

Committee	Dated:
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee	26 May 2021
Subject: Hampstead Heath Bathing Pond and Lido Annual Report 2020-21	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11 & 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Decision
Report author: Bob Warnock – Open Spaces Department	

Summary

A Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds and Lido Annual Report for 2020-21 has been prepared to provide an overview of the 2020-21 swimming season. The Hampstead Heath Charity has continued to subsidise swimming, with funding of £877,929 allocated from the Heath's Local Risk Budget during 2020-21. Despite being required to close the Bathing Ponds and Lido on a number of occasions, 160,172 swims were facilitated during 2020-21.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Members approve the Hampstead Heath Bathing Pond and Lido Annual Report 2020-21 (appendix 1).
- Members agree the proposal to re-introduce swimming tests at the Bathing Ponds as set out in para 4.
- Members agree the proposals to retain the current Free Morning Swim arrangements, as set out in para 6.
- Members agree the proposals to retain the current Season Ticket arrangements and to undertake a further review as set out in paras 8 and 9.
- Members agree the proposal for free and discounted swimming opportunities as set out in para 11.

Main Report

Current Position

1. Bathing Ponds and Lido re-opened on 29 March. From 1 May the Bathing Ponds and Lido have been operating with a mixture of capped free flow and pre-booked sessions. A review of the 2020-21 season has been prepared (appendix 1).

2020-21 Swimming Season

2. An Annual Report has been prepared (appendix 1). As part of the process of preparing the Annual Report, the Superintendent sought feedback on the following topics, which have been discussed with the Hampstead Heath Sports Advisory Forum and the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee:
 - Reintroducing Swim Tests at the Bathing Ponds.
 - Free Morning Swim for Under 16's and 60+.
 - Free & Discounted Swimming
 - Season Tickets

Proposals

Reintroducing Swim Tests at the Bathing Ponds

3. Currently, swimmers aged 8-15 are able to swim at the Lido when accompanied during the family and all-comers sessions. In order to provide further opportunities for swimmers aged 8-15, it is proposed to re-introduce swim tests at the Bathing Ponds.
4. It is proposed that specific sessions are set aside to facilitate free swim tests, which would be booked on-line or via the dedicated telephone booking line.

Free Morning Swim for Under 16's and 60+

5. Currently, a free morning swim (before 9.30am) is provided for swimmers aged under 16 and 60+ at the Bathing Ponds and Lido.
6. It is proposed to retain the current Free Morning Swim arrangements for swimmers aged under 16 and 60+ during 2021/22 and to review these arrangements as part of the Open Spaces Department Concessions review.

Season Ticket

7. Feedback was sought on moving to 5 and 7 month Season Tickets to replace 6 and 12 month Season Tickets, to align with the Summer/Winter Swimming Seasons.
8. No feedback was received in relation to this proposal, therefore it is proposed to retain the current 6 and 12 month Season Ticket arrangements at the Bathing Ponds and Lido. The 6 and 12 month combined All Facilities Season Ticket and the 1 month Lido Season Ticket will also be retained.
9. It is proposed that a further review of the Season Tickets for 2022-23 forms part of the 2021-22 Bathing Pond and Lido Annual Review.

Free & Discounted Swimming

10. Officers continue to work with underrepresented groups and organisations to arrange free and discounted swimming opportunities at the Lido. Swims have been facilitated for refugee groups, playschemes and local schools.

11. It is proposed that Officers continue to engage with underrepresented groups and organisations to arrange free and discounted swimming opportunities during 2021-22.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

12. The provision of Lifeguarded swimming facilities at Hampstead contributes towards the achievement of the three aims set out in the City of London Corporate Plan 2018-23: Contribute to a flourishing society, Support a thriving economy and Shape outstanding environments, in particular the following Corporate Plan outcomes:
 - (2) People enjoy good health and wellbeing.
 - (4) Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need.
 - (5) Businesses are trusted and socially and environmentally responsible.
 - (11) We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment.
 - (12) Our spaces are secure, resilient and well maintained.
13. The provision of Lifeguarded swimming facilities at Hampstead also meet the three objectives and outcomes set out in the Open Spaces Business Plan 2021-22 (a) Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible, (b) Spaces enrich people's lives and (c) Business practices are responsible and sustainable.
14. The provision of Lifeguarded swimming facilities at Hampstead contributes to 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.

Financial Implications

15. During 2020-21 the Hampstead Heath Charity subsidised swimming by £877, 929. An annual review of the 2021-22 Season will be undertaken to consider the progress towards implementing 2020 swimming review outcomes.

Resource Implications

16. Staff resources are being prioritised towards keeping the Bathing Ponds and Lido open, safe, accessible and secure in line with current Government Guidance for COVID-19.

Climate Implications

17. The City of London launched its Climate Action Strategy in October 2020 and the strategy is now in implementation stage. A key part of the strategy is conserving and enhancing biodiversity alongside reducing the City of London's carbon emissions.

Legal Implications

18. A letter before action was received on 13 April 2021 in respect of the lawfulness of the 2021/2022 charging decisions for Hampstead Heath Ponds. A response

was issued on 4 May 2021. The City of London does not accept that the decision to bring in mandatory charging for swimming at the Bathing Ponds or the way in which this has been implemented is discriminatory or unlawful.

Risk Implications

19. There is a risk that the Bathing Ponds and Lido may be impacted by further COVID-19 closures during the current 2021-22 swimming season.

Equality Implications

20. A Test of Relevance: Equality Analysis was undertaken ahead of implementing the 2020-21 swimming arrangements.

Security Implications

21. As set out in the Annual Report, an overnight security presence was required to stop unauthorised and out of hours swimming at the Bathing Ponds during summer 2020.

Conclusion

22. Significant progress has been made towards implementing the Outcomes of the March 2020 Swimming Review, and this has been critical to maintaining safe access for swimming during a very challenging year. Over 160,000 swims were facilitated across the Bathing Ponds and Lido during 2020-21. We are delighted that the 2020-21 swimming arrangements also provided opportunities for children and families to swim at the Lido.
23. An Annual Review of the 2021-22 Season will be undertaken to consider the progress towards implementing 2020 swimming review outcomes.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Hampstead Heath Bathing Pond and Lido Annual Report 2020-21.

Contact

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