

Committee	Dated:
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	27 January 2020
Subject: Superintendent's Update	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Discussion
Report author: Bob Warnock	

Summary

This report provides an update to Members of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee on management and operational activities across the Heath since October 2019.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Members provide feedback on the Annual Work Programme 2020-21 (appendix 1).
- Members provide feedback following the verbal update on swimming.
- Members to provide feedback on the Keep Britain Tidy report appended to the report (appendix 2).

Main Report

Management Framework

1. The report format has been updated to align with the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018 - 2028 Outcomes.
2. The Annual Work Programme 2020-21 has been prepared (appendix 1). Members feedback is welcomed.
3. The Divisional Plan 2020-23 has been prepared in draft form. Pending further information on the Fundamental Review, and the outcome of the Swimming Review, Officers will prepare a final draft for Members to consider at their April meeting.

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

City Surveyors Cyclical Work Programme

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

East Heath Car Park (A DP5)

5. The Superintendent will provide and update at the meeting.

Planning

6. 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

Trees

7. Recent tree failures include:
 - Mature Horse chestnut failed in wet windy conditions - Millfield Lane
 - Veteran Oak failed in wet conditions - Upper Bird Sanctuary
 - Mature birch failed in windy conditions - West Heath
 - Mature Ailanthus failed due to root decay – Lime Avenue
8. Tree inspections have recently been completed in the following areas:
 - Playgrounds
 - Property Boundaries
 - North End Road
 - Gospel Oak Rail Line
9. The Tree Team are currently working on the following projects:
 - Tree decay habitat survey started with Mycology Department at Cardiff University.
 - Mapping decay and recording decay species in heartwood samples of veteran oaks and beech.
 - Ongoing project mapping and recording the presence and condition of the Heaths wild service population.
10. The Team are moving toward completion of the resurvey of the Heaths Veteran tree population. The target is to complete this by Spring 2020.
11. Further halo clearance has been undertaken around veteran oaks at The Vale of Health, Cohens Wood and South Meadow.

Fishing – Hampstead and Highgate Angling Society (HAHAS) proposal.

12. The Superintendent has received a proposal from the HAHAS to introduce float fishing to the North Bank of the Highgate Men's Pond. These proposals were discussed with Members on their October Committee walk.
13. Officers are developing a Ponds and Wetlands Plan and the Superintendent proposes to consider the request in line with this Plan. A report will be prepared for Members to consider at their April Meeting, as Officers are currently awaiting the results of the recent silt survey.

Hampstead Heath as case study for MSc at the Bartlett, UCL

14. On the 28 January 2020 we will be hosting a University College London workshop for MSc Sustainable Heritage students who will be looking on Priority 2 from the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018 -2028 and focusing on three of the Commitments on page 17 of the Strategy, for a series of group exercises.
15. The three chosen themes will be management of views, protection of heritage features and planning and development challenges on the Heath's boundaries. The students will work in groups and produce assignments on the three themes and there is a further opportunity to further develop the themes into dissertation topics. This is a joint collaboration between UCL, The Heath & Hampstead Society and the City of London Corporation.

B: Improved quality of life for visitors.

Swimming

16. The City of London Corporation is beginning a review of the swimming facilities on Hampstead Heath to ensure they remain safe, sustainable and able to meet the growing demand for outdoor swimming.
17. Since 2010/11, the number of visits to the three Bathing Ponds have increased from 296,000 to over 655,000 per year. These figures are based on people counters located at the entrances to the Bathing Ponds.
18. Following the heatwaves in summer 2018 and 2019, the City Corporation wants to make sure it is ready for the upcoming summer season recognising:
 - The increasing demand for outdoor cold-water swimming;
 - Our Duty of Care towards Lifeguards, Heath Staff and visitors;
 - Ensuring the swimming facilities are sustainable and continue to enrich the lives of current and future generations.
19. At the Hampstead Heath Swimming Forum on 14 January 2020 the Chairman will launch the Swimming Review. A verbal update will be provided at the Consultative Committee.
20. Following the Swimming Forum, a series of facilitated conversations will be organised to engage with the wider Heath swimming community to discuss the long-term sustainability of the facilities. The discussions will also cover the Lifeguarding provision and bathing load following recent advice from the Health & Safety Executive, as well as the charging arrangements for the Bathing Ponds.
21. Following these discussions, proposals will be developed for consideration by the Consultative Committee. An additional meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee is being arranged for Monday 9 March 2020 at 7pm. At this meeting, Members will have the opportunity to review the proposals and make their representations to the Hampstead Heath Management Committee at their meeting on 11 March 2020.

22. We recognise the growing popularity of the Heath's swimming facilities and the opportunities they provide for Londoners to step away from their busy lives. We want to make sure that we have the right resources in place to sustain the facilities and maintain visitor safety. Consequently, this review is critical to ensure our facilities are safe, enjoyable and accessible for everybody in the years to come.
23. The Superintendent welcomes Members comments on the Swimming Review at this initial stage.

Playgrounds

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

Weddings and Civil Ceremonies

25. There are currently six confirmed and three pending bookings for 2020 ceremonies.

Fitness Training

26. An initial workshop has been completed and the Constabulary and Queen's Park Manager will provide verbal feedback.

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

Golders Hill Park Accessible Car Park

27. The Superintendent is in the process of commissioning a specialist consultant, to prepare and design options for further consideration.

Open Spaces Learning Team

28. It's been a fantastic autumn for the Learning Team on Hampstead Heath, with over 2,000 school students took part in our Learning Programme, and over 5,000 children and parents have participated at our play centres. Highlights include a Christmas party at the One O'clock Club and trials of a new facilitated session for home educators.

Events

29. A review of the 2019 season has been prepared as part of the agenda pack.
30. The Officer Event Group have received an application from the Showman's Guild to hold 2020 Bank Holiday Fairs on the Lower Fairground. In line with the Events Policy, Members will be consulted on the application via email, before it is considered by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee at their meeting in March 2020.
31. The Showmen's Guild are currently putting together an application for 2021. We anticipate that this application will seek a longer Easter Fair and no Whitsun Fair as discussed with Members at their October 2019 meeting.

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

Hampstead Heath Constabulary

32. There have been no recent reports of robberies on the Heath and hi-visibility, reassurance patrols continue, particularly after the hours of darkness.
33. The Constabulary are aware of recent incidents of criminal damage involving racially motivated hate crime (graffiti) around the Hampstead and Belsize area and are monitoring the Heath for similar activity.

New Year's Eve

34. In November 2019 the Constabulary & Queen's Park Manager met with colleagues from the Emergency Services, include the Metropolitan Police, British Transport Police and colleagues from The Royal Parks to discuss and plan the response and approach to the 2020 New Year's Eve celebrations within the London Borough of Camden.
35. On New Year's Eve four Constables were on duty, supported by two Keepers and the Constabulary & Queen's Park Manager. The Parliament Hill Fields toilets were left open until just before 1am to allow visitors to use the facilities as they made their way to and from the Heath.
36. It is estimated that 6,000 people visited the viewpoint to see in the New Year and view the fireworks along the South Bank.
37. No crimes were reported to the staff on duty and no serious incidents or accidents were reported. There were some instances of anti-social behaviour which were responded to by the Constabulary.
38. On New Year's Day morning staff from across the Division assisted with the collection of waste and recycling from Parliament Hill Fields. 15 bags of recycled material and five bags of general waste were collected by staff.

Waste & Recycling

39. The Superintendent will provide an update on the project at the meeting.
40. Keep Britain Tidy have prepared a report, which is attached at appendix 2. The Superintendent seeks Members views on the report findings and next steps, which is to prepare a communications plan.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Annual Work Programme 2020-21.
- Appendix 2 – Keep Britain Tidy report.

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