

Committee	Dated:
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	14 October 2019
Subject: Superintendent's Update	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Discussion
Report author: Bob Warnock – Open Spaces Department	

Summary

This report provides an update to Members of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee on management and operational activities across the Heath since July 2019. The report format has been updated to align with the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018 - 2028 Outcomes.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Members feedback on the 2019 grazing trial.
- Members provide feedback following the Superintendent's verbal update on swimming.
- Members provide feedback and views on the conclusions and next steps in relation to the Golders Hill Park Accessible Car Park Survey (appendix 3).
- Members provide feedback and views following the presentation on the outcomes from the recent engagement and consultation exercise relating to dog walking.

Main Report

Management Framework

1. The Annual Update has been amended following feedback from Members, and was approved by the Hampstead Heath Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee at their September 2019 meeting.
2. Once the graphic design has been completed, this will be published on the website and promoted through social media.
3. The Divisional Plan second quarter update is attached at appendix 1.
4. The Operational Services Manager will provide feedback on the Annual Work Plan for the second quarter.

5. Following feedback from Members the Superintendent is working with a Consultant and the Heath's Management Team to develop the Measurement Framework.

A: The Heath is maintained as a flourishing green space and historic landscape.

Awards

6. Hampstead Heath has retained its Green Flag award and Green Heritage status. Staff and volunteers attended the awards ceremony on 17 July 2019.
7. Golders Hill Park and the Hill Garden and Pergola have received Gold Awards for London in Bloom. The garden at Keats House which is managed by the staff from Golders Hill Park in partnership with Heath Hands was awarded Silver Gilt.

City Surveyors Cyclical Work Programme

8. The Superintendent will provide an update on current projects within the City Surveyors Cyclical Work Programme.

East Heath Car Park (A DP5)

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

Planning

10. The Superintendent will provide an update on the following planning applications:
 - North Fairground Site 2017/4346/P
 - South Fairground Site
 - 55 Fitzroy Park 2018/3672/P
 - The Water House, Millfield Lane. 2017/3692/P
 - Jack Straws Castle – Change of use application
 - Athlone House

OPM management

11. The Heath Tree Team identified a total of 957 nests in 368 oak trees across Hampstead Heath. Contractors removed 428 nests from 87 trees in high target areas, at a cost of £14,300.
12. In addition, the Tree Team removed 23 nests from 16 high risk trees using an industrial vacuum.
13. Successful OPM inspection pilot has been completed by volunteers from Heath Hands. This involved training and equipping four volunteers who inspected the oak trees on the Heath Extension. This will be rolled out again next year. Parasitism and predation on the OPM nests has been recorded this year.

Tree Works undertaken

14. There was one incident of summer limb drop on veteran oak on the Heath Extension. Other works have included:
 - Veteran tree works across the Heath Extension, The Vale and South Meadow.
 - Dead willow felled on East Heath Road.

- Large Massaria limb removals from plane trees at South End Green and Gospel Oak.
- Dead tree removal at Keats House.
- Reduction of leaning horse chestnut at Golders Hill Park Swan pond.
- Lifting perimeter ash trees on the Heath Extension.

Tree Inspection

15. Inspections have been completed in the following areas:

- Spaniards Road
- East Heath Road
- South End Green
- West Heath Road
- Hampstead Way/Wildwood Road
- West Heath Avenue
- Dams
- Swimming Ponds
- Golders Hill Park

Humanitarian Aid Workers Memorial proposal – Kenwood Estate

16. Following the Chairman writing to English Heritage to convey the views of Members, English Heritage have replied to confirm that the proposed location for the Memorial would no longer be pursued. Another location within the grounds of the Kenwood Estate may still be considered, however.

Grazing

17. A small grazing trial involving five sheep within the Tumulus enclosure ran between 27 August - 5 September. The trial was conducted in partnership with the Heath and Hampstead Society, Mudchute Farm, the Rare Breeds Survival Trust, Heath Hands and Historic England.
18. The small flock composed of three Norfolk Horns and two Oxford Downs, both of which are classified as rare breeds and were supplied by Mudchute Farm based in East London.
19. A combination of staff and volunteers shepherded the sheep and engaged with visitors over the trial period. The trial attracted a great deal of interest from members of the public and the media. Sheep last grazed on the Heath over seventy years ago, so it was a welcome sight to see their return. The Tumulus was chosen due to the existing fencing and uneven terrain making it difficult to maintain with machinery.
20. Taking account of the learning from the trial, further grazing projects are being considered for inclusion in the 2020/21 Annual Work Plan. Members feedback is welcomed.

Bowls and Croquet

21. New annual licensing arrangements with the Parliament Hill Bowling Club and the Hampstead Heath Croquet Club have been agreed. As part of this agreement two rinks will always remain available for public play. The green will be

maintained by the Sports and Recreation Team at Parliament Hill, as part of their ground's maintenance work programme.

22. This will allow the Superintendent to arrange short term hire arrangements for the Bowls Pavilion during the winter months.

Heath Extension Moth Surveys

23. The Heath Ecologist has engaged a specialist moth lepidopterist surveyor to provide a current record of the moth species on Hampstead Heath. Twelve survey nights have been undertaken in four separate locations with a further 8 planned. 330 species of moth have so far been recorded with a number of new records for the site, including a heathland specialist the 'True Lover's Knot' moth.

Hampstead Heath wildlife camera survey

24. A report from the 2018 Hampstead Heath wildlife camera trap survey has recently been produced by the Institute of Zoology. This indicates that the Heath is an important location for hedgehogs in London. Fox, rabbit, muntjac deer and even a badger were also recorded. A full report is attached at appendix 2.

B: Improved quality of life for visitors.

Swimming

25. The Superintendent has commenced a review of the summer 2019 swimming season. The issues have been discussed with the Hampstead Heath Sports Advisory Forum and the Swim Forum. The Superintendent will provide a verbal update at the meeting and Members, views and insights are welcomed.

Playgrounds

26. The Superintendent will provide an update on the Adventure Playground, Preachers Hill Playground and the Vale of Health Playground.

Weddings and Civil Ceremonies

27. There are currently ten confirmed and three pending bookings for 2019, with number of viewings booked for 2020 ceremonies.

Heath Extension Meeting Room

28. The London Natural History Society (LNHS) have agreed to relinquish the use of a small meeting room adjacent to the public toilets on the Heath Extension. Although some publications remain, discussions are ongoing about either relocating these items or the necessity of further storage. The Heath Ecologist continues to maintain a very effective relationship with the LNHS and taking account of technology they are now working in a more agile way and consequently no longer require a dedicated space on site.
29. There has been a long-term aspiration to utilise this facility as a refreshment kiosk to serve the visitors to the Heath Extension and to support the sporting offer comprising of cricket, football, rugby and the many schools and community groups who use the Heath Extension.

30. The Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee (HHHWQPC) have given approval for the room to be made available for bookings. It is envisaged that local sports and community groups may make use of the room in the short term whilst an engagement and consultation exercise with visitors, members of the local community and stakeholders is undertaken.
31. The engagement and consultation exercise will consider the potential for this facility and the way it can contribute to the achievement of our four Management Strategy Outcomes. Once we have completed this exercise, we will bring a report to the Sports Advisory Forum and then to this Committee to discuss the proposals for the facility, timelines and the next steps. A final report will then be prepared for the HHHWQPC.
32. In the short term the Sports and Recreation Keepers will manage the facility on the same basis as the changing rooms i.e. open, cleaning, closing and organising maintenance and repairs. The Superintendent will prepare booking conditions for the room which will control the way the facility is to be used.

C: The Heath is inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors.

Golders Hill Park Accessible Car Park

33. For safety reasons, the accessible car park is currently only available to visitors on weekdays. A survey has been undertaken to collate feedback from users about their current experiences using the facility and to seek their views on extending the opening arrangements to include weekends and bank holidays.
34. The report outlining the results of the survey is attached as appendix 3 and the Superintendent seeks Members views on the conclusions and next steps within the report.

Open Spaces Learning Team

35. It has been a successful summer for learning on Hampstead Heath. The Learning Team engaged with 1,545 school students in July, including fieldwork sessions for 200 GCSE students from Highbury Grove City of London Academy. Over the school summer holidays, the learning offer has also included weekly family learning sessions at the Education Centre. Activities such as pond dipping, orienteering and nature-inspired crafts have been popular with visitors.
36. The play programme at the Adventure Clubhouse and One O'clock Club has continued to be extremely popular, with 2,823 participants in July and 3,879 in August. Comments from participants demonstrate the value of this free, drop-in play service:

"It's so nice to know my 8 and 10 year old can come and get involved in the play outside and activities as we live in a tower block and my children can't play out where we live."

Licencing (A DP 6)

37. An engagement and consultation exercise in relation to the dog walkers code of conduct has been carried out with two pop-up events taking place, one at

Parliament Hill Fields and the other at East Heath, facilitated by an external consultant.

38. The online survey generated 1,300 hits with 958 completed surveys.
39. The data will be used by the City of London Corporation to support the development of a Code of Conduct, and a Licensing Scheme for commercial dog walking across Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.
40. The Consultant will present an update to Members on the outcomes of the engagement and consultation exercise.

Forest Schools

41. A number of recent enquiries relating to the use of the Heath on a daily basis for forest school activities, have been directed towards making Event Applications. In addition, the existing Forest Schools operating on the Heath are also being directed towards completing Event Applications. These will initially be considered by the Officer Event Group. Taking account of the frequency Forest Schools use the Heath it is likely they will be classified as Major Events. Consequently, the Superintendent will discuss the applications with the Consultative Committee as set out in the Hampstead Heath Events Policy Part 2.

Events

42. The Leisure and Events Manager will provide an update at the meeting on the following recent events:
 - Give it a Go! - 14 July 2019
 - 21st Duathlon – 1 September 2019
43. The Officer Event Group have also received applications for several large and major events for 2020. Following review these will be circulated to Members for their views and feedback.

D: Greater number and diversity of people taking care of the Heath.

Hampstead Heath Constabulary

44. The Hampstead Heath Constabulary are in the final stages of producing protocols and policies for the deployment of Body Worn Video Cameras (BWV). The Constables will be using BWV overtly within the next few weeks. The use of BWV equipment has been evidenced to improve safety, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour as well as improving the delivery of services through improved efficiency, and better management of complaints and investigations. Internal Information Technology (IT) issues have delayed the deployment of this equipment.
45. The project to recruit reserve Constables was unsuccessful as the recruitment process did not produce any suitable candidates. This issue is being reviewed further by Constabulary Manager with the expectation of a further recruitment drive over the winter period.

46. The newly acquired Constabulary Electric Hybrid vehicle is now being used for patrols and has been well received by Heath visitors.
47. The Constabulary are once again focusing evening patrols across the Parliament Hill area due to a small increase in the number of reported robberies. Officers continue to support the efforts of the Metropolitan Police Service and have been involved in the arrest of suspects.
48. A male was recently convicted at court for offences of illegal driving on the Heath and abusive aggressive behaviour towards a Heath Ranger. The matter had been contested however, a guilty verdict was recorded together with a fine and costs totalling £480.
49. A female was recently convicted at court for a cycling offence, failing to stop for a Constable and abusive behaviour. The matter was dealt with in her absence and she was found guilty. The Bench imposed a fine and costs totalling of £795.

Waste & Recycling

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

30th Anniversary

51. The City of London Corporation wishes to thank the Heath & Hampstead Society for hosting an event to mark 30 years of the City Corporation's custodianship of the Heath. The party on the 11 September 2019 at the Parliament Hill cricket ground proved a wonderful celebration of the Heath, an opportunity to thank staff, acknowledge the partnership work between the City Corporation and the Society and reflect on the successes achieved over the last 30 years.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Divisional Plan second quarter update.
- Appendix 2 – Hampstead Heath Wildlife Camera Trap Survey 2018.
- Appendix 3 – Golders Hill Park Accessible Car Park Survey Report

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