

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Epping Forest and Commons	11/05/2015
<b>Subject:</b> Annual report of licences issued 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 20/15	<b>For Information</b>

### Summary

This report updates your Committee on the number and variety of licences issued under delegated powers for the temporary use of Forest land in the year 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015.

There have been 210 licences issued for various events, activities and temporary use of Forest Land which together have raised a total of £84,070.66.

The most commonly requested licences were for Filming (51) 24%; Community Events (27) 13% and Photography (24) 11.5%.

457 horse riding licences, which includes annual, weekly and replacement licences, were also issued raising a total of £13,377.07.

The total income of £97,447.73 represents a 17% increase on income from 2013/2014.

### Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Receive the report

### Main Report

#### Background

1. This report is brought to your Committee to provide an oversight of the current licencing policy. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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

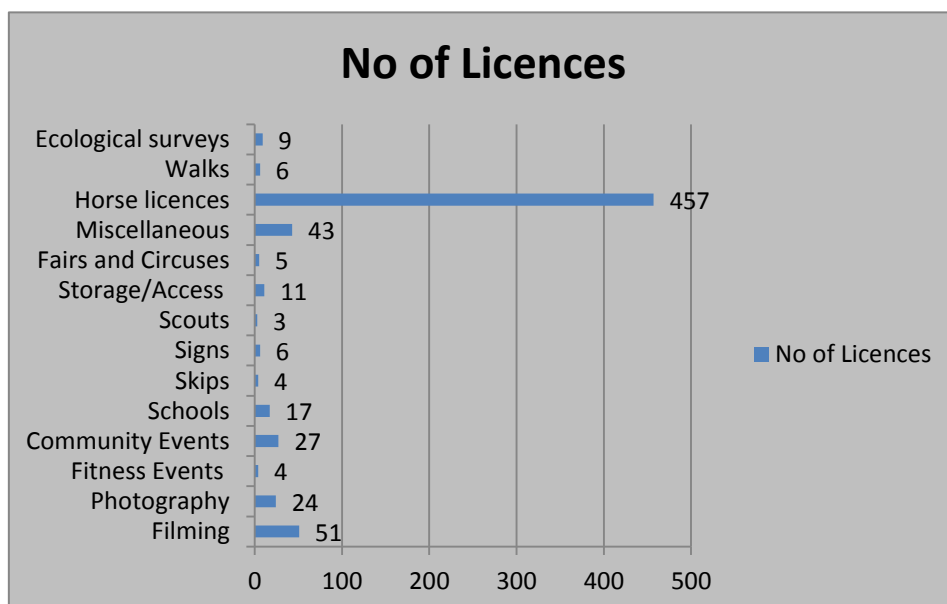
or bond is taken to cover any repairs for damage of Forest Land, or in some cases the licence request is refused.

4. 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.
5. Requests for event parking on Forest Land that, in the past, have been approved are now being refused given the potential conflict with local planning regulations.
6. Charges for events, activities or other services requiring the temporary use of Forest land are set by your Committee via the approval of an annual report presented at your January meeting. The charges for filming and photography are set by an annual report taken to the Open Spaces Committee.
7. 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

8. 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 210 licences issued for various events, activities and temporary use of Forest Land which together have raised a total of £84,070.66. The most commonly requested licenses were Filming (51) 24%; Community Events (27) 13% and Photography (24) 11.5%. A further 457 horse riding licences, which includes annual, weekly and replacement licences, were also issued raising a total of £13,377.07.
9. 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

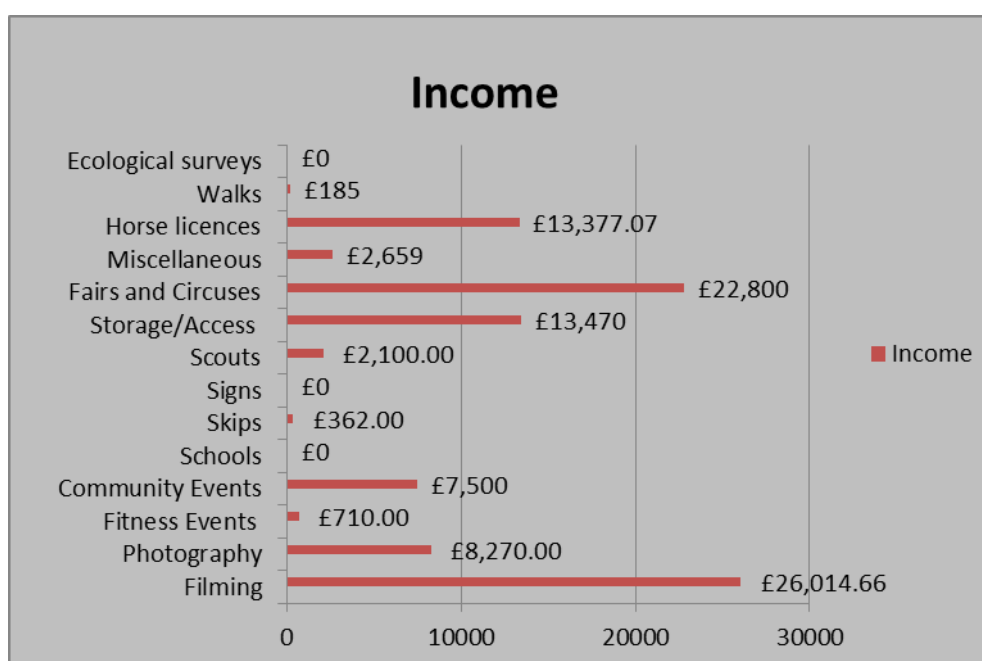
**Table 1**



Miscellaneous includes: Horse riding events, archaeological investigation, art installation and performance, orienteering, charity events, fungi forays, military cadet training, and golf events.

10. The licencing system serves two main purposes; to manage the impact of licenced events and activities on the Forest and on its visitors and to assist with the cost of maintaining the Forest.
11. Information as to where and when licenced activities are taking place can be communicated to other users via the Epping Forest web site, twitter feed 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.
12. The licenced activities provide a regular, steady income which meets the cost of the administration of licences and contributes to the maintenance of the Forest. See Table 2 below

**Table 2**



### Options

13. 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 gives operators until 1 December 2015 to remove any wild animals from their circus. The Bill is currently on track and supported by all parties.
  - ii. The well-established local fundraiser, the Theydon Bois Donkey Derby, is licenced in recognition of the fact the current event is centred around gambling which is contrary to the Epping Forest byelaws; Section 3(32) 'Disorderly Conduct' and Section 3(38) 'Racing on the Forest'.
  - iii. Concessionary charges of £55.00 are made to students for filming/photography licences on Epping Forest Land.

## Corporate & Strategic Implications

14. 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.
15. 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

16. **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.
17. The total income raised by licenced activity in Epping Forest in 2014/15 amounted to £97,447.73 representing a 17% increase on the income from 2013/14.
18. **Property:** Licensing various third 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.
19. **Legal:** The licensing of activities on Forest Land is managed by the Superintendent under the scheme of delegation 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

20. 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.

## Appendices

- None

## Background Papers

Annual report of licences issued 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014  
7 July 2014  
SEF 13/14

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