



Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee

Date: MONDAY, 19 JUNE 2023

Time: 5.30 pm

Venue: THE GREENWOOD CENTRE, 37 GREENWOOD PLACE, NW5 1LB

Members:

William Upton KC (Chairman)	Helen Payne, (Friends of Kenwood)
Ray Booth, (Barnet Mencap)	Harunur Rashid, (Black and Minority Ethnic Communities representative)
Nick Bradfield, (Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee)	Susan Rose, (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
John Foley	Ellin Stein, (Mansfield Conservation Area Advisory Committee & Neighbourhood Association Committee)
Merlin Fox, (Heath Hands)	Richard Sumray, (London Council for Sport and Recreation)
Colin Gregory, (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association)	Jeff Waage, (Heath & Hampstead Society)
Michael Hammerson, (Highgate Society)	Steve Ripley, Ramblers Association
Dr Gaye Henson, (Marylebone Birdwatching Society)	David Walton, (Representative of Clubs using facilities on the Heath)
Simon Hunt, (Open Spaces Society)	John Weston, (Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Sharlene McGee, (Leonard Cheshire)	Simon Williams, (Vale of Health Society)

Enquiries: Blair Stringman
Blair.Stringman@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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<https://www.youtube.com/@CityofLondonCorporation/streams>

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Ian Thomas CBE
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**

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

For Decision

3. **MINUTES**

a) Draft minutes of Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held on 17 April 2023 (Pages 5 - 8)

b) Draft minutes of Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held on 17 May 2023

(To Follow).

4. **HAMPSTEAD HEATH SPORTS ADVISORY FORUM MINUTES**

To receive the public minutes of the Hampstead Heath Sports Advisory Forum meeting held on 12 June 2023.

(To Follow).

For Information

5. **ASSISTANT DIRECTORS UPDATE**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Discussion

(Pages 9 - 22)

6. **HAMPSTEAD HEATH BATHING PONDS AND LIDO ANNUAL REVIEW 2022/23**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Discussion

(Pages 23 - 28)

7. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

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

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 30 OCTOBER 2023**

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HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE Monday, 17 April 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held at The Greenwood Centre, 37 Greenwood Place, NW5 1LB on Monday, 17 April 2023 at 5.30 pm

Present

Members:

William Upton KC (Chairman)
Nick Bradfield
John Foley
Merlin Fox
Colin Gregory
Michael Hammerson
Dr Gaye Henson
Helen Payne
Susan Rose
Richard Sumray
Jeff Waage

Officers:

Ben Dunleavy	- Town Clerk's Department
Declan Gallagher	- Natural Environment Department
Stefania Horne	- Natural Environment Department
Paul Maskell	- Natural Environment Department
Jonathan Meares	- Natural Environment Department
Blair Stringman	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Draft minutes of Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held on 16 January 2023

RESOLVED – That, the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2023 be agreed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

- The venue of the meeting be changed to The Greenwood Centre, 37 Greenwood Place, NW5 1LB

- Under Any Other Business, it was noted that discussion had been raised in relation to professional dog walking licenses due to a concern about the number of dogs being walked.

MATTERS ARISING

- Members requested an update on the Kenwood Master Plan. A Member (Friends of Kenwood), noted that consultation had now ended however, the plan was in its second draft form. The Member requested that should other Members of the Committee have any questions to email in so that questions could be taken forward to the correct people. It was noted that Friends of Kenwood had provided significant financial support to the Master Plan.
- Members requested that an update on professional dog walking licences be included and picked up as part of the Director's Update.

3.2 Draft minutes of Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee

RESOLVED – That, the draft minutes of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee be noted.

4. ASSISTANT DIRECTORS UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning an update on matters relating to Hampstead Heath since January 2023.

In response to a question raised by a Member (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association), the Assistant Director noted that consideration into a working group to review the management strategy had been suggested by the Consultative Committee and should Members like to part of this working group, they were asked to inform the Assistant Director.

Projects Update

In relation to the Ponds Improvement Works, Members were informed that consultation with an ecologist had taken place to ensure that there were no adverse impacts.

The Assistant Director noted that the implementation of the cricket improvement work is going through the planning phase. The Assistant Director agreed to send a summary link to Members when it becomes available.

Café Tendering

The Assistant Director informed Members that the Natural Environment Division had worked closely with City Surveyor's in engaging an expert consultant to help in the marketing of the café's. It was noted that a marketing strategy would be presented as a report to a future meeting.

Good News

The Assistant Director noted that that a dashboard would be populated every month to update Members on Crime and Disorder issues. It was agreed that this would be shared with the Committee in the future.

In response to a question raised by a Member (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee), Officers noted that wild swimming was now very popular and a programme of works on grass restoration were ongoing and the team would be putting further efforts into solving these issues.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

5. **HAMPSTEAD HEATH SPORTS ADVISORY FORUM MINUTES**

The Committee received a report of draft action points of the Hampstead Heath Sports & Wellbeing Forum.

Members were informed that a bid is being developed for numerous multi use game areas within Camden with the aim to encouraging access for priority groups. Bid submission will be between October - December 2023 with feedback on funding early 2024.

A high level sport strategy for the Natural environment, including Hampstead Heath, is in preparation and the committee was informed on the purpose and the structure of the strategy.

6. **HIGH-LEVEL BUSINESS PLAN 2023/24**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning the high-level business plan 2023/24 for the Natural Environment Division of the Environment Department.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

7. **APPOINTMENT OF THE MEMBER OF THE LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY TO THE HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk concerning the appoint of a Member to the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee.

RESOLVED – That, the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee support that Liz Andrew, nominated by the London Natural History Society, be appointed as a Member of the Consultative Committee in accordance with the London Government Reorganisation (Hampstead Heath) Order 1989.

8. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

A question was raised on the following:

- A question was raised about the boarded-up house on the southeast entrance to the Heath, next to William Ellis School. The Assistant Director noted that the house has suffered severe subsidence and was currently not habitable. It was noted a claim had been made to the insurance company. However, the amount of money to be received

would most likely not be enough to replace the damage. As a result, options are being considered, including its reuse or even demolition. Further meetings with insurance and surveyors are planned. The Chair welcomed the opportunity for further discussion on the use of this building which is located at an important entrance point to the Heath.

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

There was no urgent business.

10. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 19 JUNE 2023**

The meeting ended at 7.46 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Blair Stringman
Blair.Stringman@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Committee(s): Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	Date(s): 19 June 2023
Subject: Assistant Directors Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11 & 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Executive Director, Environment	For Discussion
Report author: Stefania Horne, Assistant Director	

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on matters relating to Hampstead Heath since April 2023.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of the report.

Main Report

Management Framework

1. Progress on the annual plan for 2023/24 is attached at appendix 1.

Events

2. The Coronation Celebrations held on 8 May were a great success. The programme included music including the London Youth concert Band and culminated with a set from the 60s legends the Bruvvers and a fantastic light show based around Saturdays Coronation of King Charles III. The day also included workshops from Heath Hands and the education team, a circus performance, fun fair ride and several cosmopolitan caterings offers.
3. It was estimated that on the day over 4,000 people participated to the event. The event was held in partnership with London Borough of Barnet and supported by the Heath and Hampstead society and the Hampstead Garden suburb Residents Association who sponsored the catering.

4. The Affordable Art Fair (AAF) was held on 10 – 14 May. 1000's visitors attended the launch for the charitable preview. The event lasted 5 days and the footfall is increasing steadily since COVID.
5. The Night of the 10k Personal Bests (20 May) was a great success. The 2023 event welcomed record athletic performances and record spectator and viewing figures, with approximately 8,000 spectators watching throughout the day. The Parliament Hill Athletics Track now proudly boasts a UK All-Comers Record time for women, no woman has ever run faster on any track within the UK. This was achieved by the winner who ran 29mins 59 seconds to record the 11 fastest time in global history.
6. The evening was complemented by incredible TV viewing figures. The event was watched by a global audience, from the BBC to European Athletics and British Athletics platforms, with over 50,000 watching live from European Athletics channel alone. On the red button on BBC the last two races were covered live and lots of praise received for the investment the City has secured for our Athletics Track.
7. Upcoming events include:
 - 2 July, Kites on the Heath
 - 19 July, Give it a Go
 - 3 September, Duathlon
 - 3 September, Natural Aspects Concert
 - 19-29 October, Zippos Circus
 - 18 November, London Youth Games

Projects update

8. A project on a page summary has been prepared in relation to the Ponds improvement works (appendix 2), and the Athletics Track improvements (appendix 3). The pond project is still green and the Athletic track is amber due to the high risk related to the tight timeline.

Partnership Working

9. Partnership working with the Heath and Hampstead Society, Heath hands and the London Natural History society is very strong and allow us to conduct a number of surveys that inform our annual conservation plans. Surveys include the long running reptile surveys, plant classification, butterfly and dragonfly surveys and hedgehog surveys.
10. The Hampstead Heath team also works with a number of educational establishments to further research and participate to mutually beneficial studies that can providing important data that inform our management practices.
11. Work in partnership with Royal Free Charity to provide a view of the heath to patients is progressing well and expected to be piloted in the summer.

Café tendering

12. The work on the marketing of the cafes is progressing and a marketing strategy is in preparation. Careful consideration of priorities needs to take place to determine the property or service procurement interests to be market tested. This will include length and type of lease in order to balance and reflect the weighting required by the Charities and City of London Corporation between optimising income generation, ensuring that the cafes are kept in good repairing condition, and aspirations about levels of food and beverage provision.

Constabulary Update

13. The Constabulary continue to undertake general and targeted patrols of Hampstead Heath. Focus remains enforcing the bylaws in relation to dog control, cycling, alongside anti-social behaviour. From April targeted patrols of the swimming facilities have been increased in line with season usage. Currently on average the Constabulary received over 300 calls a month from Members of the public.

Nature Conservation

14. The Heath Ecologist has been working with the Heath and Hampstead Society and several external partners to look at the impact and knowledge of pesticides used in pet treatments. A master's student from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine has been engaged and will be carrying out field work this summer to collect data on pesticide levels as well as conduct questionnaires on public awareness of the issue. Officers have previously worked with partners to assist in producing information about the issue which is available at <https://www.veterinaryprescriber.org/safedogswimming>. Initial testing in 2021 revealed high levels of some of these pesticides in two dog swimming areas.

Good News

15. Just giving has confirmed our registration and now all the steps to progress with gift aid has been completed. We are now setting up pages for appropriate campaigns and links to our web pages to make sure donors can benefit from gift aid.

London Tree Officer Association (LTOA) Spring Webinar on Oak Processionary Moth

16. On the 17 May, the Tree Management Officer and Senior Arborist hosted the recent London Tree Officer A seminar at the Lecture Theatre at Kenwood House. They presented on the evolution of Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) Management at Hampstead Heath.
17. The presentation focused on the evolution of OPM management here at the North London Open Spaces showcasing the emphasis on Nature Based Solutions including bird predation and insect parasitism. The Tree Team also led a walk across the site to a field demonstration of the OPM management approach, also taking a look at our veteran tree management.
18. The seminar was attended by 60 members of the LTOA including Borough Tree officers and Arboricultural consultants. The event was very well received. We have

been asked to repeat the presentation at the National Tree Officer Conference later this year.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

19. The projects and works outlined in this report contribute towards the achievement of the three aims set out in the City of London Corporate Plan: Contribute to a flourishing society, Support a thriving economy and Shape outstanding environment.
20. The projects and works outlined in this report contribute towards the achievement of the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018-2028 Strategic Outcomes A: The Heath is maintained as a flourishing green space and historic landscape, B: Improved quality of life for Heath visitors, C: The Heath is inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors and D: Greater number of and diversity of People taking care of the Heath.

Financial Implications

21. Donations are currently being sought for the following project:
 - Model Boating Pond Island - wildlife sanctuary (£50,000). The project includes works to install additional reed beds and protect the island at the Model Boating Pond. £6,303.00 has currently been raised towards this project.
22. Donations can be made via the City of London website: <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/hampstead-heath/donate-to-hampstead-heath>

Resource Implications

23. No impact.

Climate Implications

24. Included within the annual plan for 2023/24 (appendix 1) are a series of projects which contribute towards achieving the City of London's Climate Action Strategy, which was launched in October 2020. A key part of the strategy is conserving and enhancing biodiversity alongside reducing carbon emissions. The Climate Action Strategy will be embedded into future strategies which are currently being drafted within the Natural Environment Division.

Legal Implications

25. No impact.

Risk Implications

26. Risks are monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk Register.

Equality Implications

27. No impact.

Security Implications

28. Security implications are monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk register.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Annual plan for 2023/24
- Appendix 2 – Project on a Page (Swimming Capital Project)
- Appendix 3 – Project on a Page (Athletics Track Capital Project)

Stefania Horne

Assistant Director, Natural Environment

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Nature Recovery & Heritage (Protect & Conserve the Heath)

Location	Details of Proposed Work: April 2023 - March 2024	Area of responsibility and progress	RAG status
QP, HH	Implement relaxed mowing regimes linking to the climate action strategy	Conservation & Local Team- Areas have been identified and grass cutting regimes were changed	
HH	Implement Soil Survey Partnership Project	Tree team- tree team working with partners as part of a research that connects soil conditions to tree welfare.	
QP	Improve the Woodland Walk at Queen's Park	Local Team- consultation planned for summer/autumn	
All Sites	Continue the Veteran Tree protection programme	Tree Team- ongoing	
HH	Continue to implement the Ponds and Wetlands Plan	Conservation & Local Teams- . ongoing maintenance, planning desilting programmes and fishing platforms to manage pond usage for angling	
All Sites	Continue to manage invasive species	Tree team- working in partnership with DEFRA and Environment agency for an innovative approach to manage Oak Processionary moth. Other invasive species are also proactively managed through an annual programme	
HH, HW & QP	Embed the new tree management software	Tree Team- transfer of data is being implemented.	
QP	Scope opportunities for sensory garden improvements at Queen's Park	Local Team	
All Sites	Continue to work towards achieve the COL Climate Action Strategy, including exploring opportunities for recycling, develop and support nature recovery plans	Conservation & Local Teams- working wider within the Natural environment	
HH	Explore grazing opportunities at Hamstead Heath	Conservation- grazing site identified and progressing with the help of the Heath and Hampstead Society and Heath hands. Planned to start in Sept.	
HH & QP	Work with Butterfly Conservation at Heath Extension and Queens Park to increase biodiversity	Conservation & Local Team- areas have been worked and seeded	
All Sites	Identify other priority projects for habitat and species conservation according to annual plan	Conservation- ongoing as part of the nature conservation plan based on surveys. Priority areas areas of work are invertebrates, shrub management and successional management. Working with external organisation to maximise opportunities.	

Community Engagement & Sports (The Heath enriches our lives)


Location	Details of Proposed Work: April 2023 - March 2024	Area of responsibility and progress	RAG status
HH, HW & QP	Continue to work with Heath Hands and increase awareness through volunteering	Heath Hands- ongoing	
HH	Work with Heath hands and Local Councils and organisations to maximise the value of nature for health and well being	Conservation/Heath Hands	
All Sites	Develop and deliver walks to encourage participation and wellbeing	Local Teams & Communications/Heath Hands	
All Sites	Work in partnership with local friends groups and local charities etc. to support community events	Local Teams & Events- ongoing	
All Sites	Continue to develop the Corporate volunteering programme	Heath Hands & Local Teams- ongoing	
HH, HW	Implement the Cricket improvement projects	Local Teams- Heath extension works are going through planning, Parliament Hill improvements are progressing. Highgate woods works are under review.	
HH	Continue to review the Lido offer	Local Team & Development. Phase 1 completed. Funding needed to develop this further.	
All Sites	Review sport provision in line with a proposed new sport strategy	Local Team & Development Sport strategy in development.	
All Sites	Identify additional funding opportunities and work with National and regional organization and funders to support the development of sport facilities and infrastructure	Development	
All sites	Work together with the learning team to engage with schools and implement the learning programme	Learning team and local teams	

Visitor (The Heath is welcoming and inclusive)




Location	Details of Proposed Work: April 2023 - March 2024	Area of responsibility and progress	RAG status
All Sites	Improve visitor usage data capture	Visitor data is being analysed and soon will be available	Green
All Sites	Review of events programme and site specific policies	Events	Blue
HW	Implement the Highgate Woods Roman Kiln project	Local Team & Heritage Project progressing well. Surveys in progress	Green
All sites	Review the online presence and social media usage for all sites to improve the visitor experience and improve communication	Development	Blue
All Sites	Continue to engage with visitors in relation to behaviours	Constabulary & Local Teams- Constabulary team in development through the TOM review	Green
GHP	Develop a visitor offer for the Zoo at Golders Hill Park	Local Team & Communications Package of visitor experience is being tested. Terms and condition in preparation with a review of the web page.	Green
HH	Introducing Automatic number plate recognition to modernise enforcement in our car parks	Contract in preparation with implementation planned shortly.	Green
All Sites	Review of Customer Relationship Management systems, customer pathways and booking systems	Development	Blue

Infrastructure and Sustainability (Together we care for the Heath)

Location	Details of Proposed Work: April 2023 - March 2024	Area of responsibility and progress	RAG status
HH	Continue to develop the Parliament Hill Masterplan	Development & Local Team. Masterplan being scoped and ready for consultation during the summer months.	Green
HH	Mid-term review of the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018-28	Development	Blue
HH, HW, QP	Regulate licensing on site	Constabulary and Communications- review of licences in progress	Green
All Sites	Scope a funding raising plan for North London Open Spaces including sponsorships and donations	Development	Blue
HH	Implement the Ponds Safety, Access and Security project.	Swimming Project progressing well within budget.	Green
HH	Review provision of Aerator for the Ponds	Conservation- complex issue as balance need to be struck with usage of the ponds. New areators need to be considered. Currently researching.	Yellow
All Sites	Implement Ranger maintenance work programme	Operations & Local Teams- ongoing	Green
All Sites	Review Playground provision and implement improvements as identified	Development & Local Team- improvements required are being scoped for a capital bid.	Green
HH, HW & QP	Café retendering	Natural Environment with supported outsourcing enabled by the City Surveyor marketing strategy is being developed	Green
HH	Implement Athletics Track Resurfacing Project	Development & Local Team. Contractors on site from 12 June. Project is still amber dur to tight timescales and high risks.	Yellow
All Sites	Review the memorial bench sponsorship scheme	Operations	Blue
All Sites	Develop beneficial relationships with Horticultural education providers	Operations	Blue
All sites	Review the Asset Management Plan for Hampstead Heath and work with the surveyors department and the wider Natural Environment division to review build assets and identify a strategic approach for their use.	Development	Yellow
HW	Review Conservation Plan for Highgate Wood	Development & Local Team	Blue
QP	Review Conservation Plan for Queen's Park	Development & Local Team	Blue


SWIMMING - Access, Safety & Security	Outcome	Lead	Overall status
	Improved safety, access and security across the three Bathing Ponds.	Richard Chamberlain (C. Surveyors)	

Date of Report: 7 June 2023	Phase: Procurement
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Highlights	Next Steps	Metrics	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gateway 5 formally approved on 28th February Procurement made the formal award to the chosen contractor on 1st March Works started on site on 11th April, with a Practical Completion (PC) date of 21st August. Aim is to keep ponds open during the majority of the works, this is continuously assessed. Progress to date includes new building and drainage works at the Mixed Bathing Pond. Mechanical and electrical works are progressing at the Ladies' Bathing Pond. Foundations works have started at the Men's Bathing Pond. 	<p>Project Completion – August 2023</p> <p>Gateway 6 – November 2023</p>	Budget	
		Schedule	
		Risk	

Risks and Issues	Reasons for RAG Status
<p>Key Risks</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Planning conditions discharge Work sequence & access restrictions changes Construction Environmental Issues Project Programme overruns 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> RAG status has been re-baselined following the Gateway 5 report Schedule is Amber as there is a risk, this could overrun if issues arise on site.

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PH Athletics Track Surface Reconstruction	Outcome	Lead	Overall status
	Undertake a full re-surfacing of the 8-lane Parliament Hill Athletics Track & associated infrastructure (i.e., LED floodlighting) to obtain UKA “TrackMark” certification.	Stefania Horne	

Date of Report: 07 June 2023
Phase: Final Design / Pricing

Highlights	Next Steps	Metrics	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track Surface Option 1: Non-porous Sandwich System to be installed. Floodlighting Option 1: 10 x 18m masts in new positions elected as preferred option (subject to planning). FM Conway are instructed to mobilise works to start on site 12 June 2023 Track surfacing specialist (Polytan) is engaged and committed to project Planning Application has been registered (Ref. 2023/1553/P); consultation period ended on 05 June. Track engagement event on 13/05/2023 – well received feedback from locals, track users and stakeholders generally. Additional works to drainage and subsurface to track are required to achieve compliance criteria. This means few Stakeholder requests will be affordable from the current budget. 	Gateway 5 approval ongoing Commence on site 12/06/2023	Budget	
		Schedule	
		Risk	

Risks and Issues	Reasons for RAG Status
<u>Key Risks/Issues:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Project Programme and Gateway Process timescales are very tight due to the seasonal nature of the works and scheduled events. Unexpected additional works required following survey results. Scope Reduction to achieve Budget has been necessary 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Until we reach Gateway 5, overall risk is Amber. Risk, Budget and Programme are Amber due to the tight programme and “weather window” for construction works, planning consent still to be obtained, and awaited survey results which may influence works required and sequencing.

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Committee(s): Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	Date(s): 19 June 2023
Subject: Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds and Lido Annual Review 2022/23	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11 & 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Executive Director, Environment	For Discussion
Report author: Stefania Horne, Assistant Director	

Summary

This report provides Members with a review of the Swimming season during 2022/23 at the Bathing Ponds and the Parliament Hill Lido.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. There are three Lifeguarded natural Bathing Ponds at Hampstead Heath. The Kenwood Ladies' Bathing Pond and Highgate Men's Bathing Pond are open all year round, and the Mixed Bathing Pond is Lifeguarded during the Summer season.
2. The Parliament Hill Lido is a Lifeguarded outdoor un-heated chlorinated 60m swimming pool which also opens all year round.
3. This annual update sets out:
 - A summary of the 2022/23 Swimming Season
 - Improvements in access at the bathing ponds
 - Planning for the summer 2023 season

2022/23 Swimming Season

4. The 2022/23 swimming season has been busy with over 600,000 swims – partly due to the increasing popularity of cold water swimming and due to the summer heatwave.
5. Swimming season tickets have again been extremely popular, particularly in Spring and in the lead-up to the warmer weather. From the beginning of May until the end of August, there was a mixture of free-flow where no advance booking was required and sessions which did require an advance booking at the Lido and at the Ponds a similar schedule was introduced from June until the end of August.
6. This hybrid system allows for spontaneity and for swimmers to swim each day without a booking although queuing was necessary when the Ponds or Lido reached capacity. This operational model is proving very effective in preventing large queues building up outside the facilities and reducing incidents of anti-social behavior inside the facilities, creating a safer environment for swimmers and staff.
7. The Hampstead Mixed Bathing Pond season operated until 31 October. Operational arrangements are listed in Appendix 1.

Season Tickets

8. The table below details the number and type of season tickets issued. The table shows the increase in demand and uptake of season tickets from 2020. Income from online season tickets is about a third of the total income.

Season Ticket Type	12 Month	6 Month	1 Month	Total 2022/23	Total 2021/22	Total 2020/21
All Facilities - Adult	483	268	-	751	582	407
All Facilities - Concession	129	64	-	193	152	125
All Facilities - Free Early Morning Swim for U16's & 60+	526	59	-	585	623	472
All Facilities – Free Carer	28	-	-	27	25	6
Lido - Adult	243	187	209	639	478	283
Lido - Concession	74	71	73	218	124	86
Bathing Ponds - Adult	876	1544	-	2,420	2,245	1307
Bathing Ponds - Concession	298	463	-	761	668	563

Season tickets issued 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

Swimming participation

9. The following table shows the number of swims during the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Facility	Number of swims
Lido	234,099
Bathing Ponds	368,678
Total	602,777

Outreach and community value

10. Free swim sessions were made available to several groups, schools and play-schemes throughout the summer at the Lido. This included:

- 30 young refugees from DOST visited the Lido on 4 occasions.
- A local Somalian group were introduced by Heath Hands to the Lido- most swimming in an open-air pool for the first time.
- Talacre Playcentre who visited on several occasions.
- Brookfield primary school participated in a 7 week water safety awareness programme for years 3,4,5&6. Our Lifeguards delivered 12 free sessions for 120 children in total.
- NHS key workers, many from the BAME community, were given an introduction to open water coaching on Tuesday evenings.
- Swim Unity provided 6 x women only sessions in September at the Lido
- Mental Health Swim sessions at the Lido and Mixed Pond continued on a monthly basis.
- The Lido hosted the British Water Polo Association's 60th Anniversary celebrations in July 2022. The current GB men's and women's team played exhibition matches against the GB 2012 Olympic teams.
- The charity Crisis held their Icebreaker challenge event at the Lido in January 2023.

Capital Project to improve accessibility, security and safety

11. Following the 2019 Swimming Review and advice from the Health and Safety Executive, funding was secured to implement safety, access and security works across the three Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds. This work started on site in April 2023 and includes:

- Improving visibility from the lifeguard huts at Men's and Mixed Pond
- Addition of accessible changing, shower, WC and waterside hoist at the Men's and Mixed Pond and keeping the existing open plan changing room in the Men's Pond.
- Provision of accessible changing, shower and accessible WC within the existing accessible toilet space at the Ladies' Pond

12. The Ladies' Pond and Men's Pond have been able to stay open throughout the works and the Mixed Pond was delayed in opening by six weeks to allow for the more obstructive work, including laying a new power cable.

Health and Safety

13. Lifeguard numbers and maximum bather loads play an important role in keeping swimmers safe and training is provided on an ongoing basis to make sure staff remains competent and skilled. The maximum bather load for each pond has been capped at 100 in the water and this is managed by the Stewards during free flow sessions. The Stewards also control bather numbers during pre-book sessions.

Site	In water rescue	First aid	Other
Lido	14	14	
Men's pond	35	10	
Mixed pond	41	15	1
Ladies pond	19	14	1

Number of rescues or first aid incidents carried out by lifeguards from April 2022 to March 2023

Corporate & Strategic Implications

14. The projects and works outlined in this report contribute towards the achievement of the three aims set out in the City of London Corporate Plan: Contribute to a flourishing society, Support a thriving economy and Shape outstanding environment.
15. The projects and works outlined in this report contribute towards the achievement of the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018-2028 Strategic Outcomes A: The Heath is maintained as a flourishing green space and historic landscape, B: Improved quality of life for Heath visitors, C: The Heath is inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors and D: Greater number of and diversity of People taking care of the Heath.

Financial Implications

16. Officers are still undertaking an analysis of income and expenditure for 2022-23. Fees and charges are reviewed on an annual basis for all activities, including swimming.

Resource Implications

17. No impact

Climate Implications

18. Included within the annual plan for 2023/24 are a series of projects which contribute towards achieving the City of London's Climate Action Strategy, which was launched in October 2020. A key part of the strategy is conserving and

enhancing biodiversity alongside reducing carbon emissions. The Climate Action Strategy will be embedded into future operations for the bathing ponds and the Parliament Hill Lido.

Legal Implications

19. No impact.

Risk Implications

20. Risks are monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk Register which forms part of the meeting agenda pack.

Equality Implications

21. No impact.

Security Implications

22. Security implications are monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk register which forms part of the meeting agenda pack.

Conclusion

23. The swimming facilities on Hampstead Heath are busier than ever, which we can contribute to a number of factors: cold water swimming becoming more popular, hotter summers and the unique offer of natural swimming ponds close to central London. Season ticket numbers have increased as well as the number of individual tickets purchased. This upward trend of visitors puts pressure on the facilities and staff and training and upskilling is important to continue to maintain a safe and enjoyable environment. It also reinforces previous decisions taken to introduce maximum bather loads, a booking system and the increase of the number of lifeguards on duty.

24. We expect the 2023/24 season to follow these trends and again be very busy. The booking system will be reintroduced in the summer months to help ensure safety and the works to improve accessibility will also help with safety at the three ponds.

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