

Committee:	Date:
West Ham Park	10 December 2018
Subject: Park Manager's Update	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Parks and Gardens	For Information
<p>Summary</p> <p>This report provides an update to Members of the West Ham Park Committee on management and operational activities at West Ham Park since July 2018.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the report 	

Main Report

Budget and Personnel

1. The budget for West Ham Park is currently in line with anticipated expenditure for this time of year. The Park has secured a £15,000 from the GLA's Greener City Fund Community Grant scheme, to contribute toward the cost of re-landscaping works at South Meadow (see paragraph 12). A further application with Tesco *Bags of Help* is currently live in stores and would further contribute towards costs associated with the project, with the remaining costs being met from local risk.
2. Staffing: In the office the part time Support Service Finance officer role was filled permanently in November. A Public Relations apprentice joined us in May and has been of great value in developing an Instagram account for the Park (see #westhamParke7) whilst increasing our presence on Twitter and assisting with the consultation for the playground project. She will be leaving the team in December as she has secured a permanent role elsewhere.

Community, Volunteering, Outreach and events

3. The Bringing Communities Together event led by Haf's academy took place in the Park on the 14th and 15th of July. Good weather and improved marketing resulted in higher attendance figures than last year with an estimate 4,500 people attending over the weekend. Feedback from attendees was positive. The Park Manager and event organisers are preparing a detailed feedback

report along with proposals for a repeat event in 2019 which will be brought to the February committee meeting.

4. Wild East Project: 10 trike sessions have been carried out during July and August in the Park with 226 participants being involved in various wildlife activities. The Wild East officer attended events in other locations in the area to raise awareness of the project and the Park, for example at a Fun Day in Priory Park (Green Street East Ward), holding a stall at Woodgrange Market and having pop-up information stands at Forest Gate and Manor Park Library's. New user groups now using the Park following previous introduction by the Wild East Officer include 'Together!' a disabled artist group who have used the Park for their Friday morning art club; and EKTA a project for elderly Asian residents in Newham (many of whom are frail and isolated) who held an afternoon picnic in the Park. Unfortunately, the Wild East officer left the team in October. This role is not being re-recruited in the short term (see note in paragraph 7 below). Other officers from the learning team at Hampstead and Epping Forest have supported key events at West Ham Park, for example 'Newham's Biggest leaf pile' and had a presence with the trike during Newham History week.
5. Wild Schools: Over the summer holiday period the Wild School officer has been planning sessions for the autumn, including the next steps with the delivery of the extension of the wildlife garden. A new wildflower meadow has been created with assistance from the Friends of West Ham Park. Multi-stemmed shrubs were planted in November and further mixed shrub planting added to increase the understorey for wildlife and create richer and more diverse habitats for the children to interact with.
6. The proposed art project with the Friends of West Ham Park, Wild School officer and local school was declined by Crossrail in its initial form however talks are ongoing and new relationships have been forged with their communications team who are now promoting the Park's activities and events through their twitter feed.
7. The short-term City Bridge Trust funding of the Department's Learning Programme ceases on 31 March 2019. The Learning programme delivers many of the Corporate priorities linked to education and learning, social mobility, health and wellbeing and delivers activities in some of London's more deprived communities. The long term funding for the Learning Programme is detailed further in the separate budget estimate report brought to this Committee.
8. Vegetable garden: During the Friends Group's AGM, a new volunteer came forward to re-form and coordinate the vegetable garden. Over the summer two other volunteers have come forward to be 'plot leaders'. Several gardening sessions have been held and an array of produce was cultivated over the summer and autumn. The Park Manager is working with the new coordinator over the winter period to plan for a full launch for the garden in the spring with new drop in sessions on week days and weekends to be scheduled for 2019.
9. The Friends of West Ham Park have continued to be active running a series of walks, talks and events in the Park. During the 'Bringing communities

together' event, the friends ran one of the community stands talking to attendees about the Park's history, specifically the Dr Fothergill connection with botanical drawing. Children were able to create their own botanical drawings from various craft materials. On a warm evening in August 75 local people joined a walk around the Park at dusk and witnessed a number of bats feeding over the wildflower meadows and in open grassland areas of the Park. A second bat walk was held on the 28th September with 65 attendees. The annual 'Leaf Pile' event was as popular as ever in November, with around 100 people attending along with the new Mayor of Newham Rokhsana Fiaz who spent time talking with friends and residents as well as leading the charge of children into the pile at the end of the event (see pictures below).

10. The friends event season for 2018 closes with Park in the Dark on the 7th December. January will see bird walks and Star gazing as well as maintenance sessions in the wildlife garden.

Operational activities

11. The hot and dry summer weather had several impacts on the Park's landscape. Some of the lawns in the ornamental garden and the cricket outfield have suffered from scorching and have not recovered. Maintenance work during the spring will endeavour to de-compact these areas and reseed them. Some trees within the Park showed severe signs of stress. A number of the larger plane trees defoliated in August, however it is thought that they have gone into an early hibernation. The condition of all trees is being monitored closely. The ornamental gardens contain a number of box topiaries and hedging which were affected by box blight and died. Alternatives to box are being used when replacing these specimens, such as Yew (for topiary) and Pittosporum (in the rose garden for featured larger spherical specimens).
12. South Meadow: As mentioned earlier the Park has been successful in being awarded grant funding from the GLA to help with landscaping costs for the south meadow area of the Park. The area suffers from antisocial behaviour, the new landscaping has been planned to design out some of the problem areas, whilst providing additional planting to enhance the area's biodiversity, whilst new trees will increase the tree canopy cover within the Park and help combat air pollution from the nearby road. A number of large evergreen Hollies are being removed and sight lines through the space will be opened up. A new path is being added to improve access.
13. Playground Refurbishment project: During the summer public consultation was held for three different designs for the playground project. Over 400 people were directly engaged with. The project was also picked up in local media and by local community and residents' groups. Results from the consultation voted in favour of extending the footprint of the space and including new planting. The removal of the paddling pool was supported but the highest votes were for the installation of a water play feature with hand pumps rather than a splash pad facility. A short presentation regarding the designs and outcome of the consultation will be presented during the committee meeting.
14. A review of sporting activity in the Park is the subject of a separate report on this agenda.

Property Matters

15. Nursery update: The Options Review Group comprised of Members and other key stakeholders met for the third time in May 2018. Substantial progress had been made by BDP, the lead consultant, bringing design work up to RIBA Stage 2. A Gateway 3b (preferred option) report was prepared with the intention of bringing this to the July committee cycle. However, as some of the options contained within the report would require substantial capital investment, the report was withdrawn so that an appropriate funding stream could be identified. Following a meeting between Chief Officers of relevant departments and the project team, it has been determined that the options report should be taken to further internal boards and Member committees. Using advice provided by these groups, the report will then be redrafted to include proposed procurement routes for each of the options identified, before returning to your committee.
16. Letting Terms of Residential Lodges: Please see non-public Appendix 1 (attached).
17. Claim for Adverse Possession: Please see non-public Appendix 1 (attached).
18. Restoration work of Margery and Linden Gates has taken place throughout the autumn. These two sets of gates date back to 1870's (however it would appear that the Linden gates were added slightly later) and are listed features. A paint analysis was carried out to establish the original colour of the gates. Over 11 layers of paint were evident, with the original colour being a dark bronzed green mixed from Prussian blue, carbon black, ochre and a small amount of lead white. The closest modern day RAL colour to this is RAL6020. Damaged areas of the gates have been repaired and RA:6020 used to restore them to their original colour.
19. The cricket nets within the Park will be resurfaced and new fencing added this autumn. Works will be complete in time for the start of the 2019 season.

Appendices

- Non-Public Appendix 1 – West Ham Park Manager's Update 10 December 2018: Non-Public Items

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