

Sports and Wellbeing Forum Actions
28 February 2024, 6:00pm – 7:45pm
Guildhall Committee Room 2

Attendees

Alderman Gregory Jones KC CC (GJ)	Chair, Hampstead Heath Sports & Wellbeing Forum
William Upton KC CC (WU)	Chair, Hampstead Heath, H. Wood, and Q. Park Committee
Bill LoSasso (BL)	Assistant Director (Superintendent)
Charlotte Williams (CW)	Head of Operations and Parks
Emma Rea (ER)	Parliament Hill Fields Lido
Robert Gibbs (RG)	Angling
David Walton (DW)	Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee
Marc Hutchinson (MH)	Winter Swimming Club
Joseph Lowe (JL)	Highgate Harriers Athletics Club
Ella Mitchell (EM)	Hampstead Rugby Club
Richard O'Mahony (ROM)	Parliament Hill & Operations Manager
Paul Jeal (PJ)	Swimming Facilities Manager
Rudolf Benjamin (RB)	Tennis Coach
Sandy Nairn (SN)	Hampstead Heath Croquet Club
Brian Presley (BP)	Hampstead Heath Bowling Club
Ann Griffin (AG)	Kenwood Ladies' Pond Association
Beth Feresten (BF)	Kenwood Ladies' Pond Association
John Carrier (JC)	Wellbeing representative
Anandi Shah (AS)	Parkrun
Michael Smith (MS)	Highgate Men's Pond Association
Felicity Moir (FM)	Mixed Pond
Karin Oleinikova (KO)	Heath Hands
Deborah Bush (DB)	Pro-Active Camden

1. Apologies

Richard Sumray

2. Review of October 2023 minutes

- a. Corrections were noted to the list of attendees.
- b. The KLPA noted their challenge to the Chair to a break-even policy with regard to fees and charges.

3. Updates from City of London Corporation

a. Parliament Hill Athletics Track:

- i. The refurbishment of the track was completed on 24 November 2023 and the contractors, FM Conway, demobilised on 15 December 2023.
- ii. A soft opening occurred on 12 December 2023 with Highgate Harriers using the track to train for the first time.
- iii. Formal opening of the track will occur on 17 April 2024 with the Lord Mayor in attendance.

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- iv. The Athletics Track Forum is being re-established. The first meeting is on 2 April 2024.
- b. **Ponds Access Project:**
 - i. Ladies Pond - completed, including the snagging list.
 - ii. Mixed Pond – will be completed end of March, subject to snagging.
 - iii. Men’s Pond – most works will be completed end of March, including the grating, but still need to install sliding door which is subject to delivery of materials.
 - iv. The works are expected to be completed in mid-late April.
 - v. Funding was gained for a new gate at the Men’s Pond, and a new fence to replace the hedgerow and a 7” x 5” secure shed at the Mixed Pond, to house the new hoist and equipment.
 - vi. Heath Hands is supporting the project with landscaping work and a planting project at the Mixed and Men’s Ponds.
- c. **Parliament Hill Improvement Projects:**
 - i. There is no current funding for the proposed projects, but officers will explore opportunities in FY2024-25.

Repair needs and requests at the Ladies’ Pond were discussed, including:

- Shower in changing room
- Steps into the disabled changing room
- Steps down to the meadow
- Need hooks on the back of the doors
- Officers provided updates and noted additional needs.

ACTION: Order and install hooks on the back of the doors at Ladies Pond (Completed on 09 March 2024)

4. FY 2024-25 fees and charges

- a. WU contextualised the need for and approach to fees and charges, noting persistent needs on the Heath, the charity’s funding deficit funding model with the City Corporation, the City Corporation’s need to over costs, and subsidies needed to cover activities.
- b. BL provided an overview of the proposed fees and charges, noting that the majority of fees were charged in line with inflation (5%), and that while there is a need for Hampstead Heath charity to generate income, we seek to ensure that sports and wellbeing opportunities remain available and accessible for users of Hampstead Heath.
- c. GJ noted that inflation was well under inflation in FY’2023-24.
- d. Three requests were made by the pond representatives:
 - i. Extending the age limit from 16 to 18 for free swim, and extending the morning free swim from its current time of 9.30am.

ACTION: Officers responded during the Forum meeting that they would need to examine this proposal in greater detail before responding substantively.

- e. Increasing the concession rate from 40% to 50%
 - i. Officers responded at the Forum meeting that they did not think this was appropriate, and that the 40% rate was already very competitive relative to other providers.
- f. Allowing for a monthly payment option to pay for the 12-month seasonal swimming pass, payable monthly as one twelfth (1/12th) of the discounted annual seasonal rate, as opposed to the current up-front payment. This payment would be in lieu of the established monthly rate that is already available to swimmers who do not purchase the seasonal pass.

ACTION: Officers responded that they would examine this request in greater detail, as well as the potential capability to implement it in the new swimming leisure management system that is under development

- g. Swimming representatives also sought a presentation on the Corporation's cost of sports provision relative to revenue received on Hampstead Heath.

ACTION: Officers responded that they would explore the request and noted that the analysis is difficult due to historical budget coding, as well as limitations in the current digital booking systems that do not capture important data with the necessary level of specificity, which officers are working to improve in the new leisure management system.

ACTION: KLPA to send information on the hardship fund to the S&WF

EM noted that that rugby club continued to struggle and were seeking cheaper options.

JL noted he believed that believed that 17 and 18 year olds should be charged to swim.

ACTION: Officers also committed to examine the impact of parking charges on users of the Lido who use that facility for periods of time less than the minimum charging timescale during swims.

5. Discussion on Sports & Wellbeing Forum Terms of Reference and future of Forum

- a. A discussion occurred on the future of the Sports & Wellbeing Forum and existing Terms of Reference.
- b. It was generally agreed that the Forum should focus on strategic items, be purpose and goals driven, and that the focus should be on a collaborative approach to developing the offer on the Heath.
- c. The City Corporation's new sports strategy was noted and agreed to be shared to inform future conversations.

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- d. CW noted a need to look at agreements and have a consistent approach with regard to sports use across the Heath and all the North London Open Spaces.

ACTION: Circulate the City Corporation's sports strategy with the Forum minutes.

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-us/working-with-community/city-sport#:~:text=A%20New%20Sport%20Strategy%20for%20the%20Square%20Mile&text=The%20vision%20is%20for%20the,events%20and%20promoting%20community%20sport>

ACTION: CW to review existing Terms of Reference and provide notes and a draft TOR to guide discussion of the future of the Forum at the next meeting.

6. AOB

- a. Officers clarified that that fishing events with schools would be treated similarly to the past.