

Hampstead Heath Swimming Review

January - March 2020

HEATH VISION

The Heath contributes immensely to our mental, emotional and physical health and well-being, providing free access to roam in the outdoors, to pause and observe, to play, to explore, discover and learn about the natural world.

Connection with the Heath is life-enhancing and our lives are healthier and more active with opportunities for walking, informal recreation, active pursuits, swimming and sports.

KEY ISSUES

In the light of exceptional summer seasons in 2018 and 2019, a fatality at the Highgate Men's Bathing Pond in June 2019, together with multiple incidents of physical and verbal abuse against City Corporation employees, the City Corporation has commenced the first large scale Swimming Review since 2005. The review has focused on:

- Taking account of the Health and Safety Executive advice (received 8 October 2019).
- Fulfilling our responsibilities in relation to our Duty of Care towards visitors, Lifeguards and wider Heath Staff.
- Responding to the increasing demand for cold water swimming on the Heath. Swimming visits at the Bathing Ponds are estimated to have increased by over 300,000 since 2010/11, to over 655,000 visits per year.
- Ensuring the swimming facilities are inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors.
- Establishing a clear and fair charging structure that is consistent with the subsidies for recreation and sport across the Heath to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the swimming facilities.

THE PROCESS

This paper is the latest in a series of documents that have been prepared as part of a wider process of engaging with stakeholders.

The review to date has comprised of detailed discussions with the Lifeguards and engagement with the Hampstead Heath Swimming Associations at the Swimming Forum on the 14 January 2020 (see Appendix 1). Following this a series of discussions have been held with the Swimming Associations to collaborate in developing ideas and options.

The Members of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee discussed the objectives of the Swimming Review at their meeting on the 27 January 2020.

On the 4 February 2020 the City Corporation presented a series of draft options and proposals (Appendix 2) to the Swimming Forum and facilitated a further discussion (Appendix 3).

Taking account of the feedback from the Swimming Forum, this paper sets out the City Corporation's position for discussion with the Swimming Forum on the 11 February 2020.

The Hampstead Heath Sports Advisory Forum will have the opportunity to consider this position at their meeting on the 24 February 2020.

WHAT WE HAVE HEARD DURING THE DISCUSSIONS

FEEDBACK FROM THE SWIMMING FORUM	THE CITY CORPORATION RESPONSES
Don't rush	<p>The Hampstead Heath Swimming Forum commenced a review the 2019 summer season at their meeting on the 1 October 2019. It was agreed that the review would continue once the outcome of the investigations by the Health and Safety Executive and Coroner into the fatality at the Highgate Men's Pond on the 1 June 2019 were completed.</p> <p>The Health and Safety Executive concluded their investigations and provided written advice to the City Corporation on the 8 October 2019.</p> <p>The Coroners Court hearing was completed on the 31 October 2019.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Hampstead Heath Management Committee chaired the Swimming Review on the 7 January 2020.</p> <p>Engagement with the Lifeguards, the Swimming Forum and the Swimming Associations has enabled open discussions on the key issues.</p> <p>To take account of the Health and Safety Executive advice, additional safety control measures need to be implemented ahead of the 2020 Summer Swimming Season, which commences on 2 May.</p>
Don't gold-plate	<p>We understand this position, however, the City Corporation has a duty of care towards visitors, Lifeguards and the wider staff working across the Heath. The City Corporation will continue to use Risk Assessment to assess the risks in terms of likelihood and impact. Work has started reviewing the Risk Assessments and Safe Systems of Work. A roving Lifeguard is being trialled to find a cost-effective model for the winter months.</p>
Don't make payments compulsory	<p>Self-policing charges (£2 adults, £1 concession) were introduced at the Bathing Ponds in 2005. The charges were expected to generate income of £80,000 in the first year (2005/06). Income for 2018/19 was £67,000, despite the number of visits increasing on an annual basis. Taking account of the additional expenditure for the 2020/21 season without increasing income the costs are likely to rise to £994,000. This cannot be funded from the Heath's Local Risk Budget without having a detrimental impact on the conservation and protection of the Heath.</p>

	<p>Whilst fundraising has been suggested, the scale and pace required gives some uncertainty in relation to the viability of this model.</p>
<p>Don't save costs by reducing opening hours</p>	<p>Maintaining the current level of provision is being prioritised, however this will be retained as an option.</p>
<p>Don't impinge on the unique natural environment</p>	<p>We agree and whilst measures need to be taken to secure the perimeters of the Bathing Ponds, we intend to use native hedging, dead-hedging, aquatic planting and fencing in-keeping with the materials used across the Heath.</p>
<p>Don't exclude people</p>	<p>An Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the Committee reporting process. We are also developing opportunities to make the facilities more accessible to a diverse range of visitors.</p> <p>In conjunction with the Swimming Associations the City Corporation welcomes the opportunity to consider local 'hardship' funds to ensure that Heath swimming facilities are financially inclusive.</p>
<p>Do make it easier for people to pay</p>	<p>The City Corporation acknowledges your feedback about signage and communications. The priority is to implement a clear and fair system that is based around contactless payment and the online purchase of season tickets. The online season tickets were launched in April 2019 and some further improvements are required to streamline the process. You have suggested that a cash payment box should be maintained initially as visitors adjust to contactless payments or purchase season tickets.</p> <p>New signs at the Bathing Ponds were discussed with the Swimming Forum in 2018 and installed in 2019.</p>
<p>Do aim for consistency</p>	<p>Currently, the Bathing Ponds are not consistent with the other leisure and sports facilities across the Heath. There is an opportunity to extend the offer of free swimming between 7.30-9.00 for 60+ and under 16's to the Bathing Ponds.</p>
<p>Do highlight the excellent value</p>	<p>The season tickets are heavily subsidised and offer value for money. For visitors who purchase an annual Adult Bathing Ponds season ticket at £125 and swim three times per week this represents a cost of only 80p per swim. The equivalent cost is 42p for Concessions.</p>
<p>Do make the case for the City of London Corporation's role as custodians of Hampstead Heath.</p>	<p>We acknowledge the feedback received. We will look for additional opportunities to clarify the role the City Corporation as custodians of Hampstead Heath.</p>

<p>Do make the case for the Hampstead Heath Charitable Trust and that payments and donations all contribute towards the cost of providing and maintaining the swimming facilities.</p>	<p>We acknowledge the feedback received and will update our communications accordingly.</p>
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There is agreement on many things; however, we recognise there are opportunities to improve the accuracy of our data. Currently, our data, customer visits and bather numbers do not correlate (e.g. multiple beam breaks could be one person, and one beam break could be a non-swimmer. Also, a season ticket holder may not visit for a long period) and therefore we do not have reliable data to work on cost/subsidies.

Importantly, there is a shared understanding in relation to the Health and Safety Executive advice, the City Corporation's Duty of Care and the primary role of Lifeguards being to ensure bather safety, and not facility and crowd management. Consequently, the City Corporation is updating the Swimming Facilities Risk Assessments and Safe Systems of Work to reflect the learning from the Swimming Review and the Health and Safety Executive advice.

ACTIONS BEING PROGRESSED BY THE CITY CORPORATION

1. Introducing a third Lifeguard at each facility to allow for breaks, rotation of duties and to maintain alertness. A roving Lifeguard is currently being trialled, to provide support at both the Men's and Ladies' Ponds.
2. The current practice of manual head counting by the Lifeguards is no longer fit for purpose. A new system needs to be investigated to accurately monitor both the bathing and the facility load at the Bathing Ponds.
3. The Royal Life Saving Society Open Water Training with external validation for the Lifeguards and the Fixed Term Contract Lifeguards has commenced.
4. A programme of regular closures at all the swimming facilities to enable Lifeguard Team training and continual professional development will be introduced in consultation with the Swimming Associations.
5. New additional safety equipment is being procured for the 2020 season.
6. Install perimeter hedging, planting and chestnut pale fencing to reduced unauthorised access into the Bathing Ponds.
7. Trial an additional temporary perimeter fence at the Lido (June-August) to prevent unauthorised access over the boundary walls.
8. Deployment of additional Ranger staff to aid the management of visitors and operation of the swimming facilities.
9. Investigate options to increase the level of facility cleaning during busy periods.

10. Install technology to record anonymous data on visitor numbers, bather and facility loading, to assist staff in managing safety and demand, especially on busy days.
11. Promote and develop the role of Heath Hands volunteers with conservation projects associated with the Bathing Ponds.
12. Seek to work with each of the Swimming Associations and the Lifeguarding Team to establish Working Groups to collaborate on finding solutions to operational and access issues at each facility.
13. Update the Swimming Facility Risk Assessments and Safe Systems of Work to reflect the additional safety control measures.
14. Continue to work with each Swimming Association to see where fundraising opportunities can be facilitated.

REVENUE COSTS

The City Corporation is working with an independent Health and Safety Consultant to find the best possible and most practical ways to mitigate the inherent risks in a way that is cost effective and pragmatic.

Nevertheless, there are going to be substantial extra costs. The extra revenue costs to implement the additional control measures are estimated to be £300,000 - £330,000 as well as one off revenue cost of £70,000 towards new signs, equipment, technology and materials.

In addition, a significant capital investment is required to re-provision the electrical supply at the Mixed Pond, change the entrance at the Men's Pond and ensure the facilities are accessible.

Current Operating Model	Bathing Ponds	Lido	Total
Expenditure 2018/19	£747,000	£521,000	£1,268,000
Income 2018/19	£67,000	£377,000	£444,000
Subsidy 2018/19	£680,000	£144,000	£824,000

New Operating Model	Bathing Ponds	Lido	Total
Expenditure 2018/19	£747,000	£521,000	£1,268,000
Estimated Additional Expenditure 2020/21	£314,000	£61,000	£375,000
Total Expenditure	£1,061,000	£582,000	£1,643,000
Income 2018/19	£67,000	£377,000	£444,000
Income 2020/21	*	+	
Estimated Subsidy 2020/21	£994,000	£205,000	£1,199,000

* This will be modelled from May 2020 based on actual income

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PAYMENT FOR USE OF THE FACILITIES

Charges for the Bathing Ponds were introduced in 2005 at a rate of £2 for an adult swim and £1 for concessions.

There are differing views amongst swimmers about the charges. There are swimmers who pay the entry charges; there are swimmers who would be happy to pay the entry charges if it were made easier for them; and there are those who do not recognise the entry charges.

The City Corporation is very clear there are substantial cost to running all the swimming facilities. These include: the cost of providing Lifeguards, training, maintaining the changing facilities, maintaining water quality and the natural surroundings. The following position has been developed to address the long-term funding of the ponds in light of growing demand and to ensure their sustainability for current and future generations to enjoy.

PROPOSED POSITION – CHARGES

The following proposed position has been prepared for consideration by the Swimming Forum and Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee.

The introduction of fully compliant entry payment system at the Bathing Ponds applied from 2 May 2020. Contactless Payment Points will be introduced at the Bathing Ponds together with improved signage and communication. A cash payment option will be maintained for the 2020/21 season.

PROPOSED POSTION – BATHING POND FEES

Recognising that Bathing Pond fees have been held since they were introduced in 2005 and in response to the key safety issues discussed as part of the Swimming Review the following fees are proposed for the 2020/21 swimming season:

- Freeze the cost of all the season tickets for the 2020/21 season.
- Adult day tickets fees are benchmarked against other similar facilities in London. Prices range from £2 at Hampstead Heath to £10 at the West Reservoir Centre.
- Introduce free swimming between 7.30-9.00 for 60+ and under 16's.
- Concessionary rates will be reviewed and brought in line with other fees and charges across Hampstead Heath, which are based on a 40% discount of the adult rate. Concessionary rates apply to:
 - Freedom Pass
 - Disabled Card
 - Job Seekers Allowance
 - Student
 - Under 16's
- In conjunction with the Swimming Associations the City Corporation welcomes the opportunity to consider local 'hardship' funds to ensure that Heath swimming facilities are financially inclusive.
- The City Corporation will then continue to benchmark and review the fees as part of the annual cycle that commences each Autumn. This process involves consulting Stakeholders including the Swimming Forum, Sports Advisory Forum and the

Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee. The Hampstead Heath Management Committee will then determine the fees and the level of subsidy provided to swimming to ensure this aligns with the Heath's charitable objectives and the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018 -2028 outcomes.

PROPOSED POSTION – LIDO FEES

The Lido Adult and Concession day tickets prices have been held since April 2017. The Lido swimming season tickets prices have been held since April 2018.

- Freeze the cost of all the swimming season tickets for the 2020/21 season.
- Freeze the cost of all swimming day tickets for the 2020/21 season.
- Maintain free swimming between 7.30-9.00 for 60+ and under 16's.
- Concessionary rates will continue to apply to:
 - Freedom Pass
 - Disabled Card
 - Job Seekers Allowance
 - Student
 - Under 16's
- The City Corporation will then benchmark and review the fees as part of the annual cycle that commences each Autumn. This process involves consulting Stakeholders including the Swimming Forum, Sports Advisory Forum and the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee. The Hampstead Heath Management Committee will then determine the fees and the level of subsidy provided to swimming to ensure this aligns with the Heath's charitable objectives and the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018 -2028 outcomes.

NEXT STEPS

The City Corporation acknowledges the importance and the necessary pace of the Swimming Review and values and appreciates the contributions of the Lifeguards, Swimming Associations and the Swimming Forum throughout the process. Work is underway to review the Swimming Facilities Risk Assessments and Safe Systems of Work to implement additional control measures to address the issues discussed as part of the review.

Taking account of the feedback from the engagement the Superintendent will prepare a report for the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee seeking their views and comments on outcomes of the Swimming Review. The Consultative Committee Report will be published on the 28 February 2020, the Superintendent will forward the report to members of the Swimming Forum.

9 March 2020, Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee will meet to discuss the Report and make representations to the Hampstead Heath Management Committee. The Swimming Associations Chairs/ Co-Chairs or their nominated representatives will be invited by the Chairman to present the views of their Associations at the commencement of the meeting.

11 March 2020, Hampstead Heath Management Committee will meet to discuss the proposals and, taking account of the representations from the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee, decide on the recommendations.

The Superintendent will develop an implementation plan for the summer season.

Establish Working Groups to develop plans for longer term projects i.e. Men's Pond access, rear gate at the Ladies' Pond, reviewing the configuration at the Mixed Pond.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Notes from the Swimming Forum 14 January 2020

Appendix 2 – Hampstead Heath Swimming Review, January 2020 - Draft Options and Proposals.

Appendix 3 – Notes from the Swimming Forum 4 February 2020



Swimming Facilities Forum
Tuesday 14 January 2020, 6pm
Parliament Hill Meeting Room

Karina Dostalova (Chair)	KD	Chairman, Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee, CoLC
Anne Fairweather	AF	Deputy Chair, Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee, CoLC
Bob Warnock	BW	Superintendent, Hampstead Heath, CoLC
Colin Buttery	CB	Director of Open Spaces, CoLC
Tim Johns	TJ	Facilitator, Orator Consulting
Tanya Gagin	TG	Health & Safety Consultant, Human Applications
Eleanor Kennedy	EK	Parliament Hill Lido User Group
Chris Piesold	CP	Highgate Men's Pond Association
Kasia Sikora	KS	Mixed Pond Association
Margaret Dickinson	MD	Mixed Pond Association
Nicky Mayhew	NM	Kenwood Ladies' Pond Association
Ruth Halgarten	RH	Kenwood Ladies' Pond Association
Marc Hutchinson	MH	Winter Swimming Club
Robert Sutherland-Smith	RSS	United Swimming Association
Chris Ruocco	CR	Highgate Lifebuoys
Declan Gallagher	DG	Operational Services Manager, CoLC
Paul Maskell	PM	Leisure and Events Manager, CoLC
Paul Jeal	PJ	Senior Swimming Facilities Supervisor, CoLC
Jennifer Wood	JW	Communications Officer, CoLC
Nicola Hurley	NH	Duty Lifeguard Team Leader, CoLC
Mike Thompson	MT	Duty Lifeguard Team Leader, CoLC
Mick Annegarn	MA	Duty Lifeguard Team Leader, CoLC
Tony May	TM	Duty Lifeguard, CoLC
Steve O'Connell	SOC	Duty Lifeguard, CoLC
Kate Radusin (notes)	KR	PA to Superintendent, CoLC

Public Gallery

Geoff Goss – Highgate Men's Pond Association

1.	Apologies
	Mike Sands.
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting (1.10.19)
	Members to email any comments or corrections.
3.	Matters Arising
	N/A
4.	Facilitated Discussion to learn lessons from 2019 & prepare for the 2020 season
	KD welcomed the Members of the Swim Forum and introduced the Lifeguards, Tim Johns and Tanya Gagin.

KD noted a change in the meeting format and explained the item 4 would be the first item discussed and invited representatives to email any additional comments in relation to items 6 & 7 to the Superintendent.

KD explained the approach we were taking to review the Hampstead Heath Swimming Facilities. A collaborative process would be taken to co-design proposals to secure the long-term sustainability of the swimming facilities. The Superintendent noted that it was critical to learn from the heat wave in 2018 and the incidents that occurred in summer 2019, HSE Advice following the fatality at the Highgate Men's Bathing Pond and the increasing demand for cold water swimming on Hampstead Heath.

TJ then led a facilitated conversation to identify the key issues that will need addressing as part of the review.

The review will address the following priorities:

Priorities

1. Take account of the HSE Advise and review the risk assessments and operating procedures following the fatality at the Highgate Men's Bathing Pond.
2. Fulfilling our responsibilities in relation to our Duty of Care towards visitors, lifeguards and wider Heath staff.
3. Recognising and responding to the increasing demand for cold water swimming on the Heath.
4. Securing the long-term sustainability of the facilities (environmental/economic/social).

Summary of the points raised and discussed during the facilitated session

1. City of London Corporation (COLC) to implement the Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) 'Open Water' training/certification for the Duty Lifeguards and Fixed Term Contract Lifeguards and to maintain the regular training programme that includes first aid; defibrillator; personal safety conflict management; safeguarding and gender awareness etc.
2. The introduction of a regular programme of all facility closures to allow Lifeguards to undertake training as a team. Two closures to take place during the summer season.
3. Recruitment of Fixed Term Contract Lifeguards and Rangers to support the Duty Lifeguards.
4. The primary role of the Lifeguards watching the water was acknowledged. Further resources are necessary to provide support to the Lifeguards in relation to crowd control and resolving conflicts.
5. Purchase of additional rescue equipment tailored to each facility. E.g. rescue kayaks and paddle boards.
6. Programme of works to manage and secure the perimeters of the swimming facilities.
7. Undertake a review of the Hampstead Heath Swimming Regulations in relation to the age of children using the Ponds, smoking, alcohol, photography, mobile phones, etc.

8. In conjunction with the Swim Forum undertake a review the signage at the Bathing Ponds in relation to the hazards for swimmers, the role of the Lifeguards and providing information about the Hampstead Heath charitable objectives.
9. In conjunction with the Highgate Men's Bathing Pond develop the project to relocate the entrance of the facility and the associated works to provide a more accessible facility.
10. In conjunction with the Kenwood Ladies' Pond Association review the operation of the rear gate, as well as increasing the height of the gate and fencing while being in keeping with the natural surroundings.
11. In conjunction with the Mixed Pond Association review the layout and access arrangements for the facility.
12. Trialling technology to count the number of bathers in the three Bathing Ponds to assist Lifeguards in managing the bathing Load and the ratio of Lifeguards.
13. Opportunities to collect, analyse and share anonymous visitor data to support the management of the facilities.
14. Utilising the new COLC website swimming pages to provide up to date information on the swimming facilities and access to social media feeds.
15. Discuss with the Swimming Associations the opportunity to offer additional incentives to purchase season tickets. For example, the early morning swims being for season ticket holders only and the public swimming sessions commencing at 10am.
16. Install contactless payment options across the swimming facilities.
17. Consider moving towards a cashless payment system. A suggestion to retain the donation posts was also raised to provide an option for visitors without cards or phones.
18. Explore options to provide lockers/baskets/pigeonholes to facilitate the storage of phones, bank cards smart watches etc.
19. At this point Tim Johns asked the Swimming Representatives if they had sufficient background and information to discuss the issues that had been raised so far in the discussion with their respective Associations?
 - Members queried, if there were specific proposals or changes that the City Corporation wished to seek feedback on?
 - Members sought clarification of the level of savings required, is the aspiration to be cost neutral? Can payments be hypothecated to reassure swimmers that the income is being reinvested in the facilities?
 - A Member asked that an additional outcome of the review should focus on inclusivity.
 - A Member indicated that the timescale was very tight to undertake these important discussions.
 - A question was taken from the public gallery on the COLC powers to charge for access to the ponds and to enclose them.
 - The Superintendent confirmed that charges for swimming at the Bathing Ponds, were introduced in 2005. However, as a "self-policing" charge this approach has not generated the level of income needed to sustain the swimming facilities.
 - A question was received from the public gallery in relation to the opportunities for fund raising to raise money for the additional resources required.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The Chairman responded that the COLC would welcome suggestions how fundraising could be used to generate funds to support the facilities. •A Member requested a breakdown of the additional costs incurred during the extreme weather events in 2019. •A Member suggested that the COLC has a role to promote further opportunities for outdoor swimming across London. •A Member asked for clarification on the proposed changes to the layout of the entrance to the Highgate Men's Bathing Pond. The Superintendent confirmed this project was progressing and is critical to the safe operation of the Pond. •A Member queried the next steps in relation to further discussions on the 4 and 11 February. •The Superintendent confirmed that before the meeting on the 4 February, the COLC will seek to engage with each of the Swimming Associations to develop a series of proposals. To assist this process and taking account of the discussions the COLC will develop some embryonic options to guide further discussions with the Swimming Associations. The meeting on the 4 February will offer an opportunity to provide feedback and discuss the emerging proposals. The meeting on the 11 February will provide the opportunity to further collectively develop the proposals. <p>The Chairman thanked Members for their time and participation and welcomed the opportunity to engage in further discussions ahead of the next meeting.</p>
5.	Next Steps in relation to the review of the Hampstead Heath Swimming Facilities
	Covered under item 4.
6.	2020/21 Season Swimming Times
	Covered under item 4.
7.	Update on swimming facilities
7a.	Lido
	Members to email any additional comments.
7b.	Men's Pond
	Members to email any additional comments.
7c.	Ladies' Pond
	Members to email any additional comments.
7d.	Mixed Bathing Pond
	Members to email any additional comments.
8.	AOB
	N/A
9.	Date of the next meetings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 4 February 2020, 6pm at Parliament Hill meeting room • Tuesday 11 February 2020, 6pm at Parliament Hill meeting room

Hampstead Heath Swimming Review – January 2020

VISION

The Heath contributes immensely to our mental, emotional and physical health and well-being, providing free access to roam in the outdoors, to pause and observe, to play, to explore, discover and learn about the natural world.

Connection with the Heath is life-enhancing and our lives are healthier and more active with opportunities for walking, informal recreation, active pursuits, swimming and sports.

SWIMMING ON THE HEATH

The Heath's Bathing Ponds were originally created in the 17th and 18th Centuries as reservoirs to meet London's growing demand for water. Over time some were repurposed for swimming.

Parliament Hill Fields Lido was opened on 20 August 1938. At a cost of £34,000, it was the most ambitious and expensive of the thirteen Lidos built on parkland sites by the London County Council between the wars¹.

Swimming charges for the Bathing Ponds were agreed by the Hampstead Heath Management Committee on 21 February 2005. The charges were implemented across the Bathing Ponds on 15 June 2005. Payment for access to the Bathing Ponds has continued since 2005 via a 'self-policed' collection charge, along with season tickets and some users prefer to make donations.

Subsidised season tickets and concessions will continue, and the City of London Corporation remains committed to subsidising swimming on Hampstead Heath.

INTRODUCTION TO THE REVIEW

Accident investigations together with multiple incidents of physical and verbal abuse against City Corporation employees during summer 2019, led to a decision to carry out the first large scale swimming review since 2005.

In the light of the exceptional 2018 and 2019 summer seasons and a fatality at the Highgate Men's Bathing Pond in June 2019, the City Corporation decided to conduct a full review of the facilities.

The objective of the Swimming Review is to secure the long-term sustainability of the Hampstead Heath swimming facilities:

- Taking account of the 8th October 2019 Health and Safety Executive advice.
- Fulfilling our responsibilities in relation to our Duty of Care towards visitors, Lifeguards and wider Heath Staff.
- Responding to the increasing demand for cold water swimming on the Heath.
- Ensuring the swimming facilities are inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors.
- Establishing a clear and fair charging structure that is consistent with the subsidies for recreation and sport across the Heath to ensure the financial sustainability of the swimming facilities.

THE PROCESS OF THE REVIEW

- The Hampstead Heath Swimming Forum undertook a review the 2019 summer season at their meeting on the 1 October 2019. It was agreed that the review would continue once the outcome of the investigations by the Health and Safety Executive and Coroner into the fatality at the Highgate Men's Pond on the 1st June 2019 were completed.
- The Health and Safety Executive concluded their investigations and provided written advice to the City Corporation on the 8th October 2019, (Appendix 1).
- The Coroners Court hearing was completed on the 31st October 2019.
- The Chairman of the Hampstead Heath Management Committee launched the Swimming Review on the 7 January 2020.
- Members of the Management Committee and Corporation Officers contacted the Local Councillors and Members of Parliament to set out the objectives of the Swimming Review and the timescale.
- The City Corporation Lifeguards have participated in a series of facilitated workshops as part of the review process.
- 14 January 2020 the Swimming Forum participated in a facilitated discussion to establish a shared understanding of the issues that the review would need to address. The City Corporation has shared financial information, visitor data (Appendix 2) and a wider Heath Dashboard (Appendix 3) with the Swimming Associations to support the review.
- Following the Swimming Forum on the 14 January 2020 further conversations have been held with representatives from the Kenwood Ladies' Pond Association (KLPA), Highgate Men's Pond Association (HMPA), United Swimmers Association (USA), Highgate Lifebuoys (HL), Mixed Pond Association (MPA), Hampstead Heath Winter Swimming Club (HHWSC) and Parliament Hill Lido User Group (PHLUG).
- The Heath swimming facilities are being benchmarked against similar organisations and facilities.
- A further meeting of the Swimming Forum is scheduled for the 4 February 2020. The purpose of this meeting is to recap and update on the discussions that have taken place since the 14 January 2020 and to discuss the proposals that have emerged following the discussions with the Lifeguards and Swimming Associations.
- Between the 5 -10 February 2020, Swimming Associations will be asked to consider and discuss the draft proposals.
- At the Swimming Forum meeting on 11 February 2020 the proposals will be developed to form recommendations to be considered by the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee on 9 March 2020.
- 9 March 2020, Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee meet to discuss the proposals and make representations to the Hampstead Heath Management Committee.
- 11 March 2020, Hampstead Heath Management Committee meet to discuss the proposals and, taking account of the representations from the Consultative Committee, decide on the recommendations.

- A meeting with the Swimming Forum (date TBA) to discuss the implementation of the recommendations.
- 2 May 2020, commencement of the 2020 summer swimming season.

FINANCIAL DATA AND DASHBOARD

At the request of the Swimming Forum, financial data was produced showing income, expenditure, and visitor counts at each facility for 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19. (Appendix 2).

The Corporation also produced a Hampstead Heath Dashboard (Appendix 3) covering a wide range of data sets including visitor numbers, season ticket sales, weather analysis, and Hampstead Heath pedestrian counts.

The data shows that since 2010/11 swimming visits have increased from 296,000 to over 655,000 per year at the Bathing Ponds. This huge increase reflects a national trend of increased popularity in cold water swimming. For instance, Sporting England's *Active Lives* survey found that the number of people who regularly swim outdoors almost doubled between November 2017 and 2018. The same survey found that 7.5million people went outdoor swimming in the past year. Additionally, the Outdoor Swimming Society's membership has grown rapidly in recent years and now numbers 80,000.

<https://www.sportengland.org/research/active-lives-survey/>

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE ADVICE

Following a fatality on the 1st June 2019 at the Highgate Men's Bathing Pond, the Health and Safety Executive undertook an investigation including interviews with the Lifeguards on duty. In a letter of 2nd October 2019, the HM Inspector of Health and Safety concluded that he would not be pursuing further enquiries. However, he provided a supplementary letter dated 8th October 2019 providing some points of advice concerning matters found during the course of the enquiries.

The Inspector set out four specific areas for review:

- Lifeguard breaks and alertness
- Maximum bather loading
- Minimum Lifeguard Numbers
- Lifeguard Training

The full contents of the letter were shared with the Chairs and Co-Chairs of the Swimming Associations. (Appendix 1).

The City Corporation engaged an independent Health and Safety Consultant to review the current situation at the Lido and Bathing Ponds and to provide health and safety advice throughout the Swimming Review.

THE SWIMMING REVIEW – OPTIONS AND PROPOSALS

- 1. LIFEGUARD BREAKS AND ALERTNESS**
- 2. MAXIMUM BATHER LOADING**
- 3. MINIMUM LIFEGUARD NUMBERS**
- 4. LIFEGUARD TRAINING**
- 5. REVIEW OF CHARGES**
- 6. CHARGING OPTIONS**
- 7. FACILITY MANAGEMENT**
- 8. SITE SPECIFIC ISSUES**
- 9. COMMUNICATIONS**
- 10. NEXT STEPS**

1. LIFEGUARD BREAKS AND ALERTNESS

The City Corporation has reviewed the role of the Lifeguards. The Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS) guidance is to maintain a good level of alertness and supervision which will need to be reflected in the Risk Assessments and Safe Systems of Work. In effect, this means that pondside/poolside working time should be no longer than 60 minutes or in exceptional circumstances 90 minutes.

The impact of this safety control is a requirement for three Lifeguards at each facility during all opening hours. Having an additional Lifeguard will ensure that there can be rotation and breaks.

Options to comply with RLSS guidelines:

1a. Reduce opening hours to deploy the existing Lifeguard numbers to implement the new working arrangements.

Create a new rota based on minimum strength of three Lifeguards per facility. Consult existing employees on proposed new working arrangements.

1b. Volunteer Lifeguards

Supplement the team with fully qualified volunteers deployed to support the Lifeguards at the Mixed Pond, Highgate Men's Bathing Pond and Kenwood Ladies' Bathing Ponds. The Bathing Ponds would only be able to open once three qualified Lifeguards were on station.

The volunteer Lifeguards would need to be habituated and would be provided with full training in cold, opaque water techniques, and familiarisation with equipment. They would be subject to annual physical check-ups, Disclose and Barring Service checks and performance reviews.

1c. Morning and Afternoon Members Only Swimming Clubs

A new model is developed to reduce the core City Corporation Lifeguarded hours through establishing Morning and Afternoon Swimming Clubs at the Highgate Men's Bathing Pond and Kenwood Ladies' Bathing Pond.

These could operate on a similar basis as the existing Hampstead Heath Winter Swimming Club at the Mixed Pond.

For example, the morning Swimming Clubs could operate until 9am and then handover to the City Corporation Lifeguards at 9.30. The Lifeguarded public swimming sessions at the bathing Ponds would commence at 10am. A later afternoon Swimming Club could also operate.

The Hampstead Heath Winter Swimming Club at the Mixed Pond would remain unchanged.

1d. Additional City Corporation Lifeguards

The City Corporation would employ a number of additional Lifeguards*. This would be necessary to maintain Lifeguard numbers to cover breaks and to maintain alertness. This arrangement could be supplemented by Temporary Lifeguards at peak seasonal times.

* Recruitment of fixed term contract staff is subject to Business Case approval.

2. MAXIMUM BATHER LOADING

The current practice of manual head counting by the Lifeguards is deemed to be no longer feasible. A new system needs to be implemented to accurately monitor both the bathing and the facility load at the Bathing Ponds. In addition, procedures need to be developed to enable the Lifeguards to request further support.

Options:

2a. Introduce camera-based technology to monitor the bathing load.

2b. Introduce technology to monitor the access and egress to the Bathing Ponds from the jetties.

2c. Introduce technology to monitor the access and egress to the Bathing Facilities.

Once the bathing load at a swimming pond is approaching the triggers set out in section 3 below, additional measures would be required to manage access to the Bathing Ponds.

3. MINIMUM LIFEGUARD NUMBERS

In response to the Health and Safety Executive advice, thought has been given to the Lifeguard to swimmer ratios based on the numbers of people using the facilities. It is proposed to move to adopting a ratio of 1:25 Lifeguards to swimmers. The arrangements would ensure that in all cases the Lifeguards should have the ability to reach a casualty within one minute and to recover them to the side in three minutes. Given the unique nature of the Ponds the ratio of 1:25 is considered appropriate.

A trigger level of 50+ swimmers would require a fourth Lifeguard to operate from the Bathing Ponds on either a rescue ski, kayak or paddle board, thereby allowing the safety team to be in closer proximity to the swimmers. A further trigger of 75+ swimmers would require a fifth Lifeguard.

This effectively means that a minimum team of three Lifeguards are required at each facility and at each trigger point an additional Lifeguard is required in order to allow an increased bathing load.

In addition, the City Corporation is proposing to engage dedicated security/facility operatives, thereby ensuring that the Lifeguards primary responsibility is to protect and preserve the safety of bathers in both the Ponds and Lido, (see section 7).

The summer 2020 season will be the first opportunity to operate under these new guidelines. The City Corporation will carry out a review to ensure the new arrangements work effectively for all users and meet the requirements of the Health and Safety Executive.

Lifeguards	3 Lifeguards rotating positions and taking regular breaks. Pondside/Poolside working time should be no longer than 60 minutes or in exceptional circumstances 90 minutes.	4 Lifeguards rotating positions and taking regular breaks. Pondside/Poolside working time should be no longer than 60 minutes or in exceptional circumstances 90 minutes. 1 Lifeguard on a rescue ski, or operating for another suitable location.	Additional Lifeguards subject to Dynamic Risk Assessment e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in behaviour eg impact of alcohol. • Change in profile of swimming capability. • Change in weather conditions. • Additional requirement for swim tests.
Pond Bathing Load	0-50	51 - 75	76 - 100 at a Bathing Pond.

4. LIFEGUARD TRAINING

Following a series of meetings with the Lifeguards it is proposed to rollout the Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS) Open Water Training with external validation for the Lifeguards and the Fixed Term Contract Lifeguards.

Proposals:

4a. Temporary Lifeguards, including Volunteer Lifeguards, would receive the additional Open Water Training as part of their induction programme.

4b. A programme of regular closures of all the facilities to enable team training and continual professional development will be introduced in consultation with the Swimming Associations.

4c. Subject to the Risk Assessment and in consultation with the Lifeguards, the City Corporation will provide new additional safety equipment and seek to introduce separate radios for each facility.

5. REVIEW OF CHARGES

Charges for swimming at the Bathing Ponds were introduced in 2005 and are set out on notice boards at the entrance to each of the facilities. The charges are also published on the City Corporation website and in the Hampstead Heath Diary.

In 2018/19 the total cost to operate the three Bathing Ponds was £747,048. The income from ticket sales, season tickets and donations totalled £67,000. In comparison, for 2016/17 the total cost to operate the three Bathing Ponds was £584,180 and the income from ticket sales, season tickets and donations totalled £44,959.

Since 2005 access to these managed facilities has been by payment. However, for the past 15 years these charges have been collected using a 'self-policing' process. The current level of income raised through the 'self-policing' process is a small fraction of actual swim visits and is no longer a sustainable model for the future.

The huge increase in the popularity of cold water swimming together with the increased resources required to comply with the Health and Safety Executive advice will have a significant impact. In the light of this, the City Corporation now wishes to move to collecting payment for swim visits, bringing the Bathing Ponds into line with the Lido and all other recreational and sporting facilities on the Heath.

The City Corporation remains committed to subsidising the cost of swimming and fees, charges and concessions for the Heath are benchmarked and reviewed annually following consultation.

The City Corporation will be introducing contactless payment for all of its managed facilities, in line with the general societal trends.

Options:

5a. Continue payment collection via the existing 'self-policed' honesty system

Increasing the number of payments through improved reliability of collection points together with clear signage, communications and information.

5b. Access to the managed facilities is by paid admission – contactless, season tickets

Access via mechanised gates.

5c. Standalone Contactless Payment/Season Ticket and Cash option (no change provided)

Compliance by spot checks, ticket collector, and/or mechanised gate.

5d. Standalone Contactless Payment/Season Ticket only

Compliance managed by spot checks, ticket collector, and/or mechanised gate.

5e. Fundraising by Swimming Associations to significantly reduce the gap between the subsidy and the true operating costs

5f. Fundraising to support specific projects or improvements

The City Corporation welcomes fund raising initiatives towards improvement projects.

6. CHARGING OPTIONS

The City Corporation seeks to maintain a charging framework that incorporates subsidised Season Tickets, Day Tickets and comprehensive concessions.

The City Corporation seeks commonality in the approach to charging across the Bathing Ponds, Lido and other facilities.

Additionally, Direct Debit options are to be considered.

Options:

6a. Season Tickets

6ai. Season Ticket prices frozen until April 2021 and then reviewed annually following consultation.

6aii. Season Tickets prices increased by £25 as a safety levy from April 2021 and then reviewed annually following consultation.

6b. Day Tickets

6bi. Day ticket prices frozen until April 2021 and then reviewed annually following consultation.

6bii. Day ticket prices increase to the London benchmark levels from April 2020 and then reviewed annually.

6biii. Day ticket prices increase to the London benchmark levels from April 2020 with additional £1 safety levy.

6biv. Day ticket prices increase to the London benchmark levels from April 2020 with additional £1 safety levy and £2 Tourist levy (applicable for non-London residents.)

6c. Concessions

Concessionary rates will be reviewed and brought in line with other fees and charges across Hampstead Heath, which are based on a 40% discount of the adult rate.

Concessions – 40% on day ticket

- Freedom Pass
- Disabled Card
- Unemployment Card
- Student
- Under 16's
- Extend the existing Lido charging policy of free morning swims (07.00 to 09.30) to overs 60's and under 16's.

In conjunction with the Swimming Associations the City Corporations welcomes the opportunity to consider local 'hardship' funds to ensure that Heath swimming facilities are financially inclusive.

7. FACILITY MANAGEMENT

Following input from the Health and Safety Executive and the Lifeguards, the City Corporation wants to ensure that the Lifeguards are not distracted from their duties watching the water. Additionally, the City Corporation seeks to significantly reduce the risk of physical and verbal assaults to Lifeguards and other Heath staff that occur especially at busy periods.

Therefore, additional resources are to be deployed to aid the management of visitors and operation of the facilities.

Mechanised gates could be introduced to help manage access to the facilities.

Additionally, technology linked to the gates would provide data on visitor numbers, bather and facility loading, helping to manage demand and safety especially on busy days.

Options:

7a. Volunteers

Promote a programme of volunteers to help at busy periods, who will be trained and registered.

7b. Rangers

The City Corporation would employ a number of additional *Rangers. Supplemented by temporary staff at peak seasonal times.

* Recruitment of fixed term contract staff is subject to Business Case approval.

7c. Contract Security/Facilities Operatives

The City Corporation would procure a number of contract security/facility operatives to take on the responsibility for elements such as cleaning, spot checks, visitor management and security.

8. SITE SPECIFIC ISSUES

Each of the facilities has a series of unique challenges for which there is no “one-size-fits all” approach. The City Corporation is committed to creating accessible environments for more diverse visitors by removing barriers that may exist for different groups that experience more exclusion or disadvantage than others.

The City Corporation proposes to work with each of the Swimming Associations and the Lifeguarding team to establish Working Groups to collaborate on finding solutions to the following:

Examples of challenges and issues include:

- Management of visitors to the Men’s Pond including sunbathers and accessibility.
- Management of visitors to the Ladies’ Pond, the meadows and back gate.
- Management of visitors at the Mixed Pond sunbathers, accessibility and changing facilities.
- Management of visitors at the Lido.
- Improvements to Lifeguard facilities and fixed viewing positions.
- Perimeter management and planting.
- The non-bathing ponds.
- Signage and communications.
- Review of the Hampstead Heath Swimming Regulations.
- Secure lockers, pigeonholes and storage arrangements.
- Promoting biodiversity.
- Improving water quality and sustainability initiatives e.g. waste & recycling.
- Access for people with disabilities.
- Safeguarding.

9. COMMUNICATIONS

The City Corporation welcomes the feedback on the quality and effectiveness of its general communications regarding the swimming facilities. It recognises that more can be done to explain the charges, season tickets, concessions, the existence of the Hampstead Heath Charitable Trust and the significant costs associated with the safe and sustainable running of the swimming facilities.

The Heath Management Team will work with the City Corporation communication experts to review all external signage, communications and online information.

The City Corporation welcomes the considered email from the Chairs and Co-Chairs of the KLPA, HMPA, USA and the MPA (see appendix 4 and financial models).

The City Corporation also welcomes the discussions with the Parliament Hill Lido User Group which took place on Monday 3 February 2020.

The following issues were discussed:

1. With the increasing popularity of cold water swimming, more information is required to explain the health implications for over exertion and exposure to cold water.
2. The Swimming Review has identified the role of staff to support the Lifeguards with tasks like security, bag searches, cleaning, setting up barriers/sunshade and providing information to visitors queuing.
3. The learning from summers 2018 and 2019 demonstrates that additional measures are necessary to secure the boundary of the Lido. The City Corporation is considering trialling an additional temporary perimeter fence (June/July/August) to prevent unauthorised access over the boundary walls.
4. The operation of the café during extreme weather events needs to be reviewed to ensure the safety of staff and visitors.
5. There are many opportunities to collaborate with the PHLUG to improve communications using websites, social media, signs, video clips etc.
6. There was agreement that the numbered queuing system trialled over the 2019 August Bank Holiday weekend was successful and should be reviewed and implemented during 2020. The importance of information to visitors queuing was also noted.
7. The group discussed the importance of promoting the season tickets and suggested a range of extra benefits like season ticket only events or additional access for swimming.
8. The free early morning over 60's and under 16 swimmers should be issued with season tickets to record participation data and their contact details in case of an emergency.
9. A review of the lockers is required.

10. The City Corporation will collaborate with PHLUG to review the opportunities to utilise vacant space to provide opportunities for exercise and meditation, a shop, new access door to facilitate poolside recycling, water bottle refilling points etc.
11. The built assets in the area know as the Parliament Hill Triangle will form part of a comprehensive review. Initial scoping identifies the Lido as a hub for swimming, health, wellbeing and learning.
12. Further engagement with local schools was discussed.
13. In relation to charges the City Corporation discussed the following points:
 - The importance of promoting season tickets and the various concessions.
 - Maintaining contactless payment options.
 - Clear and fair charges.
 - The Lido fees, charges and concessions require benchmarking (with similar providers) and reviewed annually following consultation.
14. PHLUG recognise the historical context of the Lido which should be conserved, however the importance of hot water and maintenance of the fabric of the Lido is critical.
15. The Parliament Hill Fields Lido Café lease expires in January 2021 and a public consultation will take place in 2020, to help define the outcomes the Heath community seeks for the café facility.

10. NEXT STEPS

- 3rd February – meeting with Parliament Hill Lido User Group
- 4th February – Swimming Forum
- 5th February - meeting with the Lifeguards
- 11th February - Swimming Forum. Formal proposal to be considered ahead of recommendation for the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee on 9 March
- 9th March - Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee
- 11th March - Hampstead Heath Management Committee
- Develop implementation plan ahead for 2nd May - Summer 2020 swimming season – Phase 1
- Develop plans for Phase 2

Appendix 1 – Letters from the Health and Safety Executive dated 02 October 2019 and 08 October 2019

Appendix 2 - Swimming Facilities income, expenditure and visitor counts

Appendix 3 – Hampstead Heath Dashboard

Appendix 4 – Joint response from the KLPA, HMPA, USA, MPA and two financial models

¹Parliament Hill Lido Users' Group, website.



Swimming Facilities Forum
Tuesday 4 February 2020, 6pm
Parliament Hill Meeting Room

Attending:

Karina Dostalova (Chair)	KD	Chairman, Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee, CoLC
Bob Warnock	BW	Superintendent, Hampstead Heath, CoLC
Colin Buttery	CB	Director of Open Spaces, CoL
Tim Johns	TJ	Facilitator, Orato Consulting
Tanya Gagin	TG	Health & Safety Consultant, Human Applications
Eleanor Kennedy	EK	Parliament Hill Lido User Group
Jeremy Watson	JW	Highgate Men's Pond Association
Chris Ruocco	CR	Highgate Lifebuoys
Charles Marks	CM	Mixed Pond Association
Robert Sutherland-Smith	RSS	United Swimmers Association
Nicky Mayhew	NM	Kenwood Ladies' Pond Association
Julia Dick	JD	Kenwood Ladies' Pond Association
Declan Gallagher	DG	Operational Services Manager, CoLC
Paul Maskell	PM	Leisure and Events Manager, CoLC
Paul Jeal	PJ	Senior Swimming Facilities Supervisor, CoLC
Kate Radusin (notes)	KR	PA to Superintendent, CoLC

1.	Apologies
	Anne Fairweather, Marc Hutchinson, Mike Sands, Kasia Sikora, Chris Piesold, Ruth Halgarten & Richard Gentry.
2.	Notes of the previous meeting (14.1.20)
	Agreed.
3.	Matters Arising
	N/A
4.	Facilitated Discussion to consider draft proposals
	<p>KD welcomed Members of the Swimming Forum and provided a recap of the Swimming Forum meeting on 14 January 2020 and subsequent meetings with the individual Swimming Associations. Draft proposals have been circulated for consideration, which reflect the discussions and comments made during these meetings.</p> <p>TJ led a facilitated discussion to consider the draft proposals.</p> <p>BW noted that the draft proposals covered the following points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Lifeguard Breaks and alertness</u> – Lifeguards need to have a break after 60-90 minutes watching the water. This requires additional Lifeguard resources and is linked to managing the bathing load.

2. Maximum Bather Loading – Need to move away from manual head counts. Technological solutions are being investigated. This is linked to the facility carrying capacity.
3. Minimum Lifeguard Numbers – The ratio of swimmers to Lifeguards and the need to increase the number of Lifeguards. Links to Lifeguards breaks and maximum bather loading.
4. Lifeguard Training – Additional Open Water training to be rolled out to all Duty Lifeguards and Fixed Term Contract Lifeguards.
5. Review of Charges – Varying feedback has been received. Additional options can be included in the proposals if Members have further options to put forward.
6. Charging Options – We have considered how we can introduce systems that will not disadvantage swimmers on lower incomes.
7. Facility Management – Critical role for Ranger Staff to perform in managing gates, queues, toilets etc. to ensure the Lifeguards are not distracted from watching the water.
8. Site Specific Issues – The issues considered, which are facility specific, have arisen following meetings with the Lifeguards and Swimming Association Reps.
9. Communications – We appreciate the feedback and agree there are many opportunities to improve the signage and information at the Bathing Ponds and Lido

TJ the headlines of the draft proposals are that CoLC are proposing to increase the number of Lifeguards by at least 1 per facility and to bring in additional Ranger Staff to manage the facilities to ensure the Lifeguards are not distracted away from watching the water.

Initial feedback on the proposals were received from the Swimming Association Reps:

NM noted it was difficult to give opinions on the options as there had not yet been time for Reps to consult with their Association Members. All Members support the Lifeguards, but there are concerns that 3 Lifeguards would be too many on many occasions.

RSS supported the comments made by NM and noted that there was no data for the number of occasions during the year that the bathing load reached more than 100 people. 2020 should be considered as a year of observation. The motivation for the changes is understood but is it objectively necessary?

JW the Heath budget has stayed constant over the last 10 years, which is equal to a 30% decrease. The swimming budget has increased by inflation, however the number of visits to the facilities has increased by more than this amount. 19% of people reported visiting the Heath for swimming.

CM noted the increase in the number of Lifeguards would increase the cost of managing the facilities.

EK the Lido has a different set up as you have a to pay to get into the facility. The Lifeguards do an excellent job. The process is moving quickly, don't want there to be knock on effects from any changes made.

TJ CoLC are aware of issues around 'gold plating' but have to move forward with implementing the HSE advice. There will need to be 3 Lifeguards on duty so that there is capacity for breaks and rotations, while ensuring there are always 2

Lifeguards watching the water. The use of technology to manage the bather loading is a little chicken and egg, in that the usefulness can only be ascertained once it is in place. Data shows there is a general UK wide increase in the popularity of cold water swimming.

BW noted that CoLC were still considering how to respond to the HSE advice. The Lifeguards have been subject to physical and verbal assaults and the current rota doesn't allow for breaks. We are trying to put systems in place to support the Lifeguards, and additional staff will be required to carry out bag searches and queue management. The current operating model of 2 Lifeguards working 7.5 hour shifts needs addressing. We need to adopt a different model and start trialling 3 Lifeguards to see what system works best. It is also important to know how many people are in the water. The HSE advice is based on triathletes with a ratio of 1 Lifeguard for 20 Swimmers.

NM raise concerns that 3 Lifeguards would be too many on cold winter days and that this could be demoralising for the Lifeguards. BW confirmed that arrangements would be trialled to see what worked best. There will need to be adjustments between Summer and Winter.

TG noted that there was no average break length. Similar roles and environments would be looked at to see what would be reasonable in the context of the HSE advice. If the HSE do not consider that the advice has been followed, and the consider there is 'immediate danger' then prohibition notice is an option open to HSE.

PJ there can be 30+ swimmers for an early morning swim. If there are 2 Lifeguards on duty and an incident occurs 1 Lifeguard will react. If they then get into difficulty or need back up, or the other Lifeguard is on a break, then this leaves no-one watching the water. At the inquest into the Men's Pond fatality the 2 Lifeguards on duty were not able to corroborate the number of swimmers in the water.

A comment was received from the public gallery that the swimming areas of the ponds could be reduced.

JW queried whether there was an implementation timetable for the HSE advice?

TG noted that as advice had been received there was no deadline, however the CoLC need to show they are taking the advice seriously.

TJ led a discussion around the additional costs of implementing the HSE advice. BW confirmed that Officers were working to establish the costs. A trial of the 3rd roaming Lifeguard would commence soon. Once the facilities open Lifeguards will require their first break within 60-90 minutes. Therefore, the facility could open at 7am with 2 Lifeguards on duty with a 3rd coming on duty at 8am to cover breaks.

TJ led a discussion around the Heath budget. CB noted that the budget had reduced by an average of 2% each year for the last 2 years. To counter this additional income generation and efficiencies have been introduced, rather than services cut. On the whole, revenue has remained relatively stable at around £5m per year. In the next 3-5 years there will be less funding from Central Government. Since 2019 there has been a freeze on permanent staff appointments, and Fixed-Term and Casual contracts have been used to retain flexibility within the workforce. KD noted that the Heath budget was fixed and that additional funds could not be diverted to swimming as this would take

resources away from education, ecology etc. We want to make the facilities sustainable for future generations. CB when the CoLC took on the Heath it came with a £15M endowment. This still stands at roughly £15M as the CoLC have only ever drawn the interest from it. The funding from the CoLC has been philanthropic and is greater than the funding which would have come from the GLC or another Local Authority. The CoLC spends more on the Heath than other Local Authorities spend on their open spaces.

TJ led a discussion about the feasibility of having volunteer Lifeguards. PJ outlined the extensive training requirements, and it was agreed that this was not a feasible option to pursue. It was agreed that there could be a role for volunteers at the facilities, which would be explored.

TJ led a discussion around section 5 of the proposal - review of charges. BW noted that the majority of Lido ticket sales were by card and that cash now accounted for only a small proportion of transactions. We have considered ways to collect income at the Ponds which do not require the installation of turnstiles. Views were expressed that the current 'parking style' ticket machines, donations posts and signage was not adequate and that contactless payment points should be introduced. It was suggested that a donation tick box option was added to the online season ticket so that swimmers could make donations alongside purchase of the season ticket. It was also suggested that a delivery option should be introduced. It was noted that there are many swimmers who do not pay, but will contribute, and that there is a culture surrounding the principles of free swimming. Views were expressed that further time should be given to allow fundraising and an increase in donations (once contactless payment had been introduced).

There followed a discussion round the Hampstead Heath Charity. Views were expressed that many people visiting the facilities were not aware of the Heath's charitable status, and that further information should be provided to make this clear to visitors to encourage payment and donations.

A comment was received from the public gallery that any changes to the swimming facilities may impact on the number of people attempting to swim in non-lifeguarded ponds.

TJ confirmed the need for Lifeguards to move away from undertaking additional tasks, such as toilet cleaning and queue management. Additional Staff would be required to take on these duties, so the Lifeguards would not be distracted from watching the water. BW noted that Officers would collaborate with Lifeguards and small groups from each facility to discuss site specific planting improvements and projects, some of which will need funding identified, i.e. installation of 3-phase electricity at the Mixed Pond. Lockers would also be considered on a facility by facility basis.

5.	AOB
	N/A
6.	Next Steps

	<p>KD confirmed that the proposals would be refined following the comments and feedback received at the meeting. These would be discussed at the next Swim Forum on 11 February 2020 and would form the basis of a report to the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee (HHCC), who will meet on 9 March 2020. Swimmers would have until 9 March to put forward their comments. The proposals would be considered by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee (Management Committee), taking account of the view of the HHCC, on 11 March 2020.</p>
7.	Date of the next meeting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 11 February 2020, 6pm.