

Committee	Dated:
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	19/10/2020
Subject: Review of the 2020 Events Programme & Provisional Events planned for the 2021 Programme	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Discussion
Report author: Paul Maskell	

Summary

The following report details the significant impacts Covid-19 has had on the 2020 Hampstead Heath Events Programme. The report sets out the events currently scheduled for 2021, taking account of possible further impacts which could arise as a result of Covid-19. Members feedback on the proposed 2021 Events Programme is sought.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members:

- Provide feedback on the principle of the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain extending the traditional Easter Fair as set out in paragraph 23.
- Provide feedback on the principle of adding a second event after the Affordable Art Fair in April/May 2021.
- Provide feedback on the proposed 2021 Events Programme (appendix 1).

Main Report

Background

1. The Hampstead Heath Site Specific Events Policy (Part 2), which was approved in September 2018, sets out the framework for making decisions about events at Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.

Current Position

2. Due to the Covid-19 lockdown and introduction of social distancing measures, only two events have taken place at Hampstead Heath during 2020. The South of England Cross-Country Championships (25 January 2020) and Zippos Circus (10-15 September 2020).
3. Further Government Guidance received in late September has outlined that mass participation sporting events will not be able to resume in October 2020 as previously expected.

4. Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, the Officer Events Group (OEG) are taking a practical and informed approach in relation to considering event applications, being mindful that the current situation lacks certainty. Therefore, it is very difficult for event organisers to make applications within the usual timeframes, especially in relation to larger events, or those which involve mass participation.
5. The OEG wish to support smaller Covid Secure cultural and community events which may arise at short notice but are compliant with the latest Government Guidance.

The 2020 Events Programme

6. South of England Cross-Country Championships took place on 25 January 2020. The event was well attended with record numbers of participants in the youth event. The championships included the 125th staging of the Men's race and remains the only 15k championship in Great Britain. There were over 5,600 entries across the 10 events.
7. Zippos Circus (10-15 September 2020). In response to Covid-19 Zippos Circus ceased performances at the commencement of the Lockdown in March 2020. Since then performers and staff have remained in the country, staying at the Company Headquarters. Each Act has remained within a 'bubble' which means that should any individual in an Act show symptoms then that Act could be withdrawn from the Show, whilst not affecting other artists and Acts.
8. The Circus has worked closely with the Government and the Association of Circus Proprietors in order to achieve an agreed set of control measures, which form the basis of their comprehensive Risk Assessment. Audience numbers were limited to 360 per performance. The number of performances per day were also reduced.
9. The Circus were originally due to undertake performances on the Heath between 20-25 October. However, in consultation with the Leisure and Events Manager, the performances were brought forward to 10-15 September 2020. The change in date was made to facilitate refurbishment works at the East Heath Car Park in autumn 2020. Unfortunately, in part due to the introduction of new Government Guidance on the rule of six, ticket sales were very low.

Postponed, rescheduled and cancelled Events

10. Race for Life have been coming to the Heath for over 20 years. It is currently unclear if the event, which was due to take place on 15 June 2020, will be able to take place during summer 2021. The event organiser has therefore asked for flexibility when considering the 2021 event date. In addition to a summer date, the event organiser is also considering holding the event in the middle of August or early November 2021.
11. Affordable Art Fair (AAF), Hampstead was due to take place between 29 April - 5 May 2020. The event was tentatively rescheduled to 19 – 22 November 2020, however, in late August the event organisers cancelled the 2020 fair due to continued uncertainty around Covid-19. 2020 would have been the 10th addition of the Affordable Art Fair at Hampstead Heath.

12. Highgate Harriers' 'Night of 10,000m PB's was cancelled in early April 2020. The event had been due to take place on 6 June.
13. The summer 2020 music programme has been cancelled. 23 band performances had been scheduled to take place at Parliament Hill and Golders Hill Park during June-August 2020. The Leisure and Events Manager hopes to launch a new summer music programme in May 2021.
14. Give It A Go! Festival – Throughout 2019 and early 2020 the Leisure and Events Manager had been working with our community partners to plan and prepare for this year 2020 event. In early June, in collaboration with our partners the decision was taken to cancel the 2020 event, which had been due to take place on 5 July. The Leisure and Events Manager will make tentative plans for a July 2021 event.
15. The 21st Hampstead Heath Duathlon, which was due to take place on 6 September, was cancelled in a joint decision between the Leisure and Events Manager and the Hampstead Rugby Club, who co-run the event. 65 teams had already signed up to take part, and despite considerations around introducing staggered start times and Social Distancing measures, it was decided to cancel the event and put plans in place for a 2021 return.
16. Run for your Life is one of our most popular fun runs on the Heath and is run in partnership with the Armoury, Jubilee Hall Trust. 466 runners took place in the 2019 event. The 2020, which was due to take place on 13 September, was cancelled in August. The Leisure and Events Manager is in talks with the event organisers in relation to a possible Spring 2021 return.
17. A total of six Weddings and Civil Ceremonies took place to date at Hampstead Heath during 2020. A further ceremony is planned for early October.
18. The London Youth Games is due to take place on 16 November 2020. The Leisure and Events Manager is currently in talks with the event organisers, around the difficulties in managing the mass start and the potential conflicts with other user groups and spectators. It is likely the event will be postponed to 2021.
19. The Christmas day swim (25 December) is a unique part of the Heath's history. The 40-yard race has become a Christmas tradition for many, since it first started three decades ago. Run by the Highgate Lifebuoys, swimmers are put in the festive spirit by a bugle rendition of 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' before diving in for their race. Over the years the event has attracted large numbers and several ancillary races for men and women. We are currently in talks with the Lifebuoys with regards to this years event, which will be limited to only members of the Highgate Lifebuoys. Spectators will be allowed to view from the banks.

Proposed 2021 Events Programme

20. The English National Cross-Country Championships are due to take place on 6 March 2021. The events organising Committee are looking at new ways in which they might be able to stage these unique championships in March, but the conflict with spectators in an open space is a hurdle that they are finding difficult to overcome. The Leisure and Events Manager is in regular contact the organisers, but it is likely the event will be postponed until 2022.
21. The AAF is keen to go ahead with a 2021 Hampstead Art Fair, and have also applied to host a second event in 2021, following on from the Art Fair. It is

proposed that the marquee will be in situ for an additional week to enable a second event in April/May.

22. The addition of a second event will reduce the overheads of the AAF and will result an increase to the licence fee paid to the City of London Corporation for hire of the event space. A second event would require only a week extension to the existing AAF Licence. The Superintendent is seeking Members feedback on the principle of adding a further event in April/May 2021.
23. Linked to the proposals for a secondary event managed by the AAF, the Leisure and Events Manager has discussed with the Showmen's Guild, proposals for a longer Easter fair, to replace the Whitsun fair. The Superintendent is seeking Members feedback on the principle of extending the Easter fair in 2021.
24. Highgate Harriers have made a 2021 application for the Night of the 10,000 PB's event to take place on 5 June 2021. The event, as agreed with British Athletics and European Athletics is based on hosting under the assumption of 'normal' non- COVID-19 restrictions. The event will be the Team GB Olympic trials and the European Cup, as was intended for the 2020 event. The event organisers will plan to implement necessary Covid-19 measures as required, but if restrictions persist as they currently are, then the event would potentially be cancelled again.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

25. The Events Programme directly supports 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.
26. The provision of the events programme also meets the three objectives and outcomes set out in the Open Spaces Business Plan 2018-19 (a) Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible, (b) Spaces enrich people's lives and (c) Business practices are responsible and sustainable.
27. The events programme contributes towards the achievement of the three aims set out in the City of London Corporate Plan 2018-23. Contribute to a flourishing society (1-4), Support a thriving economy (5) and Shape outstanding environments (9-12).

Implications

Financial

28. The Events Policy details the framework for event cost recovery. The associated charges for holding events are set out in the annual Fees and Charges which is review and approved by Members on an annual basis.
29. As a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic revenue from events has been severely curtailed, which has placed additional pressure on the Superintendents Local Risk Budget.

Conclusion

30. The remainder of the 2020 Events Programme and the proposed 2021 Events Programme are subject to Government Guidance and Policy regarding the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The Leisure and Events Manager is in regular contact with the event organisers and is confident that if Covid-19 measures ease the Heath can return to hosting a wide range of events that promote sport, health and well-being, whilst contributing to achieving the Outcomes of the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018-2028.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Proposed 2021 Events Programme.

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