

## GRANT APPLICATION 2018/19 – ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATION

<b>Priority Corporate Outcomes</b>	<p>To empower residents and the community at large to play a more active role in improving their lives, local communities and public services</p> <p>To develop more innovative ways of maintaining parks and green spaces, including through greater partnerships with community groups</p> <p>To support residents to live as healthily and independently as possible through increased physical activity</p>	
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>THAMES 21 LTD</b>	<b>ref</b> 367/G/ENV
<b>Address</b>	78-83 Upper Thames Street, EC4	
<b>Relevant policy, aims and objectives</b>		
<p>The Corporate Plan, 2015-20, signifies the council's commitment to maintaining Barnet as a place where people want to live and in which an active community can thrive and to developing new and effective partnerships to deliver high quality public services, having regard particularly to the significant reduction in government funding. This includes protecting and enhancing the natural environment, recognising that parks and green spaces are amongst the borough's biggest assets. Strategic objectives include empowering residents to take on more personal and community responsibility for keeping Barnet a successful borough; improving the local environment; and looking after their health and well-being through improvement in lifestyle.</p> <p>The Community Participation Strategy seeks to build a strong civic society by increasing the level of community activity and developing a stronger partnership between the community and the council. Volunteering encourages active citizenship and helps build social capital.</p>		
<b>Activities / proposal</b>		
<p>Thames 21 Ltd (T21) is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee formed in 2013 which engages people in practical volunteering activities to care for waterways across Greater London, protecting, maintaining and enhancing rivers and canals through the removal of litter, waste and debris and building sustainable relationships between urban communities and local waterways to effect measurable and lasting improvements, recognizing the impact that urban waterways can have on a community's way of life as well as being vital sanctuaries for wildlife.</p> <p>In 2015-16, 5,673 people volunteered at river clean-up events and a further 1,932 at river habitat enhancement projects. T21 now has 24 volunteer-led 'badged' groups across the region, extending from the non-tidal Thames in Berkshire in the west to Essex in the east. These involved 475 people removing 950 bags of rubbish at 84 events between May 2016 and June 2017, empowering local people to take ownership of their 'patch' in pursuit of strategic local authority plans linked to a European Union directive on water protection.</p> <p>In 2017, T21 ran nine events involving 189 volunteers on waterways in Barnet, co-ordinated as part of a development project funded by City Bridge Trust and including monthly activities focused on the Silk Stream in Burnt Oak. The work embraced vegetation management; litter removal; river invertebrate sampling; and educating residents about water quality.</p> <p>This application relates to a new project to remove 100 metres of redundant toe boarding, wooden revetments installed on river edges many years ago, from Dollis Brook at Brook Farm Open Space, and replace existing vegetation with native aquatic flora. To be carried out by volunteers using hand tools, the proposal will serve to re-profile the banks for the betterment of wildlife, creating new habitats for fish and macroinvertebrates; aesthetics; and water quality.</p>		

The project forms part of the Brent River Corridor Improvement Plan, a scheme being coordinated by the Brent Catchment Partnership, a consultative body hosted by T21 composed of stakeholder groups including the council, the Environment Agency (EA) and Thames Water, which aims to transform to a more natural condition up to ten kilometres of heavily modified river by 2021. It will extend over a six month-period and include a series of nature walks for volunteers to develop their interest and knowledge, plus accredited training, both to implement the work in question and to lead on future environmental activities in the locality themselves.

The Environment Commissioning Group's green spaces team endorses the value of T21's work and supports the project, especially as a potential catalyst for future community involvement in upgrading local green spaces and watercourses.

### Cost and financial need

Most of T21's work is delivered in relation to funding for specific projects, either commissioned work or short-term grants. Expenditure over a fifteen-month period in 2016/17 totalled £2,296,941, of which 98% was on frontline activities. Core staffing costs accounted for 35% of turnover. The charity's office space is gifted in kind by City of London Corporation. Funding derived from 76 sources, Thames Water Utilities, City Bridge Trust (CBT) and the EA accounting for £511,984 of total income of £2,311,209, in each case supporting a range of projects across the capital. Other funders included local authorities, charitable trusts and commercial enterprises. Net current assets at 30/6/2017 were £90,252, of which £80,446 were uncommitted reserves (38% of estimated expenditure in 2017/18).

T21's nine projects in Barnet last year were funded from a £141,533 London-wide development programme grant by CBT.

The cost of the project to remove the toe boarding and vegetation from Dollis Brook is shown as £14,839, of which £9,382 is staffing time to recruit and train volunteers and co-ordinate the work on two days a week over six months. The balance includes the provision of tools and materials; the reimbursement of volunteers' expenses; additional sustainability training; and management overheads. A grant of £4,947 is sought with a view to splitting the cost equally with the EA and from T21's share of the CBT development grant. The green spaces team will defray the cost of the removal of the boarding and other debris off-site, estimated to be £500.

The award recommended is based on a revised shortfall following a grant of £5,000 by the EA.

### Grant recommendation, type and conditions

£4,892 (from Edward Harvist Charity)

Start-up grant

One-off grant

#### Special conditions:

Payment of the award should be made subject to the receipt of a progress report after three months and an undertaking to provide an evaluation of the project upon its completion.

### Target grant outcomes

To galvanise the involvement of the community in protecting and improving Dollis Brook, Brook Farm Open Space and other green spaces in the borough.

**Date:** June 2018