

**HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**  
**Monday, 2 June 2014**

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held at  
Parliament Hill Conference Room, Parliament Hill Staff Yard, Parliament Hill Fields,  
Hampstead Heath, NW5 1QR on Monday, 2 June 2014 at 7.00 pm

**Present**

**Members:**

Jeremy Simons (Chairman)  
Virginia Rounding (Deputy Chairman)  
Xohan Duran (Representative of People with Disabilities)  
Colin Gregory (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association)  
Michael Hammerson (Highgate Society)  
Ian Harrison (Vale of Health Society)  
Dr Gaye Henson (Marylebone Birdwatching Society)  
Susan Nettleton (Heath Hands)  
Helen Payne (Friends of Kenwood)  
Mary Port (Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee)  
Susan Rose (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee)  
Ellin Stein (Mansefield Conservation Area Advisory Committee/Neighbourhood Association)  
Richard Sumray (London Council of Recreation and Sport)  
Simon Taylor (Hampstead Rugby Club)  
John Weston (Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee)  
Jeremy Wright (Heath & Hampstead Society)

**Officers:**

Alistair MacLellan	Town Clerk's Department
David Arnold	Town Clerk's Department
Bob Warnock	Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Declan Gallagher	Operational Manager, Hampstead Heath
Meg Game	Hampstead Heath Ecologist
Richard Gentry	Superintendent of Hampstead Heath Constabulary and Queen's Park Manager
Paul Maskell	Leisure and Events Manager, Hampstead Heath
Jonathan Meares	Trees and Conservation Manager
Esther Sumner	Open Spaces Department
Philip Everett	Director of the Built Environment
Paul Monaghan	Assistant Director of Engineering, Department of the Built Environment

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from John Hunt (South End Green Association) Steve Ripley (Ramblers' Association) and David Walton (Representative of Clubs)

Using the Heath). It was noted that John Etheridge was attending the committee as an observer on behalf of John Hunt.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

3.1 **Minutes of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee Meeting held on 7 April 2014**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2014 were approved as a correct record subject to Steve Ripley (Ramblers' Association) being listed as present.

**Matters Arising**

**Ponds Project Correspondence**

The Chairman noted that the correspondence between the City of London Corporation and the Heath & Hampstead Society between December 2013 and March 2014 had been made available and copies were available on request.

**Planning – Athlone House**

Susan Rose noted that the proposal to list Athlone House had been refused.

**Graffiti – Hill Garden Shelter**

The Chairman noted this would be dealt with as part of the Superintendent's update.

**Dog Control Orders (DCOs)**

The Chairman reiterated that the outcome of the trial of DCOs at Burnham Beeches would be reported to the November meeting of the committee, and that a public report of the City of London Corporation providing an update on the current legislative process would be issued at the end of the meeting.

**The Good, The Bad, The Ugly**

The Chairman noted that the sculpture had been moved to Golders Hill Park on 27 May in the presence of Jake Chapman, who was very pleased with the location. In response to a query from Ian Harrison over why Golders Hill Park had been chosen as a venue over Parliament Hill, the Chairman replied that Golders Hill Park had ultimately been identified as the more secure of the two sites. The Deputy Chairman added that the final decision had also been influenced by concerns expressed by the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee at its last meeting.

In response to a query from Helen Payne, the Operational Manager replied that access issues that had originally prevented the location of the sculptures in Golders Hill Park had been overcome following the decision to use a different location within the Park. The decision had been taken in consultation with the artists.

### **Additional Work Programme Bids 2015/16**

The Chairman noted that the AWP 2015/16 bids for Hampstead Heath were shortly due to be submitted to the Resource Allocation Sub (Policy and Resources) Committee for decision. He cautioned that, whilst 100% of bids had been agreed in the past, this did not necessarily mean that full approval would be granted in the future.

### **Planning – Garden House**

Ian Harrison noted that the owners of Garden House were not proceeding with a proposed alternative scheme for the development of the property.

### **Hampstead Heath Constabulary Dogs**

The Chairman noted that this item would be covered in the Superintendent's update.

### **Pitt Arch Sign**

In response to a question from Ian Harrison, the Superintendent replied that the restoration of the Pitt Arch sign had been included in the Heath work programme.

### **3.2 Minutes of the Sports Advisory Forum held on 12 May 2014**

Richard Sumray introduced the minutes of the Sports Advisory Forum meeting held on 12 May 2014, noting in particular the success of the 'Night of 10,000m' held on 10 May 2014, in spite of the poor weather. The Forum had also examined plans for the Parliament Hill Lido drawn up by the Greater London Council in 1984 that had recently been discovered.

In response to a request from Simon Taylor, the Superintendent agreed that the question of annual and monthly charging for the Athletics Track could be considered at the November meeting of the committee.

### **RECEIVED**

### **3.3 Notes of the Ponds Project Stakeholder Group Seminar held on 13 April 2014**

The committee received the notes of the PPSG meeting held on 13 April 2014.

### **RECEIVED**

### **3.4 Notes of the Ponds Project Stakeholder Group Seminar held on 24 April 2014**

The committee received the notes of the PPSG meeting held on 24 April 2014.

### **RECEIVED**

### 3.5 **Notes of the Ponds Project Stakeholder Group Seminar held on 10 May 2014**

The committee received the notes of the PPSG meeting held on 10 May 2014.

#### **RECEIVED**

#### 4. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Superintendent noted that several meetings had been held to discuss the Hampstead Heath Ponds Project (HHPP) since the last meeting of the committee on 7 April 2014. These had included two Ponds Project Stakeholder Group seminars on a Saturday and Sunday – both followed by an additional session for anyone who could not attend the weekend sessions; a meeting with Brookfield Mansions residents; the Hampstead Heath Angling Society; the Kenwood Ladies Pond Association; Graham White (Senior Wetland Ecologist at the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds); a meeting between the London Borough of Camden, City of London and the Heath & Hampstead Society to discuss emergency planning measures; and a meeting with London Borough of Camden's former Green Councillor, Maya D'Souza. This week officers would be meeting with Stephen Myers, author of *Walking on Water: London's Hidden Rivers Revealed*, and residents adjacent to Highgate No.1.

The Superintendent went on to note that BAM Nuttall had completed their initial ground investigations and surveys on 15 May 2014, a fortnight ahead of schedule. Work undertaken included 15 bore holes and 34 trial pits. Some work had been postponed on account of the nesting season, and this would be completed in August 2014. He concluded by noting there would be a meeting of the Camden Development Management Forum later in the coming week, and further meetings with the Kenwood Ladies Pond Association (10 June) and the Ponds Project Stakeholder Group (26 June). It was anticipated that, subject to the decision of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee on 9 June, that the planning application for the Ponds Project would be submitted to the London Borough of Camden on 4 July 2014.

#### **Planning – Water House**

The Superintendent noted that the application had not been formally progressed by the London Borough of Camden since April. Nevertheless he understood that Camden had possession of the basement impact assessment and were discussing this with the developer. He suggested that it was unlikely the proposal would be submitted to a London Borough of Camden Planning Committee before Summer 2014.

#### **Planning – Archway Tower**

The Superintendent noted that the application had not been considered by the April meeting of the London Borough of Islington's Planning Committee and therefore the developer had appealed and resubmitted an application that was likely to be considered on 5 June. He added that the resubmitted application was not considerably different from the original application and therefore the City of London Corporation's objections and comments on the scheme remained the same.

### **Planning – Athlone House**

Further to the update provided by Susan Rose under Matters Arising, the Superintendent noted that the current application under consideration involving a smaller basement still did not address concerns expressed by the City of London Corporation and therefore the scheme would be objected to.

Michael Hammerson added that the Highgate Society was concerned that the London Borough of Camden were too focused on the issue of Metropolitan Public Land rather than the wider impact of the proposed development.

### **Planning – Garden House**

The Superintendent noted that a larger scheme for the site had been withdrawn.

### **Planning – Swains Lane**

The Superintendent noted that the scheme remained current and the applicant has responded to numerous objections and comments from the Council by amending the scheme. Mary Port added that the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee also had concerns, particularly over the proposed parking arrangements of the new development and that it was hoped - if the scheme went ahead – that alternative road crossings would be provided for visitors attempting to access the Heath.

### **Property – Parliament Hill Athletics Track**

The Superintendent noted that the athletic track showers had been repaired and replaced in time for the 10,000m event on 10 May.

### **Property – Parliament Hill Lido**

The Superintendent noted that repairs to the Lido Café roof would commence in the coming week. The temporary fences have been repositioned to provide as much space on the sun terraces as possible. The Superintendent is continuing to work with the City Surveyor to complete the re-instatement of the boundary walls in the autumn.

### **Pergola Belvedere**

The Superintendent reported that the staircase was expected to be open to the public in approximately two weeks.

### **Hill Garden**

The Superintendent reported that the Camden Listed Building Consent Officer had agreed that harder render could be used. Tanking works to the stairs would have to be completed first and therefore it was estimated that work could start on site in March 2015. The wall would then need approximately six months to dry out before the older damaged render could be removed and the new hard render applied.

### **Golders Hill Park Toilets**

The Superintendent reported that the toilets in Golders Hill Park were still closed but that it was hoped new pumps should be installed soon in order for them to be repaired and reopened.

### **National Grid**

The Superintendent noted that restoration work had been carried out at the Education Centre, including the planting of a wildflower garden. Works to install some hedging would take place in the autumn. He added that restoration works to both the Education Centre and the football pitches had been charged to the National Grid.

### **Network Rail**

The Superintendent reported that Network Rail proposals for both a new electricity substation and the installation of new boundary fencing along the southern perimeter of the Heath had been considered by officers. National Rail had been advised that the location of the new substation was considered inappropriate to the wider setting of the Heath and that the design of the proposed boundary fencing was similarly not in keeping with the character of the Heath's surrounding landscape.

### **Staffing**

The Superintendent commented that he was satisfied with staff performance for the year 2013/14 and that three Heath staff had been awarded a grade of 'outstanding' in the City of London Corporation's internal annual appraisal process. All staff had now set their 2014/15 objectives in liaison with their senior managers.

The Superintendent added that a Senior Zoo Keeper had also recently been recruited for the zoo at Golders Hill Park. In response to a question from Colin Gregory, the Superintendent replied that the Zoo Keeper would be employed on an 18-month fixed term contract and given a mandate to establish the true cost of operating the zoo and deal with licensing issues. They would also be expected to draw up a longer term management plan for the zoo to ensure it was financially sustainable.

### **Hampstead Heath Constabulary Dogs**

The Superintendent reported that his informal consultation on a potential restructure of the Hampstead Heath Constabulary had been extended and was now complete. He was currently drafting a report on the issue.

### **Additional Staff Vehicle**

The Superintendent noted that an additional Land Rover was present on the Heath that was on loan from the City of London Corporation's Department of the Built Environment. The vehicle was ordinarily used to grit difficult-to-access City streets during the winter months and was being used to give the Tree Team greater mobility over the summer period.

### **Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Consultative Committee Walk**

The Superintendent noted that both the Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee and the Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group were being offered a tour of the Heath ahead of the Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group's meeting on 4 June.

### **Open Spaces Identity Project – Hampstead Heath Branding**

The Superintendent reported that the new Hampstead Heath branding had now been launched, with the first example of the new branding being the Hampstead Heath Diary 2014/15. The new branding would become more prevalent as signage across the Heath was updated and replaced.

### **Green Flag and Green Heritage Inspections**

The Superintendent noted that inspectors for both the Green Flag and Green Heritage Award schemes were expected on the Heath over the coming weeks.

### **Events**

The Superintendent reported on recent and forthcoming events on the Heath, highlighting the success of the 10,000m event on 10 May which saw over 75 personal bests set by those taking part. He added that the Leisure and Events Manager was now working with the Highgate Harriers to submit a bid to the London Marathon Trust to secure funding for a repeat of the event in 2015.

The Superintendent went on to note that construction had begun on temporary structures for the Affordable Art Fair which would open on 11 June, and be followed by Grow London on 19 June.

He added that Cancer Research UK's Race for Life was scheduled for 5 July and had proved one of the most popular fundraising events on the Heath to date, given it had seen over £175,000 raised for charity in the last year.

The Superintendent concluded by listing other forthcoming events on the Heath, including the City Dip on 11-12 July, the City of London Festival on 13 July, and Give it A Go on 20 July.

### **Conservation Work**

The Superintendent highlighted the recent work of the Conservation Team, noting that they had planted three new wildflower areas on the Heath in addition to poppy planting for the First World War Centenary. Other work undertaken by the team included algae clearance from Whitestone Pond, injection treatment to eradicate Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed, reed bed maintenance and clearance of storm damage from the recent period of bad weather between October 2013 – February 2014.

He added that staff had been working with English Heritage towards the conservation of the area around Kenwood House Dairy, and with the Friends of Queen's Wood towards the clearance of ponds. A project had also been completed with Highgate Primary School to help create a new school allotment.

### **The Good, The Bad, The Ugly**

In response to a question from Helen Payne, the Chairman confirmed that the sculpture would remain in Golders Hill Park for up to one year. In response to a further suggestion from Helen Payne, the Operational Manager confirmed that the grass around the sculptures would be allowed to grow to ensure they were situated in a semi-rural setting as originally envisaged by the artists.

## 5. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF HAMPSTEAD HEATH:-

### 5.1 Gateway 4c - Detailed Design: Hampstead Heath Ponds Project

The Chairman introduced a joint report of the Director of Open Spaces and the Director of the Built Environment regarding the Gateway 4c – Detailed Design of the Hampstead Heath Ponds Project. He explained the City of London’s Gateway project process and the structure of the report and its appendices.

The Director of the Built Environment noted that the report provided an overview of the current stage of the project. He added that, given no clear preference had been expressed for any of the options that had been presented during the non-statutory consultation and information giving stage, officers had based their recommendation for the detailed design stage on the fundamental principles of the project, such as the desire to minimise tree loss and reduce where possible the overall increase in height of the dams.

The Ponds Project and Management Support Officer provided an update on the trees “at risk” in order to reflect the most up to date picture emerging from the detailed design work. Currently it was forecast that 15 Category C trees were at risk at the Kenwood Ladies Pond rather than 12; it was also likely that the trees “at risk” at Highgate Number 1 Pond would increase and it would also be necessary to carry out some coppicing to provide access for engineering equipment; furthermore 5 rather than 4 Category C trees were at risk at the Viaduct Pond. The City continued to work with Atkins to reduce the numbers of trees “at risk” at the Stock Pond – which reflected the particular concerns of the Ponds Project Stakeholder Group.

Richard Sumray commented that these numbers represented an increase beyond that had been foreseen and therefore expressed concern over the potential for tree loss to increase further. In response, the Director of the Built Environment replied that the City of London continued to work with Atkins to minimise tree loss as far as possible. He commented that the detail of the final design was by no means fixed and therefore it was possible the tree loss could be reduced in due course.

Gaye Henson expressed concern at the proposed timeline, which had works beginning in spring 2015, which would clash with the nesting season on the Heath. In reply the Superintendent commented that any tree works would be carried out in January and February 2015, ahead of the nesting season, and that spring 2015 would be the start-date for ground works.

Helen Payne expressed concern over the wording of the section that outlined Enabling Works, noting that these would be a waste of time and resources if the outcome of a judicial review meant that they were ultimately unnecessary. The Director of the Built Environment replied that the City of London Corporation would not proceed with any works without planning permission. Helen Payne added that a budget of £500,000 for enabling works seemed excessive. In response the Director of the Built Environment replied that the budget was intended to give him the flexibility to ensure all necessary enabling works were carried out in good time.

Jeremy Wright noted that the committee was being asked to provide comment and advice on a report that would ultimately go to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park Committee for decision. He expressed disappointment therefore that the committee had not been granted



access to the second Quantitative Risk Assessment (QRA) referenced in the committee report. He added that the committee report indicated that a Flood Risk Assessment would be made available to the London Borough of Camden when the City of London Corporation submitted its planning application – therefore it should have also been submitted to the committee for its information and consideration.

In reply the Director of the Built Environment noted that the QRA was not an essential document in terms of decision making and would not add any further substantive detail that had not already been provided to members. The first QRA had been helpful in identifying the risk of dam failure, the most likely failure mode, and that a failure would cause unacceptable risk to life, but that once this was established then in accordance with the engineering guidance the dams had to be designed so as to be able to resist the Probable Maximum Flood.

Jeremy Wright stated that the first QRA had been very helpful and therefore the second QRA would no doubt be similarly helpful. He queried the reluctance of the City of London Corporation to share the second QRA with the committee given the published timeline indicated that it should have been drafted by this point of the project. He mentioned the fact that the City of London Corporation had failed, at an earlier point of the project, to provide the Heath & Hampstead Society with responses to over 20 questions regarding the QRA, including the basis of the potential for 1,400 fatalities caused by dam failure.

The Director of the Built Environment replied that the flowchart included with the committee report was wrong in terms of when the second QRA would be made available. It would be more accurate to note that the City of London would carry out a second QRA on the preferred option, which would not be possible until the decision to proceed had been made by both the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee and the Project Sub (Policy and Resources) Committee.

Susan Rose expressed disappointment that the section on traffic movements ignored people who lived in immediate proximity to the Heath, given that many of the roads involved were narrow and had poor sight lines. Moreover she expressed concern that at this late stage it was still unclear over where BAM Nuttall's main base would be located during the course of the project.

In response the Superintendent noted that BAM Nuttall was still drawing up its proposals on issues such as traffic management following a meeting with the Ponds Project Stakeholder Group. He noted that officers were aware of and understood the concerns expressed and therefore were requesting that BAM Nuttall address these through measures such as the use of smaller vehicles, and early delivery times.

Susan Rose commented that residents had a low opinion of the London Borough of Camden's ability to enforce Construction Management Plans (CMPs) and therefore the Corporation and its contractors would need to provide more than honourable commitments.

Ian Harrison agreed, noting that the London Borough of Camden had a poor track record of enforcing Traffic Management Plans in particular, and therefore if residents could not rely on Camden it would be necessary to rely upon the City. In response the Director of the Built Environment said that he

was happy to give that assurance, particularly given the track record of minimal interruption achieved by BAM Nuttall in its recent exploratory surveys of the Ponds and their immediate setting.

In response to a query from Ian Harrison, Jeremy Wright confirmed it was the intention of the Heath & Hampstead Society to launch a judicial review of the Ponds Project if the decision was made to proceed with a planning application. Ian Harrison therefore queried whether the planning application would proceed in the event of a judicial review being launched. The Chairman noted that this was a question for the London Borough of Camden rather than the Corporation.

The Chairman went on to note that the Secretary of the Heath & Hampstead Society, Marc Hutchinson, was present in the public gallery and invited him to address the committee on the topic of the proposed judicial review if he so wished.

Marc Hutchinson confirmed that a judicial review of the Ponds Project would be sought as soon as reasonably practicable depending upon the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee's decision on the project on 9 June. He confirmed that the City and Society had agreed to request expedition, and if this request was successful, it could be expected that a hearing would take place in October or November 2014.

The Director of the Built Environment noted that a judicial review would not in itself be a reason to halt the planning application, but nevertheless the City of London Corporation would take a judgment over whether to submit the application in the event of a judicial review being launched.

Ellin Stein queried the relevance of ensuring the dams did not fail, given the level of surface flooding downstream envisaged would reach its full extent six hours before the dams were forecast to fail in the event of a major storm. In reply the Director of the Built Environment noted that the key driver of the project was the need to ensure the dams were not at risk of failure and met the requirements of Institution of Civil Engineer's guidance rather than to mitigate the impact of flooding downstream.

Richard Sumray queried the purpose of carrying out a second QRA given the low importance attached to it by the Director of the Built Environment. The Director of the Built Environment replied that the commitment to carry one out had been made at the start of the project and therefore the Corporation intended to carry it out. Richard Sumray commented that, the reservations of the committee aside (which he felt would be resolved in the event of a judicial review), the two proposed options seemed sensible.

Jeremy Wright drew the committee's attention to the list of documents that the Corporation intended to submit alongside its planning application, and queried why not even drafts of these were available given the planning application date was only four weeks away. He added that the Heath & Hampstead Society could not support either option outlined in the report. He continued by expressing reservations over tree loss particularly at Stock Pond, the loss of a lime tree, the creation of a wetland area below the Catchpit, and the proposal to create an island in the Model Boating Pond. He also suggested that there should be a greater curve in the culvert at Hampstead Number 2 Pond to protect the London Plane trees, if possible.

In response to Jeremy Wright's comment regarding the availability of planning documents the Director of the Built Environment replied that the

documents had not yet been completed. The Superintendent, in response to concerns over tree loss, reiterated that officers would continue to work with Atkins to ensure this was kept to a minimum.

In response to an observation from Susan Rose over the need to have a healthily cynical attitude towards the chosen contractors, the Director of the Built Environment noted that Atkins and BAM Nuttall were well aware of the sensitivity of the project. He added that BAM Nuttall had been through a rigorous tender process and were chosen on the basis of their suitability for the project, rather than cost.

Colin Gregory noted that, in the event of the project proceeding as envisaged, it would be useful to emphasise the guiding principles set out in paragraph 44 of the committee report. He added that he hoped that the relations between the Heath & Hampstead Society and the City of London Corporation would remain amicable and constructive in their bid to resolve their differences of opinion over the project.

The Director of the Built Environment noted that the City of London Corporation had always been content to engage in academic debate with the Heath & Hampstead Society over the impact of dam failure and surface water flooding, but this could not be allowed to detract from what it saw as its statutory duty to ensure the dams conformed with legislative requirements. He noted that during the course of the City's dialogue with the Heath & Hampstead Society, consideration had been given to a "Part 8" application. However the Society had not responded to the City's questions about this procedure and had continued to hold the threat of Judicial Review should this procedure not result in the outcome sought by the Society. The City was therefore not inclined to follow this route. Against this context the Corporation had no choice but to proceed whilst being as inclusive and open to consultation as possible.

Susan Nettleton expressed concerns over the impact to the Catchpit posed by the proposals. She believed the character of that area would change significantly and the visual impact would be most marked from the western approaches. The Director of the Built Environment agreed, but noted that work on the Catchpit was being carried out to ensure there was a lesser impact on other areas of the Highgate Chain.

## **5.2 Ladies' Pond Fatality Report**

The Leisure and Events Manager introduced a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath on the fatality that occurred in the Kenwood Ladies Pond on 4 August 2013.

He noted that it was a difficult report to present to the committee and it covered what had been a difficult period for all who had been involved in the incident. He commented that the City of London Corporation could be proud of its response to the incident given that it had been handled professionally, responsibly and caringly.

He went on to note that the lifeguards were extremely busy during summer 2013 and were carrying out regular rescues from the Ponds. He commented that the peer-review report on the City of London Corporation's lifeguarding practices demonstrated that they were ensuring the Corporation was meeting its duty of care to swimmers. He emphasised that the fatality had been the first one on the Heath whilst lifeguards had been on duty, for 37 years.

He concluded by noting that the health and safety report concluded that the City of London was doing all it could to limit the hazards faced by swimmers in a natural water setting, but that ultimately the responsibility in responding to those hazards was the individual swimmer's.

Richard Sumray welcomed the action plan included with the report that outlined improvements that would be made to the swimming experience at the Ponds. He supported in particular the induction of new swimmers and the installation of a second platform, which were recommendations of the Sports Advisory Forum. Moreover he welcomed the fact a report on proposed changes would be submitted to the Forum in due course.

Jeremy Wright commented that the lifeguards did an excellent job but queried the usefulness of updated signage. In response the Superintendent replied that chalk boards had been introduced to reinforce the safety messages and share relevant information with bathers.

In response to a query from Michael Hammerson the Superintendent replied that the intention was to ensure there was no conflict between swimmers and anglers. For example carp fishing involved casting lines towards the centre of the Ponds, which posed a clear conflict with swimmers. To compensate for the removal of fishing from the mixed pond and restrictions at the Men's pond improvements to the other fishing ponds were being explored.

### **5.3 Weddings and Civil Partnerships at the Hill Garden and Pergola**

The Superintendent of Hampstead Heath introduced a report outlining proposals to begin offering weddings and civil partnerships at the Hill Garden and Pergola.

He thanked those present for the comments that had been provided on the proposal at the committee walk on 29 March and noted that officers intended to adopt a 'soft opening' of the proposal to ensure its impact on the site and other visitors was kept to a minimum.

John Weston welcomed the fact there would be a 'soft opening' but expressed concern over the potential impact of weekend popularity of weddings.

In response to a question from Colin Gregory regarding how long set-up and dismantling of temporary wedding structures would take, the Superintendent replied that officers would seek to encourage a minimalist approach to the site given the appeal of its landscaped setting. Colin Gregory commented that the time of day at which the wedding was conducted would also have an impact on other visitors, given an afternoon wedding would conflict more with popular visiting times compared to a morning wedding.

Richard Sumray commented that he supported the proposal but agreed with Colin Gregory that the time it took to set up and dismantle temporary structures would be an issue, particularly in the event of rain.

Jeremy Wright commented that he too welcomed the proposals provided appropriate safeguarding work on the setting was put in place by officers. He welcomed the fact that the initiative would encourage a greater awareness amongst the general public of what was arguably a little-known part of the Heath.

Helen Payne endorsed the concerns expressed over the impact on the wider public posed by set-up time of weddings and civil partnerships. She noted

that particular rooms and areas of the property being closed off at Kenwood House had been known to be resented by other members of the public seeking to enjoy the site.

Michael Hammerson suggested that the City of London Corporation adopt internet marketing of the proposal to maximise awareness amongst interested couples.

Jeremy Wright requested that the impact of the proposal be evaluated after two years and the conclusions of the evaluation be reported back to the committee.

In response to the concerns expressed, the Superintendent noted that there was a demonstrable appetite for Friday ceremonies which would hopefully lessen the impact posed to the general public by staging weddings and civil partnerships at the weekend.

#### **5.4 Outdoor Triples Table Tennis Table**

The Leisure and Events Manager introduced a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath regarding a proposal to install a triple table tennis table on the Heath.

The Leisure and Events Manager explained that the proposal was inspired by comments from the public following the success of similar initiatives in Golders Hill Park and Queen's Park, and that the decision to install a triple table had been made as this would be more inclusive.

He added that the proposed location of the table would be adjacent to the Parliament Hill tennis courts as this would be in keeping with the current use of that area, and it was hoped that the installation of the triple table tennis table would encourage the informal development of the area as a youth 'hub'. Moreover, he noted that the installation would serve as a good marketing tool for the upcoming Give it a Go event on 20 July.

Richard Sumray commented that the proposal looked good and was arguably the right approach for that area of the Heath.

Michael Hammerson similarly welcomed the proposal but expressed concern over the potential impact of increased activity on area of grass on which it would be situated and the improved setting of the Bull Path. This impact could be mitigated by placing the table tennis table as close as possible to the tennis hut.

Susan Nettleton commented that it was an excellent idea but that a green table would be arguably more appropriate aesthetically, instead of a black one.

Jeremy Wright noted that he shared the concerns expressed by Michael Hammerson but that he welcomed the proposal overall.

#### **5.5 Management Work Plan for Preacher's Hill**

The Hampstead Heath Ecologist introduced a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that outlined a management work plan for Preacher's Hill. She noted that the aim of the plan was to increase public access to a little-known part of the Heath without detracting from its current natural character. She added that there was the potential problem of Ash Dieback which would have to be monitored over the longer term.

Jeremy Wright noted that the Heath & Hampstead Society fully supported the management plan and that its members were grateful for the excellent work of the Hampstead Heath Ecologist and her colleagues.

**6. QUESTIONS**

There were no questions.

**7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no other business.

**8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee will be held on 3 November 2014 at 7.00pm in the Conference Room, Parliament Hill Staff Yard, Hampstead heath, NW5 1QR.

**The meeting ended at 9.04 pm**

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Chairman

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