

DRAFT Sports and Wellbeing Forum Actions
9 October 2023, 6:30pm
Parliament Hill Meeting Room

Attendees:

Alderman Gregory Jones KC (GJ)	Chair
Bill LoSasso (BL)	Asst Director, Natural Environment, Superintendent, NLOS Head of Operations and Parks
Charlotte Williams (CW)	Events, Leisure and Communications Manager
Paul Maskell (PM)	Head of Conservation and Trees
Jonathan Meares (JM)	Deputy Chair
Richard Sumray (RS)	Parliament Hill Fields Lido
Emma Rae (ER)	Angling
Robert Gibbs (RG)	Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee
David Walton (DW)	Licensed Activity - Winter Swimming Club
Marc Hutchinson (MH)	Highgate Harriers Athletics Club
Joseph Lowe (JL)	Hampstead Rugby Club
Ella Mitchell (EM)	Officer from Hampstead Heath
Richard O'Mahony (ROM)	Officer from Hampstead Heath
Paul Jeal (PJ)	Tennis coaching.
Rudolf Benjamin (RB)	PH Croquet Club
Sandy Nairn (SN)	

Apologies

William Upton, Chair, Hampstead Heath Management Committee
Debbie Bush, Pro-Active Camden (PAC)
Ray Booth, Mental Health
Richard Caylor, Bowls & Croquet
Karen Smith, Parliament Hill Fields Lido
Beth Feresten, Ladies Pond

Outstanding Actions from the last meeting & matters arising.

Action

Natural Environment Sports Strategy – • Reps to provide a brief summary of their sports/facilities in terms of the range of use and suitability. Information to be provided via email to the newly appointed Assistant Director, BL. Ongoing (4/4/23)

All reps

Angling – • Further site meetings are required to discuss the siting of net dips and line litter bins.

PJ/Anglers to meet on site. Action Discharged

Fees & Charges – • A benchmarking exercise for all sports, activities all facilities would be helpful to inform a review. Discussions will be taking place in autumn to feed into the fees and charges review cycle. Ongoing (4/4/23)

All

MUGA Funding – • ROM attended a workshop hosted by Camden. The funding criteria for MUGA's is very prescriptive in terms of size, accessibility, lighting, staff presence etc. A MUGA will be included in the Masterplan proposals, but this will not fit the Football Foundation (FF) criteria. If additional resources are available from the FF following bid allocation this will be investigated. Ongoing (4/4/23)

CoL

Swimming 2022/23 season – The winter sessions at the Lido were regularly attracting 500-600 swimmers per day during December which marks a huge growth in popularity. PM to circulate link to annual swimming review paper to the Forum. Ongoing (12.6.23)

PM

PH Masterplan Draft proposals - SH provided an update on the draft proposals. This will be discussed further with HHCC and HHMC. ACTION – SH capture the Lido project within the document. Ongoing and moved to BL (12.6.23)

BL

Ladies' Bathing Pond. ACTION – BF/BL to discuss options to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the Ladies' Bathing Pond and to agree a date, avoiding 2024 owing to the Paris Olympics. Ongoing (12.6.23)

BL/BF

Update from the CoL

Swimming Ponds Project – The project is progressing well with snagging needed to the Ladies Pond disabled toilet, sink and some tiling. The Mixed Pond is approaching completion leaving some work to the grating. The men's lifeguard snagging completed except for the window. Timber sub-structures are being installed on steel the structure. It is hoped the work will be complete mid-November.

Athletics Track –Despite the hold up with poor sub-base condition, drainage and poor weather affecting work, the project is back on track. The base layer and sealant are down with only a small section of top layer to be laid. Lining is scheduled to start on the 30 October. Hopeful for mid-November testing and sign off.

Ducts in switch room may contain asbestos but a workaround is in place for floodlights and track event power.

Thought to be given for the commercial activities for the night of the 10,000m with the infield or outside the track being used as not to cause damage to the track.

Damage has been caused to the sealant layer of the track by an intruder climbing the perimeter fence.

ACTION: Running clubs to ask people to not access the track while under construction, as it causes damage.

A need to raise the profile of the plan night of 10,000m and to consider marketing opportunities and sponsorship for the event.

PH Masterplan Draft proposals - Consultation happened on Heath, lots of feedback, to Consultative Committee and will feedback once done. All agreed important to prioritise proposals contained within the plan, but more work was needed to fine tune vision. All felt important to include the Lido's inclusion in the Masterplan as a topic for the next meeting.

BL

Events – Paul Maskell, thanked all for support at 'Give it a Go Day' which saw over four thousand attending. Themes were Health and Wellbeing and featured Yoga and mindfulness coaches.

Dates for the diary:

- Inter Borough London Youth Games on 18 November
- World Cross Country Trial on 20 January

Fees and charges

A swimming survey conducted over autumn posed:

- Consider changing the aged limit from 16 to 18 and to extend morning free swim, currently before 0930 which did not align to free travel.
- Concession currently at 50% to move to 40%??
- Stagger payment for season ticket.

Swim club

All/BL

ACTION: Send copy of survey questions to Chair

ACTION: Conduct a benchmarking exercise regarding fees and charges and concessionary fees. And to share the findings of benchmarking exercise already conducted to BL

The Chair reiterated the City's stance is to continue to move towards 'break even' balance sheet.

While the City of London would endorse the hardship fund proposed by the club, the Chair repeated the City's previously stated position that it was not able to administer or fund it.

Updates from Clubs

Angling. Discussions with officers will continue about siting and installation of the platforms, part funded by Angling Trust. Match funding from the CoL was not yet forthcoming. Since June, there has been some tuition for schools, 1-1, and family groups have shown a lot of interest in the 'give angling a go event'.

The club passed on thanks to Richard Payne for his quick assistance following pond incident resulting in the loss of 15 carp due to oxygen failure. JM confirmed that new

pump diffuser units will be placed the Men's, Ladies' and No.2 ponds to alleviate the issue of algae by next season. He added that the fishing committee will be involved in the procuring of new units and the upgrade to existing pumps.

Rugby: Amateur level club are merging. Generally healthy but challenges owing to higher costs, so working on fundraising and sponsorship. Juniors' recruitment is going well. Well supported by Heath team. Senior sides are doing ok, women's numbers are growing,
Men's section struggling and has gone from five teams to two which is a concern. Valued 'give a go day' for forging relationships.

Swimming: Work started in the disabled area in April. Only minor issues but thankfully swimming wasn't affected. New swimmers, not understanding rules, brought some anti-social behaviour. Reinforced signage helped. Looking at more permanent options for shelter.

Mixed pond: thanks to the lifeguards, for coping with disruption and for fixing showers, and thanks to CoL for allowing the tea party at Lido. Looking forward to works to the electric supply in Nov/Dec.

Lido has been extremely busy with the Constabulary having to deal with queues and turning people away. Eight thousand recorded swims in October hot weekends alone. Members were finding booking system better in terms of availability and safety.

Tennis: working with LTA to promote play for the 4-16 age group. The Give it a Go Day successful for networking. Floodlights are very much needed as the courts were full this year, but this is in the Masterplan.

Croquet: Thanks to Richard for doing a wonderful job in keeping the green in best order, receiving many compliments from other clubs. An increase in membership by 25% - pay and play and open play busy.

Running: Using Finsbury Park training owing to track closure has seen a drop in numbers. Juniors still training outside the track and have purchased lighting for training. Concerned that the long jump / pole vault run up left out of the track refurbishment with only making good in scope which needed to be addressed. Consider funding from London Marathon Trust. CW has asked for quote to cost this into the project already, although the window of opportunity to include before track completion may have been missed. Depending on sum needed, clubs may be able to contribute to this element of the project.

CW

ACTION: A need to reestablish the Track Forum once the track is handed back for use.

**B/L
ROM**

ACTION: Ensure the path work is part of the cyclical works programme given the low lighting.

AOB

Robert Gibbs, Angling rep raised the following points, which were discussed on his behalf:

ACTION: To consider more signage at Mens' Pond south bank alerting walkers of no exits though preexisting gate following dam works. **BL**

ACTION: To consider signage showing ponds access points for dogs. **BL**

ACTION: To consider a trial of night fishing from mid-October to 14 March given the ease of anti-social behaviour. **BL**

ACTION: Following staff organisation, a need to consider the option of fishing permits being obtainable from the track. **BL**

Date of next meeting

It was agreed to hold the next forum at the Guildhall as an alternative setting, which might enable easier access to other members of the committees.

The meeting will start at 7pm with hybrid option for those unable to join. Date TBC.