

Committee:	Date:
West Ham Park	9 December 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 October 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 in line with that expected at this time of year. The Park currently has a full complement of full-time staff.

Community, Volunteering, Outreach and events

2. Wild Schools: Wild Schools in West Ham Park has been progressing well with 1188 students taught in the Park since the start of term in September. The aboriginal art sessions were very well received by staff and students from St Helens Primary School. Year 3 from Park Primary also successfully constructed their own versions of Caesars 'Rhine Bridges', spanning two metres using only string and two lengths of stick. The Wild Schools' officer has also been busy running Forest School sessions for Ravenscroft school, where they cooked over the fire and planted bulbs in the Wildlife Gardens. Finally, the team successfully trialled a new stone age session where students used turmeric, red cabbage and charcoal pigments to colour sticks after they had scraped off the bark using a stone age flint tool. As the number of school sessions reduces in December, the team are planning to concentrate on some outdoor education training for our Wild Schools' volunteers and work to improve habitats in West Ham Park wildlife gardens.

Figure 1: Wild school sessions



3. The Friends of West Ham Park: Over 200 people attended this year's leaf pile event in the Park. The event, organised and run by the Friends, assists with leaf clearance in the Park, whilst connecting young and old with nature. The Friends group also completed a wildlife garden maintenance session, carrying out key autumn maintenance tasks.
4. Future Friends' events happening in the Park over the coming months are listed below.
 - a. Park in the Dark and stargazing – 6th December 5 – 7pm
 - b. Wildlife garden maintenance – 14th and 15th December 12 – 3pm
 - c. Vegetable garden sessions – Tuesdays 2 – 4pm
 - d. Health Walk – every Wednesday 11am – 12 noon
5. In September on City Giving Day colleagues from across the City Corporation came to volunteer in the Park. Working with the Wild Schools' officer the team created dead wood habitats, topped up the dead hedge with additional material and topped up the central path with wood chip. Corporate volunteers from Brit insurance visited the Park in October and spent the day clearing and mulching tree pits in the orchard.

Operational activities

6. Management plan review: In November a workshop was held to review the Park's management plan. Attendees included Friends of the Park, Tennis coaches, members of our adult cricket team and colleagues from the learning team. The groups considered the Park's recent achievements and discussed what they felt were the priorities going forward. A draft document is being prepared for wider consultation, before it comes to this Committee in 2020 for final sign off.
7. Ornamental gardens: Planting of the top terrace of the rose garden has been completed with a mixed herbaceous scheme that echoes planting in neighbouring beds.
8. Parkland – Re-sculpting of the mounds is progressing well despite the rain. Two mounds have been completed. 17 Corporate volunteers helped plant 30,000 bulbs and wildflower seeds. The remaining work will be completed over the winter months.

9. Playground Project – The refurbishment project has been submitted as one of the Open Spaces Department's top priorities in the new annual bidding process to try to secure Capital funding. An application to the London Marathon Charitable Trust for additional funding has also been submitted.
10. Sports: A full review of this year's sporting activity is presented in a separate report.
11. Tree Management database. The Park Manager has been working with the City Gardens Manager to identify a new provider for tree information in the Square Mile and at the Park. Tenders have been assessed and a preferred supplier identified. The new system will be operational by March 2020.

Property Matters

12. Nursery project: The proposals for the future of the nursery site have been presented and approved by the following committees:
 - a. Projects Sub Committee - 16th October
 - b. Corporate Asset Sub-Committee – 7th November
13. The Park Manager has been working with Head of Corporate Development Management in the City Surveyor's team to appoint a Senior Development Manager to support the project going forward. Colleagues from the City Solicitor's team have contacted the Charity Commission regarding the proposed scheme and are currently awaiting their response.

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