

INFORMAL MEETING OF HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Monday, 10 June 2024

Minutes of an informal meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held at Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall. on Monday, 10 June 2024 at 4:00pm.

Present

Members:

William Upton KC (Chairman)
Nick Bradfield (Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
John Arnoldi (Heath Hands)
Michael Hammerson (Highgate Society)
Dr. Gaye Henson (Marylebone Birdwatching Society)
Helen Payne (Friends of Kenwood)
Richard Sumray (London Council for Sport and Recreation)
Jeff Waage (Heath & Hampstead Society)
John Weston (Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee)

Officers:

Emily Brennan	- Natural Environment Director
William LoSasso	- Environment Department
Charlotte Williams	- Environment Department
Callum Southern	- Town Clerk's Department
Blair Stringman	- Town Clerk's Department
Paul Maskell	- Leisure and Events Manager

The Consultative Committee started at 4pm, which was the time that members had been invited to meet at Guildhall. However, the Committee was advised that it could not meet in formal session as the time that had been publicly advertised had not been changed, and remained as 5.30pm. The Chair proposed, and Members agreed, to have an informal meeting, that would be minuted. The time could be used to discuss matters, and the informal discussions would help inform the formal meeting when it was opened at the advertised time, at which time any formal decisions could be made as well.

3. MINUTES

The Committee discussed matters arising from the public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- a) It was highlighted that a previous meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee had occurred on the day before a religious holiday. Officers indicated this would be avoided in future.
- b) Requested amendment of reference from Black hairstreak to Brown hairstreak and indicated that larvae eggs was not a technical term, the correct term was larvae.
- c) The representative for London Council for Sport and Recreation highlighted the minute relating to drug paraphernalia and suggested the point was more related to numbers of constabulary on the Heath which he believed was insufficient and indicated his desire to see a more substantive discussion on it. The Chair suggested a report needed to be added to the work programme in relation to the constabulary.
- d) Suggested that questions raised on the licensing scheme for dogs and resource limitations at COL were for assisting the Kenwood Estate, not managing it.
- e) It was noted that parks would be closed if windspeeds exceeded 39mph; Highgate Wood would be closed if windspeeds exceeded 37mph.
- f) Requested that reference to the boarded-up cottage in the minutes should refer to its location at close to William Ellis School at the entrance to Hampstead Heath.
- g) The Committee enquired regarding an update on the boarded-up cottage near William Ellis School. Officers noted that the case was currently with the insurance department to acquire specification to repair the cottage. Specification had been delayed and the insurance department was now awaiting quotes; the work was expected to be completed in mid-2025 now and Officers committed to updating the Committee at the next meeting.
- h) The Committee considered what the boarded-up cottage could be used for. Officers noted that substantive energy had been put into examining the footfall around the area for a visitors' centre.
- i) Considered whether perpetrators flouting dog licensing restrictions paid much attention to them. Officers indicated they would engage with the dog walking community to reiterate the importance of doing the right thing and informed the committee there would be an update on constabulary work.
- j) The Committee requested Members' roles be added to the front page of the minutes. Officers agreed to the change.
- k) The Committee discussed when the café tendering process would occur on the Heath. Officers noted there was no definitive timeline, but would seek to bring a report with an update to the next meeting.

4. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

The Committee discussed the Assistant Director's report which presented an update on matters relating to Hampstead Heath since the last Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee meeting on 22 April 2024.

During the discussion, the Committee:

- a) Explored the possibility of holding a further World Athletics cross-country event in addition to the Southern Championship cross-country event on the Heath. Officers warned that two large-scale events within two weeks of each other would present resource problems and highlighted that some in the community perceived that the Heath was being worn out, even though it would be using different areas of the Heath. The Committee suggested further discussion was needed at Sports and Wellbeing Forum.
- b) Considered whether the pond access project was completed. Officers updated that both the women's and men's ponds were complete, but there were pieces of additional grating needed to enforce void between concrete wall and grating and were looking into a temporary measure to address the issue.
- c) Discussed the ongoing work occurring at Golders Hill Park related to the sand pit. Officers acknowledged that it had become a much larger job than could be handled internally and contractors were being approached for quotations, and fund raising options need to be explored.
- d) Requested an update on temporary work to make the Pergola at Hampstead Heath accessible and considered whether August was the firm deadline for finishing work. Officers noted there was a three month time horizon for works needed and it was accepted that it probably could not last through another Winter if it was left open; consultants would carry out a full survey.
- e) Questioned whether the Mixed Pond access could not be used following works. Officers noted there were issues regarding the contractor leaving, with debris being left in the area, but the Conservation team had worked to get work completed. However, the surface of the access track still needed to be rolled.
- f) Sought an update on the oak processionary moth (OPM) as spraying had been uncovered at Kenwood House. Officers indicated that spraying had been significantly curbed and a nature-based solution had been in use recently. Control of the site had been established and parasitoid fly had done a good job of managing the number of OPM larvae. Officers noted that the team at Kenwood were interested to hear what City of London colleagues were doing differently.

- g) Suggested carrying out a moth survey to assist with establishing the Heath as a site of further ecological importance. Officers indicated they would consult with ecologists and consider the action.
- h) Considered whether there could be another exhibition use for the affordable art fair tent. Officers noted that they would continue to examine what could work as the nature of the site means that the build is expensive; the costs projected were usually a barrier but welcomed ideas to achieve it.
- i) Expressed interest in a report on the Learning Team's activity on Hampstead Heath and requested validation of numbers using the Heath. Officers indicated they would validate 20,000 number provided by Learning Team and would request a specific report from the Learning Team. Officers indicated there would regularly be a Learning Team section in Assistant Director reports.

The discussion was then paused, to allow for the matters addressed in the report to be considered in formal session.

The informal meeting ended at 5:29 pm, in preparation for the formal meeting to be started.

Chairman

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