

Huge thanks to our amazing volunteers:

- **1,898** hours from **26** volunteers welcoming people to the Forest at the Visitor Centre at High Beach
- **913.5** hours from **29** walk volunteers to our guided walks and community engagement programmes
- **4,487** hours from **521** different volunteers in **156** different conservation sessions
- **450** hours from **10** volunteers to our policy and planning work

From partners and participants

"I learned more about some bits of the Forest which I know quite well, but also discovered a new area. A good mixture between walking and learning information. Well organised and led."
-Guided Walk attendee

"Epping Forest is beautiful. I learnt lots of cool facts about the Forest and the trees and wildlife, and I'd definitely come back again. How cool that this is so close to the Big Smoke! You really feel like you're nowhere near a city."
-Black Girls Hike Family Walk attendee

"Women only spaces are incredibly supportive and empowering and we as women should do all we can to support these groups."
-Women's* conservation volunteering session participant

"This partnership isn't just about visibility or business growth; it's about collaboration, connection, and giving back. Together, we can create opportunities that support both our goals and the wider community."
-Gavin Bastian, Deputy Manager, STOREX Loughton, EFHT Beech Partner

We are very grateful to our funding partners



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Epping Forest Big Walk 2025. Photo © Yu Leng

Our impact 2025-2026



**Epping Forest
Heritage Trust**

A message from our Chair

One year into delivering our Strategy 2025–2030, I am delighted to share the progress we have made together. Over the past year, we have expanded our reach, welcomed more people into the Forest than ever before, strengthened our conservation work, and significantly increased the scale and influence of our policy and advocacy efforts.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of our members, volunteers, donors, partners, funders, fellow Trustees and staff. Your commitment has enabled us to protect, preserve and champion Epping Forest. Thank you for everything you have done.

This report highlights many achievements, but a few stand out in particular:

- **Growing community engagement**, welcoming thousands of people to the Forest through our Visitor Centre at High Beach, free monthly guided walks, and tailored community events and activities.
- **Expanding conservation action**, delivering 50% more conservation sessions than the previous year while engaging younger and more diverse participants, with women making up the majority of attendees.
- **Strengthening our voice**, leading a powerful campaign to reduce the speed limit on Epping New Road and raising the profile of the Forest through our election awareness campaign, which secured support from across the political spectrum.



- **Building long-term resilience**, securing major multi-year funding partnerships with the National Lottery Heritage Fund, National Lottery Community Fund and The Swire Charitable Trust—an endorsement of both the quality of our work and the confidence others place in our vision.

While we have much to celebrate, the challenges facing Epping Forest continue to grow. Climate change, biodiversity loss, increasing development pressures and proposed changes affecting the Green Belt mean our work has never been more important. We must continue to grow our impact, strengthen our partnerships and ensure this extraordinary landscape is protected for generations to come.

Thank you once again for your continued support. Together, we are making a real difference, and I look forward to building on this momentum in the year ahead.

James Harrington
Chair, Epping Forest Heritage Trust

The support of EFHT members, supporters, partners, funders and volunteers is vital in protecting and preserving Epping Forest. We'd like to say a big thank you for your love of the Forest, and share some of the highlights of our achievements together over the last year.

Educate & inspire

- Welcomed over **12,500 people** to the Forest through the **Visitor Centre at High Beach**
- Guided over **305 people** on **14** free monthly **guided walks**, sharing insight about the Forest's ecology, heritage and culture
- Led **150 people** on the **Epping Forest Big Walk**, with support from the City of London Corporation, a range of local politicians and local organisations, including Forest talks en route
- **Co-created 28 activities** and supported over **1,109 people** to connect with the Forest through our community engagement programme

Conserve & grow

- Led **102 Green Team sessions**, involving **294** individual volunteers, **216** of them for the first time, and delivering **2,208 volunteering hours**
- Our team of people with learning disabilities, the Happy Loppers, undertook **36 conservation sessions** involving **25 people** and delivered **1,615 hours** of volunteer time
- Built **24 Leaky Dams** and **planted 4,040 hedgerow whips** as part of the City of London's Climate Action Strategy project
- Delivered **6 community conservation** sessions, engaging **77 people** to deliver **201 hours** of conservation activity
- Managed **12 corporate** team conservation sessions involving **125 people** to deliver **454 hours** of conservation activity

Protect

- Signed-up **140 candidates** to our **9 Manifesto pledges** in the local **election awareness** campaign, **40** of whom were elected
- Responded to **28 planning proposals**, objecting to **21** of them. Of those applications, 8 are pending, 3 were approved, 9 were refused and 1 was withdrawn.
- Responded to **3 local plan** consultations
- Produced **policy briefs** on **solar farms**, and the Government's new **grey belt** policy