

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Management Committee	22 nd July 2013
Subject: Update on Recent Sports Activities	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Decision
Summary	
<p>This report provides an update on a number of sports activities together with feedback from the last Sports Advisory Forum and a proposal to enable extended use of the amenity sports areas in Parliament Hill for winter training purposes.</p>	
Recommendation(s)	
<p>That the members of the Management Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the success of the various sports event held over the past few months; • approve the use of “pop up” flood lights on a one-year trial basis to help accommodate winter training sessions and improve turf management within the Parliament Hill area of the Heath. 	

Main Report

Background

1. The Sports Advisory Forum was established in 2009, its main aim is to “influence the management and development of sport on Hampstead Heath in accordance with the Management Plan and the terms of this document”. Comprised of a number of different Heath sports users and external agencies associated with promoting sport and health and well-being, it has proved to be a valuable Forum in recognising and promoting the importance and value placed on sport across the Heath.

Recent Events

2. This report provides a brief update on some of the key activities that have been undertaken over the last three months, together with minutes of the last Sports Advisory Forum held on the 20th May 2013 (see appendix 1).

Highgate Harriers – 10km Open Event

3. On June 6th 2013 Highgate Harriers held their inaugural “Night of the 10,000m Personal Bests”. This new middle distance athletics initiative from attracted national interest and all three 10,000m races were filled in a matter of days when the entry went live in January 2013.
4. Ben Pochee from Highgate Harriers said “The aim was to create an annual 10,000m track event that brings together quality club runners, provide them with a platform to work collectively to achieve their personal best (PB) potential and gain the confidence required to truly take on the tough 25 lap event.” He went on to say “We at Highgate firmly believe that racing standards can be further enhanced if our club runners have an annual opportunity to plan their training focus towards a trusted competitive, quality rich, pace guided and atmospheric 10,000m track event.”
5. To put into context the quality field lining up at Parliament Hill track on June 6th, over the whole of 2012, UK Athletics had 17 athletes (including Mo Farah’s Olympic gold victory) break 30 minutes on the track for 10km, the Highgate Harriers event on June 6th had 24 men targeting this sub 30 minute milestone. Unfortunately the evening was really windy which hampered times however out of the 75 athletes 44 registered a personal best and one of the athletes the winner of the “A Class” event Ed McGinley went under the fabled 30 minutes slot in 29.53
6. Feedback thus far from athletes / coaches has been hugely positive, few had experienced a track event with so much excitement and the overwhelming request has been to release the 2014 event date. Ben Pochee organiser commented “As such I’m very keen to build upon our initial success to ensure next year we have higher quality racing, larger crowds and more theatre to attract the local community - fundamental to this development will be working closely with CoL and so as soon as we have a proposed date I would relish sitting down with you to discuss further the event.” It was agreed that promoting a further event in 2014 should be pursued.
7. Adding to ambience of the event, Highgate Harriers had former 10,000m world record holder David Bedford (a member of the Sports advisory Forum) in attendance offering inspirational words to the next generation of club athletes & picking a winner from each race that in his opinion worked hardest to keep their group on Personal Best target.

Lord Mayors Charity Appeal City Dip

8. On Friday and Saturday the 6th and 7th June 2013 we hosted the Lord Mayors Charity Appeal City Dip event for the second time in conjunction with the Lord Mayors appeal team. This was a 5,000m sponsored swim which attracted over 25 teams, raising several thousand pounds for the appeal.
9. The Lady Mayoress Dr Clare Gifford participated in the event, swimming her 5,000m at the Kenwood Ladies Pond. This has very much helped to raise the profile of this cherished ladies facility.

10. The lifeguards at Hampstead Heath are keen to work with future Lord Mayors Charity Appeal teams to host future City Dip events.

Hampstead Heath "Tug of War Championships"

11. This event was started last year under the Green to Gold banner whilst this years entrance field was a little disappointing with 4 teams in the senior event and only 2 in the junior one, it attracted a large audience and great fun was had by all the competing teams. The title went to the Hampstead Heath Rugby Club 'oldie's who lost last year to the Hampstead Rugby Club 'young guns'.

Other events

12. *The Lido* also hosts a number of clubs and other events during this early part to the summer. Water polo is played on a Sunday and Wednesday evenings from May to September by the Polytechnic and Otters Water polo teams. Triathlon training takes place three times per week at both the Mixed Pond and the Lido. There is also a free Tai Chi club that use the poolside on a Saturday mornings throughout the year.
13. *Quad Kids* - Highgate Harriers now host a monthly Quad Kids on the last Sunday in every month, with around 100 youngsters aged up to 12 (with some as young as 3!) taking part in a 75m sprint, 600m run, vortex throw and long jump. Their performances are then converted into points with certificates handed out with the total points on. Quad Kids is one of the most successful club events in the London area trying to inspire children to become active in sports and is hosted by Highgate Harriers with the City's support.
14. *Disability Athletics 11th June* - Camden Sports Development and Highgate Harriers organised a day of athletics at the Parliament Hill running track for Camden's Disabled youngsters. Over 80 children attended and thoroughly enjoyed the sprints, throws, jumps and even a tug-of-war! This is the third year Camden and Highgate Harriers have held this event, this year a similar athletics day is planned for University ages in July.
15. *Park Run* this weekly timed event over 5km continues to attract on average 80 to 120 runners and below are some statistics as of Saturday 25th May, demonstrating showing what a quality event this is becoming:
 - Number of events: 105
 - Number of runners: 2,162
 - Number of runs: 9,041
 - Number of first finishers: 91
 - Number of clubs: 174
 - Number of PBs: 1,987
 - Average number of runners per week: 86.1
 - Average number of runs per runner: 4.2
 - Biggest Attendance: 186
 - Average run time: 00:27:05
 - Total hours ran: 4,080
 - Total distance ran: 45,205 km

- Female Record Holder Rebecca Robinson - 18:52 - Event 74 (13/10/12)
- Male Record Holder Ben Moreau - 15:44 - Event 37 (21/1/12)

Proposal Hampstead Rugby Club

16. At your last Committee walk in March 2013 a proposal was put forward by Hampstead Rugby Club and Highgate Harriers to introduce “pop up” flood lights (see picture Appendix 1) to help accommodate winter training sessions. A video of the proposals was shown at a recent Consultative Committee visit and at the presentation members were generally supportive of the proposals.
17. The flexibility of the system will greatly assist with improved turf management, as the current dedicated training areas become very compacted and muddy in the depth of winter. Given that the lighting systems are low level with little or no light pollution it is requested that your Committee support the principle of introducing a one-year pilot on the sports areas to the rear of the running track and on the amenity grass area to the north of the running track on training nights (Tuesdays and Thursdays), so long as the systems were removed by 9.00pm.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

18. This proposal supports the City Together Strategy - The Heart of World Class City 2008-2014 theme of: ... supporting our communities.
19. The proposal also shares the Open Spaces Department Business Plan 2012-2015 aims & objectives: “Promotes opportunities to value and enjoy the outdoors for recreation, learning and healthy living”.
20. This report also supports the Overriding Objective for Sports as set out in the Strategic Management Plan: “Work collaboratively in maintaining and developing the existing sports facilities and activities in response to changing demands ensuring appropriate provision for all sections of the community.”

Implications

21. The activities and events outlined in this report are supported by the various partnerships with Clubs and other agencies that underpin the sports activities undertaken across the Heath. The cost of the collapsible floodlights would be met by the Hampstead Rugby Club.

Conclusion

22. This report demonstrates the important contribution that sports activities offer Heath users.

Simon Lee

Superintendent of Hampstead Heath

T: 020 7332 3322

E: simon.lee@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Appendix 1

