

Committee(s): Queen's Park Consultative Group	Date(s): 9 October 2019
Subject: Superintendent's Update – Queen's Park	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Discussion
Report author: Richard G Gentry	

Summary

This report provides an update on the management of the Park and operational activities of the Queen's Park Team since the previous meeting of this group in March 2019.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Give feedback on the events held in 2019, (para 19 – 25).

Main Report

Operational Management

1. As we approach another winter season, the staff will hire in a mulching deck, as they did in autumn / winter 2018. The mulching deck is a ride on machine which cuts leaf litter on the ground. The shredded leaves decompose, releasing nutrients into the ground. This method reduces the amount of staff time required to collect and dispose of green waste.
2. The Park has appointed two full time staff in recent months. Following a successful recruitment campaign, a Grounds Maintenance & Projects Team Leader and an Animal Keeper & Engagement Assistant have joined the Team. Both members of staff bring with them a wealth of experience and knowledge from their previous roles.
3. The current full-time establishment at Queen's Park remains eight staff, and Staff at the Park continue to be supported by colleagues from across Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Keats House.
4. Casual staff were employed over the summer months to support the maintenance of the Park, this included staffing the Paddling Pool, pitch & putt course and general duties, including cleaning and waste collection.

5. Management tasks over the summer have included the edging of grassed areas using an edging machine. The machine maintains a clean edge and reduces the amount of time required to complete the task.
6. The Team Leaders are planning the maintenance of the formal sports turfed areas and the Quiet Garden lawn with the support of the Sports and Recreation Keeper. Staff have noticed areas where the turf has sunk in the Quiet Garden. Further works will include scarification of the lawn and the pitch & putt course, hollow tinning and the use of horticultural materials to maintain these well used areas of the Park.
7. The Park Manager is seeking to appoint an Apprentice post in early 2020, the post will be shared with Golders Hill Park and the Apprentice will work within the gardens at each location.
8. The Paddling Pool has suffered a leak over the summer months, which was discovered after the pool was commissioned and reopened in May 2019. The current costs of investigating the leak equates to £7,185. Further works will be required to repair the leak.
9. The Heath's Tree Team have undertaken works in Queen's Park, including the removal of Massaria branches from 12 London Planes, and the tethering of a split canopy on a horse chestnut at the top of the Park. The Tree Team have also carried out the dead wooding of a lime tree along Kingswood Avenue and an internal tree inspection in August. The Park Manager has appointed a contractor to carry out hedge works and external tree limb reduction. Oak Processionary Moth nests were removed by hand with only a small quantity of nest found in 2019.
10. Queen's Park received the Green Flag and Green Heritage Awards in 2019 and retained its London in Bloom Gold Award. These awards recognise the quality of the green space which is provided for the community, as well as the contribution from the staff and volunteers in delivering a much-loved Park.

Projects

11. The redevelopment of the Playground Toilet and Sandpit is currently on hold. New central funding arrangements will be introduced in the autumn allowing Officers to bid for funding for the projects that are on hold, as well as new Projects.
12. Due to usage and age, the Sandpit play equipment is failing and some items have had to be removed or cordoned off. The Team Leaders are in the process of obtaining quotations for the repair / replacement of equipment, as well as the replacement of the liner and sand. The Park Manager will provide a further update at the meeting.
13. The Park Manager will give a verbal update on the Woodland Walk Management Plan at the meeting. The appointed consultant is preparing a draft document

following a meeting with Stakeholders and Staff where feedback on suggested proposal were given. This draft will be shared with Members initially for their commentary and feedback.

14. The tennis courts have been repainted and relined. An event was held on the 28 September 2019, offering Park visitors the opportunity to try tennis for the first time, or to improve their game. A similar event was held in July 2019, where the tennis coach provided guidance for those who either wanted to give tennis a go or enhance their techniques.

Sustainability

15. A change in the corporate waste management contract has seen Veolia take on this responsibility. They are responsible for the removal of the general waste from the Park. Through a local contract, Veolia Brent are responsible for the collection of recycling from the Park. New, larger recycling bins have been purchased and these are located outside the café and inside the Children's Play Area.
16. The Queen's Park Area Residents' Association (QPARA), in liaison with Veolia Brent introduced recycling bins for the first time this year at Queen's Park Day. The use of these bins meant that staff were having to deal with less general waste which would be removed from site and incinerated.
17. The Queen's Park Team will work in partnership with Veolia Brent and offer a location in the Park for the dropping off of Christmas Trees over the 2019/20 festive period. Previous years have seen in excess of 1,400 trees collected.

Visitors and Community

18. Two successful wedding ceremonies were held on the bandstand over the summer. Further promotion of the venue will take place through a publication which is produced by the London Borough of Brent. These events support the Park with income generation assisting with the ongoing maintenance of the green space.
19. There were shows for children held in the Park in August, these events are funded for by the City of London Corporation and continue to be free of charge for those attending. The shows attract an average of 175 people, although this can be weather dependant.
20. Regent Brass performed on the bandstand from June through to August. Again, these performances are funded by the City Corporation and are of no cost to those attending.
21. The Bandstand continues to be hired for parties and other events. Income generated in 2019 is £3,780. Revenue from the hire of this facility supports the entertainment provided on the Bandstand and the Children's entertainment.
22. Queen's Park Book Festival is a weekend celebration of the literary arts in the heart of London. Authors, poets, actors, journalists and artists gather at the end

of June 2019 for a weekend of events in Queen's Park, London. The festival is a non-profit organisation with a commitment to engaging the local community and residents. It is run in association with QPARA.

23. Shakespeare in the Squares is a not-for-profit touring theatre company that stages a Shakespeare play in London garden squares and parks for one night in each venue every summer. Shakespeare in the Squares took place in the Quiet Garden on 22 June 2019. The productions are tailored to the individual garden squares and parks, with the organisers working with the management team to create a unique community celebration around the play. Their aim is to provide a showcase for talented young theatre practitioners with the intention of introducing the audience to the stars of the future.
24. Where is the Nomad had an audience in excess of 900 people for their screening of 'Bohemian Rhapsody' on 7 September 2019.
25. The annual Queen's Park Day which is organised by volunteers from QPARA took place on 15 September 2019 Queen's Park Day was a great success. With an estimated 19,500 people attending the event, the feedback on the day and in days following has been very positive and complementary.
26. The Park Manager has been approached by the organisers for the following events:
 - John Parnham Children's Funfair, 10 days in May 2020 (Dates TBC)
 - 20 June 2020 – Shakespeare in the Squares
 - 27 / 28 June 2020 - Queen's Park Book Festival
 - Late June/ early July 2020 – Queen's Park the Opera
 - 20 September 2020 – Queen's Park Day
27. Event organisers will be asked to complete an events application in order that their proposed 2020 events can be considered. Members will be consulted on these applications as per the Event Policy Part 2.

Learning, Volunteers and Schools

28. Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) from Westminster College worked in the Farm and Quiet Garden this summer. Working 2 hours per week, one day a week for a six- week period, the work gave them an introduction to tasks undertaken in a park environment.
29. A Student with SEN from Queen's Park Community School completed work experience in the Children's Farm over the summer. Tutors from the school reported that the pupil had gained invaluable interpersonal and animal husbandry skills and that they were interested in pursuing a career in this area.

Queen's Park Café

30. The Superintendent presented a report to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee on the 11 September providing an update on the Queen's Park Café. This report forms part of the meeting Agenda Pack.

Income and Expenditure

31. The operational requirements highlighted in the report will be met from the Superintendent's Local Risk Budget.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

32. The activities and projects included within this report contribute to the three objectives and outcomes set out in the Open Spaces Business Plan 2019-20 (a) Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible, (b) Spaces enrich people's lives and (c) Business practices are responsible and sustainable.
33. These activities and projects also contribute towards the achievement of the three aims set out in the City of London Corporation Corporate Plan 2018-23. Contribute to a flourishing society (1-4), Support a thriving economy (5) and Shape outstanding environments (9-12).

Conclusion

34. The City of London Corporation continues to deliver a much-loved green space in the heart of a multi-cultural urban environment. The Park Manager is looking forward to the opportunity to work in partnership with the London Borough of Brent as they celebrate the London Borough of Culture 2020.

Richard G gentry

Constabulary and Queen's Park Manager

T: 020 7332 3322

E: richard.gentry@cityoflondon.gov.uk