

Committee	Dated:
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee	15 May 2017
Subject: Superintendent's Update	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Decision
Report author: Bob Warnock – Open Spaces & Heritage Department	

Summary

This report provides an update to Members of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee on management and operational activities across the Heath since January 2017.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Members note the contents of this report.
- Members agree to an extraordinary Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee meeting on 17 July 2017, as outlined in para 5.
- Members to agree a short meeting in held prior to the planned walk on the 25 September 2017, as outlined in para 5.

Main Report

Open Spaces Bill

1. Committee proceedings concluded on the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Bill. The Committee agreed that one clause covering the issue of Anti-Social Behaviour Notices could be withdrawn, as the City Corporation could obtain these powers under national legislation. This followed discussions with the Home Office on the prospects of obtaining a Statutory Order, specifying the City Corporation as being entitled to issue such notices. This resolved the issue on which the previous hearing had focused, having been raised by the Kennel Club. The remainder of the Bill was approved and now awaits a date to be fixed for consideration by the whole House of Commons.

Management Plan Engagement

2. The engagement process is underway to develop a community vision for Hampstead Heath to inform the 2018 Management Plan.
3. The aims of the community engagement are to:
 - Prepare an audience development plan for Hampstead Heath.
 - Deliver engagement activities that achieve representative engagement of the wider Hampstead Heath community, in order to capture community aspirations.
 - Prepare a draft vision statement for Hampstead Heath.
4. The successful tenderer was appointed in March, and a small Advisory Group has been established to provide advice and local knowledge to the community engagement project between April and July 2017. Activities include two workshops to involve key stakeholders and community organisations, a programme of wider engagement activities to reach visitors to the Heath, and an online survey that will run during May and June 2017.
5. The Consultants will provide a report on their findings to the Consultative Committee prior to presenting a full report to this Committee. Following consultation with the Management Plan Advisory Group, the Superintendent proposes an extraordinary meeting with Members of the Consultative Committee takes place on Monday 17 July 2017. The Superintendent also proposes that the walk planned for this Committee on 25 September 2017 is changed to also accommodate a short meeting to receive the full report and consider the Hampstead Heath Management Plan Vision Statement.

Update on Capital Projects

6. The Capital Projects associated with East Heath Car Park, The Hive and the playgrounds at the Adventure and Peggy Jay Centres were considered by this Committee on 30 January 2017, when it was agreed they should proceed to the Project Sub-Committee the following day. All three projects were approved at Gateway 2 and allowed to proceed towards their next Gateway. For East Heath Car Park, this will involve an options appraisal and further consideration by the Consultative Committee and this Committee, before submitting a report to Gateway 3. Following this, the report will be considered by the Corporate Priorities Board to request funding from the City's Cash provision for new schemes.
7. Detailed project plans for the Hive and the Playgrounds at the Adventure and Peggy Jay Centres are being prepared. This will involve engagement, consultation, design and a funding strategy. The Consultative Committee will be consulted prior to completion of the tender report.

Cross-Country Running

8. The Southern Counties Cross-Country Championships took place on 28 January 2017. The weather was dry in the lead-up to the event and on the day itself, so the ground conditions were consequently very favourable. As a result, fewer restoration works will be required compared with previous years. Oak chippings were used instead of the Christmas tree chippings used in previous years to protect asphalt surfaces. The Ranger Team installed temporary barriers following the event to aid the recovery of certain sections of the course. A map detailing the restoration works undertaken and proposed has been prepared (see Appendix 1).
9. On 18 February 2017 the North-West London Young Athletes Cross-Country League held a pilot fixture on the Heath Extension. 114 boys and 87 girls took part; the event was well organised and proved successful. The Operational Services Manager has reviewed the ground conditions following the event. Due to the favourable firm ground conditions, leading up to and during the event, and the number and ages of the runners, there is minimal impact on the ground. The Sports Advisory Forum will undertake a review of the event and the outcomes of this review will be reported to the Consultative Committee.

Cycling

10. The Superintendent and Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager met with a member of the public and a representative from Camden Cycling Forum on 24 February 2017 to discuss the shared use of the Lido to Broadwalk path by both pedestrians and cyclists. The route runs north-south and would potentially link the main cycle path running from Highgate Road to Nassington Road with Gordon House Road, as well as with designated cycle routes going south to Kentish Town and Central London.
11. This proposal has been discussed previously by both the Consultative Committee and this Committee. The most recent proposal was withdrawn, following the failure of the application for Heritage Lottery Funding to create a new vehicle route to the Service Yard at Parliament Hill.
12. Following discussion with the Consultative Committee, the Superintendent proposes that the wider issue of cycling provision should be considered as part of the development of the new Management Plan.
13. The Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager is working with a small cycling group to discuss how the current cycling provision can be maintained on Hampstead Heath. Both he and the Superintendent also met with 'Heath for Feet' representatives in late March to discuss shared walking and cycle paths on Hampstead Heath.
14. The intention now is to combine the cycling group and 'Heath for Feet' into a Working Group and to arrange an inaugural meeting. The most immediate concern expressed by the cyclists is the condition of the bound gravel sections of the existing cycle paths. The Group will also consider improving the

waymarking and signage on the shared-use paths and strategies to promote responsible cycling on the Heath.

Eruv

15. The Superintendent has established that the location of the proposed Eruv pole at Windmill Hill does form part of Hampstead Heath. Minutes of both the Consultative Committee and the Management Committee have been provided to the applicant and a further site meeting has been arranged. The Superintendent has requested the applicant revises the proposals to lessen the visual impact of the Eruv on Hampstead Heath. The Superintendent will aim to present the revised proposals to the June Consultative Committee.

Benches

16. Work on the Bench Project continues, with the mapping and surveys that took place in 2016 providing detailed information about the location, construction and condition of over 550 benches across the Heath. Supervisors are preparing a Bench Work Plan for 2017/18, as set out in the Annual Work Programme. Priority areas include continuation of the improvement works at the summit of Parliament Hill, reinstatement of benches affected by the Ponds Project, and the replacement or removal of any benches that are reaching the end of their lifespan.
17. Recommendations for the provision and management of bench dedications at Hampstead Heath:
 - i) Maintain the current cap on the number and distribution of benches across the Heath, and prepare and maintain a Schedule of Locations that will be updated annually to reflect Annual Work Programmes, as well as being reviewed periodically to ensure benches are located appropriately (a ten-year review period is recommended to align with the review of the wider Management Plan for Hampstead Heath).
 - ii) Apply a design standard to bench renewals and replacements, to ensure benches are in keeping with the landscape characteristics and achieve a consistent standard. To this end, a schedule of appropriate bench styles will be developed, expanding on the current styles found across the Heath (and phasing out less desirable styles).
 - iii) Continue to implement a standard dedication period of ten years for all benches, with an option for applicants to extend their sponsorship on a ten-yearly cycle (at the published fee).
 - iv) Continue to maintain a waiting list for bench dedications and to offer benches for re-dedication as they become available. Aim to reduce the waiting list for a bench dedication on Hampstead Heath to a maximum of 50 applicants, and to cap it at this level in future.
 - v) Revise the current guidance for dedicating a bench, to ensure it aligns with the wider offer across the Open Spaces & Heritage Department.

- vi) Prioritise the renewal and re-dedication of benches that are reaching the end of their life span. A large proportion of benches on the Heath are over 20 years old and no current contact details for the past sponsors are held on file. Recognising the sensitive nature of the removal of benches that have been dedicated in the past, every effort must be made to respect the wishes of the original sponsors. To this end, the following protocol is proposed for the notification of bench renewals:
 - a) Commence notification 12 months prior to scheduled bench renewal.
 - b) Offer first right of refusal for re-dedication of the bench to the registered sponsor (where sponsor records are current).
 - c) Place a notice on the bench at least 3 months and up to 12 months prior to the scheduled bench renewal (where sponsor records are no longer current).
 - d) Retain timber slats bearing the inscribed dedication and store securely for a period of 2 years, in case a sponsor wishes to claim it at a later date.
18. The Superintendent seeks feedback on the recommendations for the provision and management of bench dedications at Hampstead Heath, to inform the development of the policy.

Planning

19. 114-120 West Heath Road - The application was approved at the Barnet Area Planning Committee on 9 March 2017 following some discussion regarding impacts on the veteran tree in Golders Hill Park. Follow-up meetings between the applicant and the City of London were agreed to identify a strategy for protecting trees on the Heath. Some applications to discharge the planning conditions have now been submitted and more are expected in due course.
20. Water House, Millfield Lane - The applicant's planning appeal (ref. APP/X5210/W/16/3160718) to the Planning Inspectorate was formally withdrawn on 7 February 2017. The Superintendent has met with the new owners to discuss the revised proposals and access arrangements for the site.
21. Athlone House (ref. 2016/3587/P) - Planning permission was granted in September 2016 for the restoration and extension of Athlone House for use as a 6-bedroom single-owner dwelling house. Applications to discharge the various planning conditions have yet to be submitted.
22. Land Adjacent to Jack Straws Castle North End Way London NW3 7ES (ref. 2017/2064/P) - The current owner of the site wishes to develop the car park. A meeting is currently being arranged to discuss the latest proposals in more detail.
23. Heath House (ref. 2015/6280/P) - The previous application to convert the existing building into apartments was withdrawn in January 2017. No further

news has been received and it is not known whether a revised proposal will be submitted.

The Good, The Bad and The Ugly – Art installation at Golders Hill Park

24. The Good, The Bad and The Ugly by Jake & Dinos Chapman was de-installed from Golders Hill Park on 27 February 2017. The cost of de-installation from Golders Hill Park was met from the Superintendent's Local Risk Budget.

The Awakening II

25. The Superintendent has received a proposal regarding a possible new art installation on Hampstead Heath. Following a review of the installation requirements, the Superintendent is not proposing to proceed with this art installation.

Storm Doris

26. The decision was taken on 22 February to close Golders Hill Park, The Hill Garden & Pergola, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park on 23 February, in anticipation of Storm Doris. In addition, the Kenwood Ladies' Pond was vacated in the afternoon of 23 February, and English Heritage closed the Kenwood Estate at 12.30pm.
27. 22 trees were damaged, 14 of which were lost (felled, root plate failures, stem failures) and 8 had significant crown/branch damage. A Lombardy poplar has been reduced on the Heath Extension, following concerns that the main stem had moved.
28. The Heath Ranger Team and Conservation Team have been actively working on a number of trees around the Heath to clear the storm damage, and the Tree Officer is continuing to survey the Heath.

Constabulary Update

29. The Superintendent will provide an update at the meeting.

Drones

30. Following feedback from Members of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee in March, the Superintendent is in the process of updating the guidance on the use of drones. A Report will be presented to this Committee in July.

Highgate Wood

31. The Electric gates at the Onslow Gate are now fully operational and are allowing the staff to manage vehicle access to the site. A storage box has been installed at the entrance, so that early morning deliveries for the café no longer

need to drive into the Wood. This arrangement is used at Queen's Park and has successfully reduced vehicle movements.

32. The Play Area safety surface works have been completed. This was a five-year programme to replace the bark chip safety surface used throughout the play facility.
33. The Highgate Wood Team and the Senior Ecologist have drafted the outline of a new Woodland Management Plan for Highgate Wood, following a site visit from a Woodland Management Consultant in March.
34. In late January, Highgate Wood hosted a staff working party attended by 30 people to construct dead hedging around the new conservation area. The session was very successful, with over 100 metres of dead hedging constructed, and was an excellent opportunity for a number of staff members to learn about woodland management in Highgate Wood.

Queen's Park

35. Following a suggestion from the Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group (QPJCG), the Park Manager has engaged the City Surveyors Department to undertake a scoping exercise to consider the construction of an additional accessible toilet facility on the exterior of the Children's Play Area toilets. The Park Manager is preparing a report for the 14 June QPJCG to discuss the Project in more detail.
36. The Queen's Park Farm redevelopment is being led by a small Project Team within the Division. A further report on this project will be brought to this Committee in July 2017, following the opportunity to seek further comments on the proposals from the QPJCG. The Farm was introduced in 1990 and receives in the region of 80,000 visits per annum. It continues to provide an excellent opportunity for children to engage with animals and is a much-loved resource in the Park. The redevelopment of the Farm has the guiding concept of "A small-holding with a sense of fun" and will aim to introduce children to growing vegetables, as well as caring for animals such as chickens, goats and sheep.
37. In June 2017 the QPJCG will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the recent engagement and consultation survey that was carried out at the Queen's Park Café. At their June meeting, they will also consider the Café Service Standards and Performance Indicators, which have been suggested through the Café Working Party. Taking account of the Consultative Committee's views, the Superintendent will then prepare a report for the July meeting of this Committee on the lease and Service Standards for the Queen's Park Café.
38. The Children's sand pit refurbishment has been discussed with the QPJCG and works have commenced with the installation of some items of equipment in March 2017. Further works will be carried out in the autumn / winter of 2017. A final project timeline is being produced to ensure the installation of equipment and any potential closure of the play area causes the least disruption to the Park visitors.

39. With the help of Section 106 moneys, the London Borough of Brent has funded the procurement of additional Trim Trail equipment in the Park. The new equipment was installed in March 2017 and is of wooden construction, which is considered to be more in keeping with the environment of the Park.
40. Applications have been submitted for the Green Flag and London in Bloom Awards, with judging will be carried out during May & June.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Cross Country Restoration map

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