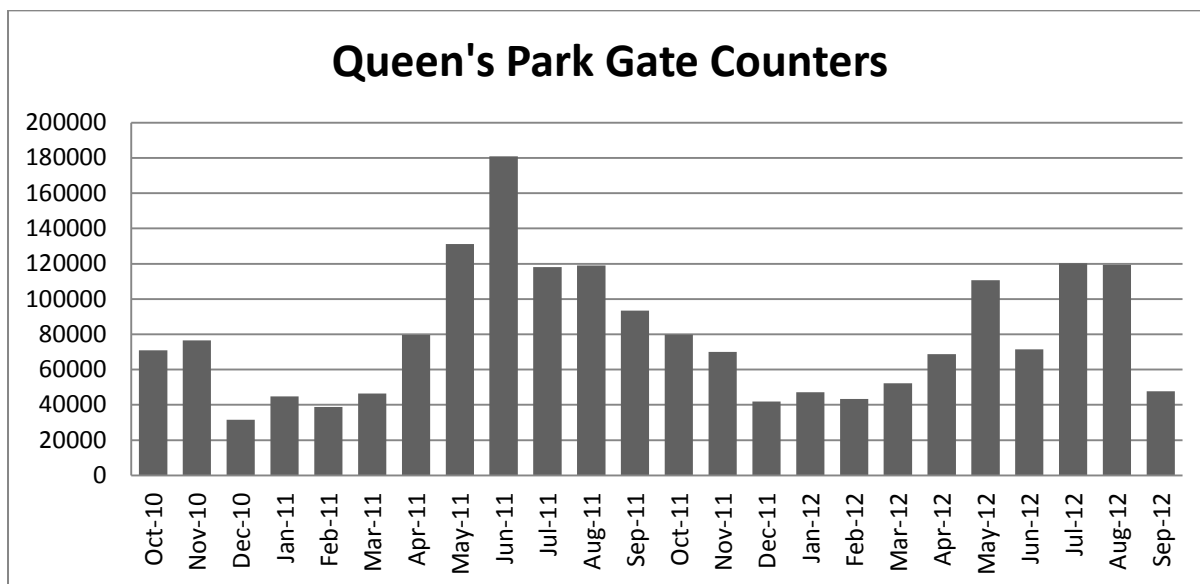


Committee(s):	Date(s):
Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group	21 st November 2012
Subject: Superintendent's Update - Queen's Park	Public
Report of: Superintendent Hampstead Heath	For Discussion
<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>This report provides an update to members of the Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group on management and operational activities in Queen's Park since the last meeting in June 2012.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>That the views of the Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group be received.</p>	

Main Report

Background

1. Following a busy summer of events and activities in Queen's Park this report highlights the successes and provides updates on projects in the Park.
2. Between the periods October 2011 – September 2012 the park saw 872,720 visits from data captured by our gate counters. For the same period the children's farm saw 85,540, and the play area saw 197,022 visits. Below is a table which shows visits via the park entrance gates, this does not include data from the farm or children's play area



Queen's Park Gate Counter Data 1

Ecology

3. In support of the new planting scheme in the Quiet Garden, interpretation signage has been introduced to assist visitors with the identification of plants. This will be changed in the future as we continue to reduce the seasonal bedding and increase perennial planting.
4. Bees from the hives in the Quiet Garden continue to produce honey, especially after a worrying wet start to the summer season. Our resident bee keeper had honey for sale at Queen's Park Day and continues to sell honey in the café. A group of budding bee keepers were given access to the Lych Gate to carry out a training session on apiary management and a donation given to the park for the use of this facility.
5. The vegetable plot continues to be popular; Transition Towns volunteers have recorded a total of 588 hours between April and September 2012. The group will also support the planting of whips around the edge of the park where there are gaps and in the 'Phase One' of the Play Area.
6. A recent bat walk, which was led by City of London staff and a local resident, attracted 30 people.

Sport and Recreation

7. Queen's Park Rangers Football Club (QPR) held a two week soccer camp in the park, charging a minimal amount for children to come along and have a go at football. Both girls and boys were encouraged to join in. This idea has followed on from an initiative that the Local Safer Neighbourhood Team has been working on with QPR as part of a KICKS scheme at the Queen's Park Community School. Another camp will be held over the half term period in the park between 12pm and 3pm.

8. Summer Tennis Camps were run by the resident tennis coach. The camps took place over 6 week period and attracted 1,050 children. The Islamia School have also attended the park for tennis coaching with 280 pupils taking part.
9. Ten school sports days took place in July with in excess of 900 children taking part in the various activities. Keepers mark out running lanes for the schools. There were no issues with schools not being able to use the park on the preferred day. Contact is made with schools in advance by the Park Supervisor to ensure staff are prepared for any forthcoming sports events. Kensal Rise School organised a mini marathon involving 150 children.
10. Between June and September 2012 the park sold 4,700 games of golf and 4,300 games of tennis. Both facilities are popular attractions in the park which require management and resource in order to maintain them to a good standard. The park uses golf balls which are suitable to be used in a built up area, in response to a question which was raised in June, a seven iron allows for sufficient power to be used to get this type of ball down the fairway. A review of the tennis booking system will take place over the summer in consultation with users and the local community as some complaints have been received about court availability.
11. Fifteen children's entertainment events took place near the play area in August; these included Punch & Judy, Magic and Balloon Modelling. It has been suggested at a recent liaison meeting with local residents that the City of London, as managers of the park review their entertainment programme and make it more inclusive for older children.
12. After a suggestion from a member of the Residents' Association, bands at the Bandstand were booked between July and August, extending the period over the summer that we have bands available for the entertainment of the public. One band played on the Bandstand in June as part of the Open Garden & Studios event in the area.
13. The Lexi Cinema and their sister company, Where is the Nomad, had a successful season of three films in the park. The weather was perfect for the three outdoor films in August and September 2012 and attracted an average of 1,200 visitors to each showing.
14. It is proposed to hold four outdoor films events in 2013 and the views of the Committee are sought on this proposal.
15. Two events took place over the summer which were organised by Queen's Park Area Residents Association. The Open Gardens & Studios event took place in June, our gardener was on hand to offer advice and answer questions in the Quiet Garden and the local bee keeper was available to

answer queries about bee keeping. One of the highlights of the parks event calendar each year is Queen's Park Day. Again, this is organised by volunteers from the residents association. Attractions included donkey rides, birds of prey and acrobats with a plentiful supply of community stalls and refreshments. This year's event saw an estimated 15,000 visitors.

16. Other activities have included walks and yoga sessions organised by the London Borough of Brent and a Brent Partnership Day organised by the Brent Primary Care Trust.
17. The Winter Gathering event is planned to take place on the 6th December 2012, from 3.30pm until 6pm. The lights on the Christmas tree will be switched on and Santa Claus will pay a visit to the park along with other entertainment and attractions outside the café.

Conservation and Heritage

18. A consultant has now been employed and work has commenced on the Conservation Management Plan for the park, further information is provided in a separate report.

Landscape Management

19. A contractor is about to be employed to carry out works to a number of trees across the park. Work will include 27 canopy reductions of between 20% – 50%, 5 trees which require dead wooding, 1 complete removal and 1 statutory lifting of a tree. Species affected are Horse Chestnut, Ash, Lime, Plane and Acer. It is planned for this work to be completed December/January.
20. Work will be carried out to reduce the hedge around the tennis courts and remove the build up of ivy on the Lodge.
21. Other works to that will be carried out over the winter include repairs to the greens on the Pitch and Putt course and work to the lawn in the Quiet Garden.

Management

22. The City Surveyors Department has scheduled works in the park over the winter. This includes painting part of the fence line around the perimeter, replacing the flooring in the Bandstand and painting exterior woodwork of buildings in the staff yard, other works will include repairs to pathways. These works are part of the 20 year annual work programme.
23. A recent farm visit by an external vet as part of our annual inspection was positive with comments about the introduction of the interpretation signage

and good animal husbandry. Suggestions were made about improving the planting around the duck pond and reducing the risk of foxes entering the area. Improvements have been made over the last 24 months to reduce the risk of foxes entering the enclosure. We suffered the loss of a chicken over the summer due to a fox.

24. As part of the Departmental Sustainability Audit, the park submitted an assessment which was recently verified by an Open Spaces colleague from another division. Achievements include the addition of rain water butts in the yard to assist with washing down machinery or watering the hanging baskets via the bowser. A pedal assisted bike been purchased to assist in the reduction of vehicle usage between the Park and Hampstead Heath.
25. The park had three work experience pupils from the Queen's Park Community School in July. They worked in the farm and in the garden under the guidance of park staff. Letters of appreciation were received from the pupils involved.
26. No serious incidents, accidents or near misses have been reported since the meeting in June 2012.

Visitors and Community

27. The planned roadshow events where staff will engage with users about byelaws and responsible use of the park will be scheduled in spring and summer 2013. Hampstead Heath Constables will be used to support these events. These events did not take place in 2012 due to limitations on available staff resources.
28. In August 2012, the Hampstead Heath Education Team attended the park and delivered free family events. Over 1,300 children and adults attended the events. Similar events in August 2013 will be planned by the Education Team.
29. The park continues to hire the Bandstand for celebrations; this has generated an income of £1,200.
30. Use of the park for filming and professional photography has generated an income of £1,300.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

31. The management and provision of Queen's Park provides a vital retreat, enabling people to escape the daily pressures of living and working in London. The park fulfils many of the themes within the City's Community Strategy, but specifically providing "A World Class City which protects, promotes and enhances our environment". "A World Class City which is

vibrant and culturally rich”. “A World Class City which supports our communities”.

32. It will also help fulfil the Department’s Strategic Goals and Objectives 2 (Involve communities and partners in developing a sense of place through the care and management of our sites.) and 3 (Deliver sustainable working practices to promote the variety of life and protect the Open Spaces for the enjoyment of future generations).

Implications

33. There are no financial implications arising from this report, the operational requirements highlighted in the report will be met from the Superintendents’ local risk budget. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Conclusion

34. It is acknowledged that Queen’s Park continues to be a popular open space within the community, serving a wide and diverse audience. The staff that work in the park take great pride in the service they provide to the community and are actively engaged in a number of initiatives to ensure that the management of the site is sustainable and operates within the financial limits set down by the City Corporation.
35. The City of London Open Spaces Department, Queen’s Park and its staff continue to provide a range of high quality facilities and attractions for visitors to enjoy.

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