

Committee	Dated:
West Ham Park Committee	7 July 2022
Subject: Assistant Director Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Juliemma McLoughlin, Executive Director Environment Department	For Information
Report author: Ricky O'Garro, West Ham Park Acting Supervisor	

Summary

This report provides an update to Members of the West Ham Park Committee on management and operational activities at West Ham Park since the Committee's last meeting which took place in April 2022. The funding for the work stated is met through the West Ham Park local risk budget (City's Cash), apart from the Playground Project, which has been funded through a capital bid.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of the report.

Main Report

Current Position

1. The improved weather, seeing temperature increase and drier conditions has seen an increase in visitor numbers to the park and activities, including schools making more use of the park for sports activities. Frontline staff continue to deliver a quality green space with the aim of obtaining accreditations such as the Green flag and London in Bloom.
2. **Playground Refurbishment Project:** Ongoing construction of the playground is progressing well. The contractor has installed most of the newly purchased play equipment and surfacing is currently being laid in the water play area. The water play area will have a surface that will be made of different materials and

finishes including pebbles. These different surfaces will offer a different sensory experience to children. Planting areas are near completion with trees being planted. The West Ham Park team and volunteers are supporting the development of a planting scheme in the play area. A community planting event will be scheduled with the Friends of West Ham Park, local Scout group and park users in the near future. Colleagues from Epping Forest have assisted with the supply of three large tree trunks for the natural play area and 30 tree limbs to be used as stepping logs in various areas of the playground. New benches and bins are due to be installed withing the next week. The excitement is building as park users see the final stages of the playground redevelopment being completed. The ship, which is at the centre of the playground is installed and looks magnificent with its sails hoisted. It's hoped that completion will take place at the end of July 2022 and a launch of the playground can be organised by the beginning of August.

3. **Friends of West Ham Park:** The friends group have been carrying out litter picks four mornings a week. Although visitors to the park are generally responsible and will make use of the bins provided, the support given by the Friends' is appreciated as the summer months are always proving challenging in relation to litter and its collection. The volunteer litter picks also support the keepers and gardeners enabling them to continue with preparations for the fast-approaching judging dates for Green Flag and London in Bloom.

The Vegetable Garden volunteers held a planting and pot painting event in the Food growing area on 2nd June in celebration of the Queens Platinum Jubilee. Children and adults were able to paint pots in an array of designs to celebrate the Jubilee. They could then select a vegetable seedling to plant in their pot and take it home to nurture and harvest.

4. **Sport and activities**

Cricket season is in full flow and the home teams are making the most of the warm and dry days. The cricket teams have commented they are very impressed with the condition of the pitch, which is maintained by two park groundsmen. The changing rooms are in full use following the relaxation of social distancing guidance.

5. **Events**

Over the weekend Friday 20 to Sunday 22 May, the park hosted a funfair which was run by George Irvin Leisure. After months of planning the event was a huge success. The weather was warm with a little rain on the Friday afternoon but that did not deter the crowds. The volume of people attending the fair was huge with the queues to enter stretching over 100 meters and not going down until the end of the day. A great time was had by all attendees with 17 rides or stalls for all ages. Many park users commented that it was great to see the funfair in the park and that they would like to see more events like this and possibly for longer.

A community event also took place on the 2nd June to join the Jubilee celebrations. The event went very well, with good attendance.

Other events planned are:

HAFS summer Fair supporting HAFS charity - 15 July

The Newham Walk (Friends of West Ham Park) – 30 July

Bat Walks (Friends of West Ham Park) -26 August and 23 September

Newham biggest leaf pile- 6 November

6. **Learning Team**

Regarding the use of the wildlife gardens – the teaching sites are still in high demand with seven schools / nurseries using one of the sites each week

Coming up before the end of term – there are several orienteering sessions taking place in the park as well as several Wellbeing sessions that will be taking place at Wanstead Flats.

In recent months the Learning Team have delivered:

- April – 12 sessions delivered to 324 children
- May – 19 sessions delivered to 478 children (including a session in half term for children from the community group Ambition, Aspire, Achieve)
- June – 15 sessions so far to 450 children (including an Orienteering training session for the teaching staff at Sandringham Primary school, to help them carry out more outdoor and Orienteering sessions themselves)

7. **Corporate and Strategic Implications**

The work and activities outlined in this report contribute to numerous strands of the City of London Corporate Plan 2018-2023, but notably outcome 12. “our spaces are secure, resilient and well-maintained”, under the Shape Outstanding Environments strand.

8. **Financial/Resource/Legal/Risk/Equalities/Climate/Security/Public sector equality duty Implications**

None.

9. **Conclusion**

Thanks to the hard work of officers and volunteers, the park maintains its great standards despite pressures of visitor increases due to the longer days and summer weather. The Park continues to be a great asset for the community for the number of services, events and activities it has to offer and it is good to see that children participation continues to be high.

Ricky O'Garro

Acting Supervisor, Environment Department

T: 020 8472 3584

E: Ricky.O'Garro@cityoflondon.gov.uk