

Committee:	Date:
West Ham Park	08 April 2019
Subject: Park Manager's Update	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Parks and Gardens	For Information
<p style="text-align: center;">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 February 2019.</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. Expenditure for West Ham Park is anticipated to be slightly over budget for 2018/19 financial year. This is due to the implementation of the 'Sustainable Fleet and Plan Management Plan' and the inspections and repair costs associated with this.
2. The Park currently has a full complement of full-time staff. The City's overall number of apprentices is currently at capacity and therefore no further apprentice recruitment can take place. Once the opportunity arises the Park will look to replace its vacant apprentice roles.

Community, Volunteering, Outreach and events

3. Wild Schools: At a special meeting of RASC in March approval was given for additional funding to be added to the Open Spaces budget to fund the learning team going forward. This secures the role of the Wild Schools officer in West Ham Park. Over the spring the Park has been a hive of activity with soil science and stone age art classes taking place in the newly extended wildlife garden with local primary schools. This is in addition to regular forest school sessions with a local autism group and children from a Special Educational Needs class.
4. The Friends of West Ham Park applied to the City for £11,927 of funding through the 'Enjoying green spaces and the natural environment' grant fund, to improve facilities in the vegetable garden. They were successful in their bid

to add a new shed/volunteer cabin, three additional raised beds and a fruit cage. The new additions will increase their capacity to grow fruit and vegetables. The group operate regular sessions on Tuesdays and 'pop-up' sessions at weekends and are planning several events throughout 2019 to raise awareness of the garden, healthy eating and growing your own food. The Friends are also planning to hold another exhibition in the gardens for Open Garden Squares weekend in June. The exhibition will focus on the history of the Park, Dr John Fothergill and how his plant collections are reflected in the displays currently seen in the Park.

Operational activities

5. Spring has been productive in the Park and ornamental gardens. In the ornamental gardens the old New Zealand bed has been removed, soil improved and replanted with American native plants. Dr John Fothergill, the horticulturalist who once lived in Ham House sent ships to America in search of new and unusual species. The team have been working with a student from Capel Manor college to search records and ascertain what species were brought back to the Park and what species could be sourced to grow in the garden today. A number were found and will be included in the gardens design.
6. The Park keepers have been busy implementing the remainder of the south meadow project. The new path and steps are almost completed, with the new area expected to be open to the public in early April. Cricket pitch and grass renovation work has also been taking place across the Park to repair areas that were scorched during last year's prolonged hot and dry summer.
7. Playground Refurbishment project: Detailed design work has continued since Projects Sub-Committee gave its approval for the project in February. Draft applications to external funders are being prepared along with documents for planning approval.
8. Cricket: Capital Kids Cricket run the West Ham Park and Stratford Junior cricket team. They were also successful in their application to the 'Enjoying green spaces and the natural environment' grant fund. They will be delivering programmes to get women and girls more physically fit and encourage them to engage with the Park. The Park Manager is working closely with them to support the events, the first of which will take place on Mother's Day and includes a soft ball cricket competition, fun run, walk and aerobics classes happening in the Park.

Property Matters

9. Claim for Adverse Possession: At the time of writing, a third court hearing has been scheduled for the afternoon of Wednesday 27 March 2019. The Superintendent will provide a verbal update to Committee at the April meeting.

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