

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons	7 July 2014
Subject: Annual report of licences issued 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014	Public
Report of: The Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 13/14	For Information
Summary	
<p>This report updates your Committee on the number and variety of licences issued for temporary use of Forest land in the year 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014.</p> <p>There have been 227 licences issued for various events, activities and temporary use of Forest Land which together have raised a total of £66,235. The most popular licenses were Filming (73) 32%; Community Events (32) 14% and Fitness Events (27) 12%. A further 485 horse riding licences, which includes annual, weekly and replacement licences, were also issued raising a total of £17,092.00.</p> <p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive the report 	

Main Report

Background

1. This report is brought to your Committee to provide oversight of current licencing policy and is the first annual report of licences issued on Epping Forest. Requests are received for various services requiring the temporary use of Forest Land. These requests are for a wide variety of events and activities that individuals and companies and property owners wish to carry out on the Forest. The Conservators normally levy a charge on events or activities. When a request is received the details of the event or activity are scrutinised, or in the case of access, a skip or storage, an inspection is carried out by a Forest Keeper in order to ascertain whether a licence should be granted for use of Forest Land in respect of that request.
2. The impact that any event or activity may have on the Forest, or those who use the Forest is always the major consideration in the decision making

process. Consideration is always taken as to the Conservators' duties under the Epping Forest Acts 1878 and 1880 and whether any damage to Forest Land may occur. Where there are very real concerns around damage either a refundable deposit or bond is taken to cover any repairs for damage of Forest Land, or in some cases the licence request is refused.

3. Licence requests are refused for a variety of reasons: some requests are for events that are far too big for the Forest to facilitate such as festivals with expected attendances of several hundred thousand.
4. Requests for event parking on Forest Land, that has previously been approved are now being refused given the conflict with local planning regulations.
5. Charges for events, activities or other services requiring the temporary use of Forest land are set by your Committee by way of an annual report brought to your January meeting. The charges for filming and photography are set by an annual report taken to the Open Spaces Committee.
6. Certain classes of licence currently do not carry a charge, for example charity events and social gatherings. Similarly no charge is made for ecological study licences where the data is made available to the Conservators.

Current Position

7. The types of events and activities requested include filming, photography, fairs, circuses, fitness events, community events, school events, skips, signs, scout events and various miscellaneous activities. There have been 227 licences issued for various events, activities and temporary use of Forest Land which together have raised a total of £66,235. The most popular licenses were Filming (73) 32%; Community Events (32) 14% and Fitness Events (27) 12%. A further 485 horse riding licences, which includes annual, weekly and replacement licences, were also issued raising a total of £17,092.00.
8. Other requests come from the many properties that border, or are enclosed by, the Forest. These properties often have no direct access to the rear of their curtilages or space to place skips; site scaffolding or temporarily store building materials during repair or development works. **See Table 1 below**
9. The licencing system serves two main purposes; one is to manage the impact of licenced events and activities on the Forest and other Forest users. Information as to where and when licenced activities are taking place can be communicated to other users via the Epping Forest web site, twitter and the many email groups that we maintain for this purpose. This enables them to plan around the activity and minimise the impact on their visit.
10. The second purpose is to assist with the cost of maintaining the Forest. The licenced activities provide a regular, steady income which helps meet the cost of the administration of licences. **See Table 2 below**

Options

11. Your Committee's attention is drawn to the fact that the Conservators continue to licence events under the following circumstances:
 - i. Circuses on Forest Land which may contain performing wild animals. This is anticipated to change with the introduction of the Wild Animals and Circuses Bill which will give operators until 1 December 2015 to remove any wild animals from their circus.
 - ii. Concessionary charges of £50.00 are made to students for filming licences on Epping Forest Land.
 - iii. Consideration may also want to be given to the annual licence for the Theydon Bois Donkey Derby, which is now in its 26th Year and acts as an important fundraiser for local charities. The Sunday event includes donkey racing and gambling which are both contrary to the Epping Forest byelaws – Section 3(32) *Disorderly Conduct* – and Section 3(38) – *Racing on the Forest*.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

12. The issuing of licences for the use of Forest land supports the City Together Strategy theme 'A World Class City which protects, promotes and enhances our environment. This is linked to the associated Open Spaces Strategic Aim "Provide safe, secure and accessible Open Spaces and services for the benefit of London and the Nation".

Implications

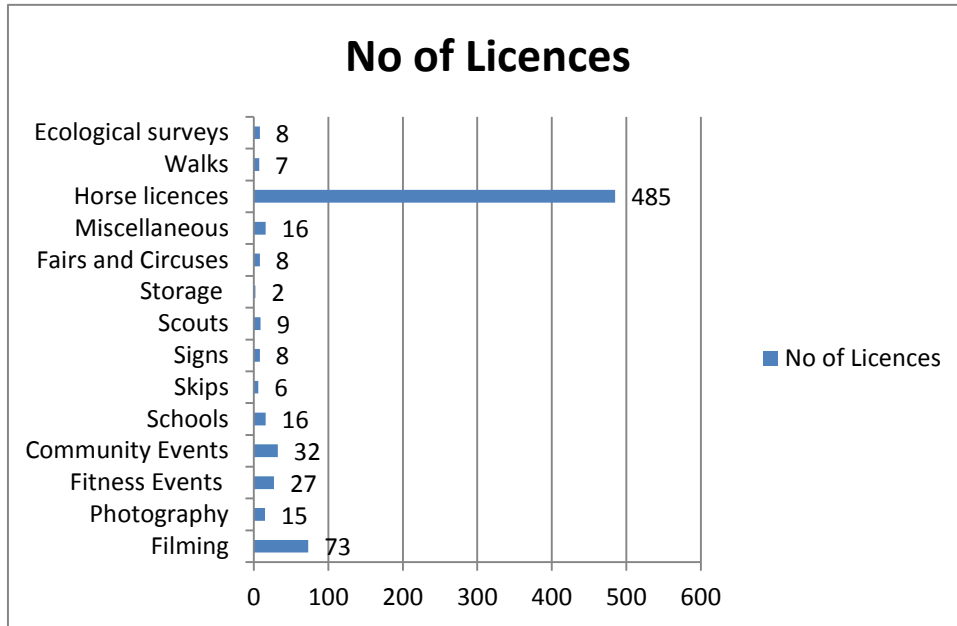
13. **Finance:** The City's Financial Regulations require all departments to recover full costs when setting charges to persons or external organisations, or submit reason to the appropriate service Committee when that objective is not met. It is, therefore, at the discretion of individual spending Committees to determine the actual level of fees and charges relative to the services that provide, after taking into account local considerations and priorities.
14. The total income raised by licenced activity in Epping Forest in 2013/14 amounted to £83,327
15. **Property:** Licensing various 3rd party temporary activities that the City is willing to permit upon the Forest should ensure that the City retains full and proper control of the Forest, can prevent misuse, and has appropriate terms in place to protect the City and the public.
16. **Legal:** the licensing of activities on Forest Land is managed by the Superintendent under delegated powers and reflects the general powers of the Conservators under section 33 – General Powers – and section 30 – Powers to make byelaws – of the Epping Forest Acts of 1878 and 1880.

Licensing also prevents the inadvertent concession of various possessory rights which might otherwise be conveyed in certain circumstances.

Conclusion

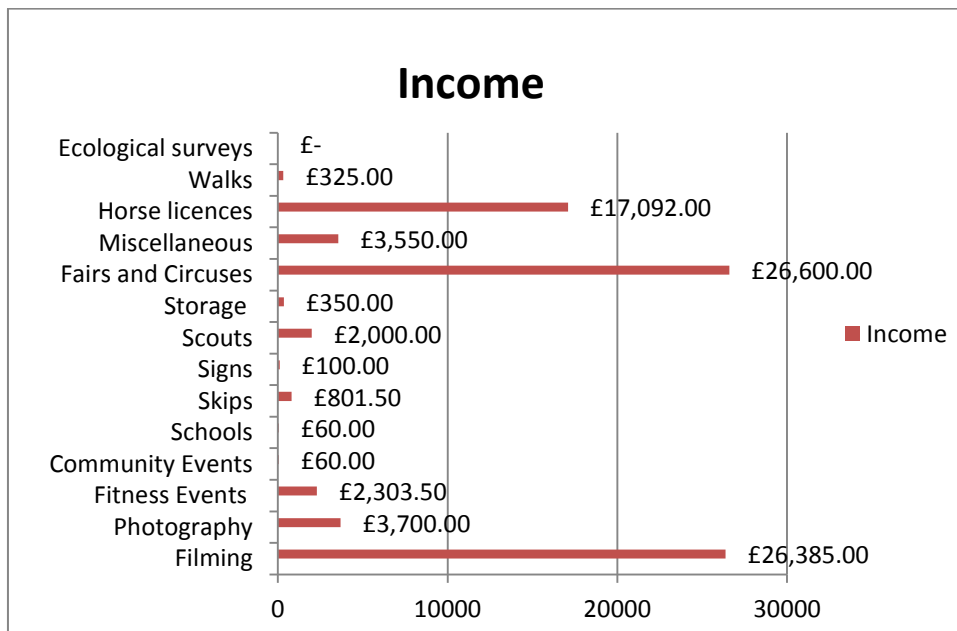
17. The licensing of events and activities on Forest land is necessary to ensure that there is no major impact on the Forest and its users. Also that no possessory rights are conceded and that the use of Forest Land is properly regulated and recognised through a standard charge wherever possible.

Table 1



Miscellaneous includes: Horse riding events, night hikes, fungi forays, military cadet training, temporary airwave mast and golf events.

Table 2



Appendices

- None

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