

Committee(s)	Dated:
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee	20 July 2015
Subject: Superintendents update for July 2015	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Information

Summary

This report provides an update on management and operational activities across Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park since May 2015.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the contents of this report.

Main Report

Property

1. Contractors working for the City Surveyor have now completed all the building works at the café, apart from the coping stones above the middle section. The works included new full length doorways on the front and back elevation of the building, as well as a new roof and windows. The café reopened for business on 23 May 2015.
2. The Lido boundary fence has been removed from the north-west wall and some repairs made to the brickwork. The north-east wall will be rebuilt after the summer season. An architect has been commissioned to prepare designs for a new fence on top of both boundary walls. Once a design has been agreed, planning permission will be sought. Vegetation will be planted externally along the perimeter walls for added security.
3. The Lido paddling pool has been relined with a non-slip rubberized safety surface and was reopened in time for the Spring Bank Holiday weekend.

Planning

4. **Athlone House Appeal (ref. 2013/7242/P)**. The Planning Inspector issued his findings and decision on 8 June 2015, dismissing the Appeal.
5. **Parliament Hill School, William Ellis School and La Swap Sixth Form (ref. 2014/7683/P)**. This Application has now been approved by Camden Council. There are Conditions attached to the Council's planning consent, requiring further landscaping details to be submitted for approval, as well as a Condition requiring the submission of a final Construction Management Plan.

6. **53 Fitzroy Park (ref: 2015/0441/P).** This Application is still being considered by Camden Council.

Oak Processionary Moth

7. Forestry Commission inspectors working with the Hampstead Heath Tree Team have identified the Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) pest on eight trees on Hampstead Heath and two trees at Queen's Park.
8. At Queen's Park, contractors removed the nests on 2 July 2015, under the direct supervision of the Tree Team. Nests were removed, by contractors under supervision from the Tree Team, from the main body of the Heath on 7 July 2015.
9. On the Heath, the affected trees are mainly located in the East Heath area, and have been securely fenced off for public safety. The Forestry Commission and Heath teams are now surveying all oaks within a 100m radius. Nest eradication will start as soon as the survey is complete, to ensure comprehensive removal of any nests found.
10. OPM is an invasive species, native to southern Europe where local environmental factors and predators keep its populations in check. Aided by the trade in live plants, it has become established as far north as the Netherlands and northern Germany. It was first accidentally introduced to Britain in 2005. It is theoretically possible that if it were allowed to spread, it could survive and breed in much of England and Wales.
11. The larvae, or caterpillars, of OPM are a pest, because they can damage oak trees, cause itchy skin rashes on humans and also affect animals.
12. The City of London is working closely with the Forestry Commission to ensure that the public is protected. Our message is that it's important for the public, and their pets, not to touch or approach any nests or caterpillars, and if found, to alert Heath staff and the Forestry Commission at www.forestry.gov.uk/opm.
13. OPM caterpillars are most easily recognised by their distinctive habit of moving about in late spring and early summer in nose-to-tail processions, from which they derive their name, and by the fact that they almost exclusively live in and feed on oak trees.
14. They have long hairs and build white, silken webbing nests on the trunks and branches of oak trees. They leave similar trails on the trunks and branches in early summer and feed in clusters.
15. Public Health England guidance advises the public to call NHS111 or see a doctor if you think you or someone you care for has had a serious allergic reaction after contact with OPM nests or caterpillars.

Events

16. The Affordable Art Fair and GROW London returned to the Heath in June. The events proved successful, with in excess of 28,000 visitors attending them. The site was handed back to the City on 28 June 2015.

17. The City of London Festival Hampstead Heath Family Day returned to Parliament Hill for the seventh year on 28 June 2015, 11am to 6pm. An estimated 2,000 people attended the event.
18. Race for Life is a 5k charity run for all ages and abilities. The event started from East Heath at 11am on Saturday 4 July 2015.
19. The Lord Mayor's Appeal Charity swim, City Dip, was once again hosted by the Lido from 10 to 11 July 2015. More information is available at www.thelordmayorsappeal.org.
20. The Give it a Go! Festival is now in its fourth year. This year's event, held in partnership with the London Borough Camden, took place on 12 July 2015 from 1pm to 5.30pm.

Constabulary update

21. A total of 1,195 incidents were dealt with by the Constabulary from 1 January 2015 to 30 June 2015, of the 1,195 incidents recorded 713 are enforcement incidents. Of the enforcement incidents recorded, 26% related to cycling enforcement actions, 21% related to nuisance, and 7% to dog control enforcements.
22. Two successful prosecutions have been brought to Court so far this year; one related to cycling and the other to dog control.

Green Flag and London in Bloom

23. The Green Flag judges visited the Heath on 22 June 2015. The informal feedback following the visit was very positive.
24. Last year, Golders Hill Park won Gold and was the 'large park over 25 acres' category winner. This year's judging took place at Golders on 29 June 2015.

Operational updates

25. The mini heat wave that started on 30 June 2015 resulted in a significant increase in the number of visitors to the Heath, particularly to the swimming facilities.
26. The mini roundabout at the Traditional Playground has been repaired and is back in operation.
27. The sink hole that appeared on 24 April 2015 near the Vale of Health has been filled and the gate also removed, as it was no longer required.
28. Contractors working for the City Surveyors attended the site and carried out repairs to the diving board at the Men's Pond between 8 and 10 June 2015. The board has been in use again since 15 June 2015.
29. The public toilets adjacent to the Golders Hill Park Zoo were out of action from 4 to 18 June 2015. The reason for the closure was that debris had blocked the macerator, causing both pumps to fail. Staff continue to monitor the situation and will arrange for the tanks to be emptied prior to the start of the school summer holidays.

30. Haymaking has been started at Cohen's field and Stock Pond Meadow, producing eight large round bales.
31. In partnership with City Procurement and the City Surveyors Department, a project has commenced to retender the café facilities across the Division.

Highgate Wood

32. Green Flag judging took place on 3 July 2015.
33. Significant squirrel damage to Beech and Hornbeam is occurring within Highgate Wood. The Highgate Wood Manager is undertaking an assessment of the damaged trees; it is likely a number of them will have to be coppiced this winter.

Queen's Park

34. New playground equipment has been installed and will be opened to the public, once a RoSPA safety inspection has been completed.
35. Green Flag judging took place on 27 May 2015. This year will be the first time Queen's Park has entered the London in Bloom 'large park over 25 acres' award. The judging took place on 8 July 2015.

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