue in small, socially distanced groups Timelines may need to be extended if further national lockdowns are imposed 	G
Lack of activities and activations along the walking routes	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Routes would continue regardless, without having a significant impact on the project 	G
Product is not of a high enough quality (either routes or printed maps)	Low	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with established partners (e.g. Footways) who already have a core audience and track record of delivery 	G
Activities or routes contain hazards to the public	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All activities and events to be audited and ensure relevant risk assessments, public liability insurance and safeguarding procedures are in place Best practice guides sent out to all organisers giving advice on risk assessment, accessibility and sustainability All routes to be audited by Footways prior to mapping, to ensure they are safe and accessible Disclaimer on maps and website to ensure the public know the events and routes are not managed by the GLA 	A

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

4.2. As part of the recovery programme, the Green New Deal mission, jointly coordinated by the Mayor of London and London Councils, aims to tackle the climate and ecological emergencies, and improve air quality, by doubling the size of London's green economy to accelerate job creation for all. This mission has four overarching objectives, and this programme focuses on the fourth:

- improve London's natural environment, improve air quality, and tackle the climate and ecological emergency
- promote and incentivise activities that sustain and grow London's green economy

- prioritise interventions reducing health inequalities and social injustices
 - engage Londoners and businesses in their journey to become a zero-pollution and greener city.
- 4.3. It aligns with the Mayor's Strategy for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (strategic objective 12: A Great Place To Live) and the Health Inequalities Strategy (objective 3.3: Healthy Places and Healthy Communities).
- 4.4. It aligns with the London Environment Strategy Proposal 5.3.1.e: the Mayor will work with civil society organisations to develop a series of campaigns that engage Londoners and enable them to enjoy, participate in and contribute to London becoming the world's first National Park City.
- 4.5. The primary recovery mission focus of this project is the Green New Deal; but it is also relevant to Building Strong Communities, and Mental Health and Wellbeing.
- 4.6. The Mayor's Walking Action Plan states that London should be the world's most walkable city. This means a city where walking is the most obvious, enjoyable and attractive means of travel for all short trips.
- 4.7. The Mayor's Leisure Walking Plan (currently being drafted for summer publication) states that walking for pleasure offers rich rewards: gentle exercise; improved health; a change of mindset; and the chance to explore, to discover, to follow your thoughts or enjoy companionship.
- 4.8. The London Nature Trail proposals align closely with the Leisure Walking Plan's objective to expand the network and unlock leisure walking opportunities for communities that have been deprived of them for too long. The Plan outlines criteria for identifying leisure walking routes to prioritise for development or improvement. This is designed to tackle health inequalities by breaking down the barriers that deter more deprived communities from accessing green space and attractive walking routes.
- 4.9. This project supports a number of proposals in the Mayor's Transport Strategy:
- An overall commitment that 80 per cent of all trips in London will be made on foot, by cycle or using public transport by 2041
 - Proposal 4 states that the Mayor, through TfL and the boroughs, and working with other stakeholders, will protect, improve and promote the Walk London network and create new leisure walking routes
 - Proposal 10 will use the Healthy Streets approach to deliver co-ordinated improvements to public transport and streets to provide an attractive whole journey experience that will facilitate mode shift away from the car.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.10. GLA officers are not aware that anyone involved in the drafting or clearance of this form has any conflicts of interest with the proposed programme.
- 4.11. If any conflicts of interest arise during the delivery of the programme (i.e., a GLA officer has links with an organisation that applies for a grant) they will declare that interest and not take any part in assessing that grant application or awarding funding to that organisation.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. £50,000 is required for the creation of four new green walking routes across the city – London Nature Trail. These routes will be delivered in partnership with Footways who have a range of established walking networks across the capital.
- 5.2. Grant funds of £35,000 will be issued to Footways by way of contribution for the project management, map curation, designing and distribution costs for the London Nature Trail. The balance of £15,000 will be spent by the Authority on other project costs such as promotion, evaluations and audit.
- 5.3. No further costs are envisioned beyond 2022/23 and as such expenditure will take place in the same financial year only. The Environment and Energy Unit hold the budget provision for this – specifically the Green Infrastructure element.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. This decision is not proposing to deviate from the requirements of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code so does not need legal comments.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 7.1. *Set out how the project will be delivered and complete the outline timetable*

Activity	Timeline
Grant agreement with Footways	June 2022
Route development	June 2022
All design and writing/copywriting work	July 2022
Engagement with activity organisers and map distribution organisations	July 2022
Map printing and distribution	August 2022
Marketing begins to promote the trails ahead of bank holiday weekend	August 2022
London Nature Trail weekend	27-29 August 2022
Evaluation	September 2022

Appendices and supporting papers:

None

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 – Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

If YES, for what reason:

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under the FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to
confirm the
following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Pete Nichols has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Corporate Investment Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Corporate Investment Board on
6 June 2022.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature:



Date: 07 June 2022