

Minutes

Hampstead Heath Sports & Well-being Forum

24 April 2025 at 18:00

Parliament Hill Conference Room & MS Teams

ATTENDEES:

Members:	Richard Sumray (Deputy Chair, acting Chair)		Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee
	Joseph Lowe		Highgate Harriers
	Sandy Nairne		Hampstead Heath Croquet Club
	Felicity Moir		Mixed Pond User Group
	Emma Rea		Parliament Hill Fields Lido User Group
	Robert Gibbs		Hampstead and Highgate Angling Society
	Scott Davis		Hampstead Rugby Club
	Cassie Bridger	Online	Barnet Council
	Deborah Bush	Online	Pro-Active Camden
	Karin Oleinikova		Heath Hands
Officers:	Bill LoSasso		Superintendent, City of London Corporation
	Charlotte Williams		Head of Operations and Parks, City Corporation
	Richard O'Mahony		Parliament Hill Fields Manager, City Corporation
	Paul Jeal		Swimming Manager, City Corporation
	Colin Houston		Volunteer and Engagement Manager, City Corporation / Chief Executive, Heath Hands
	Helen Evans		PA to Superintendent (Minutes), City Corporation

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Agenda Items and Minutes

1. Apologies

Greg Jones (Chairman), Jennifer Lovell

2. Introductions

Richard Sumray welcomed the group to the newly reformed Forum with its strategic focus.

3. Review of minutes and Terms of Reference from 28 November 2024

The minutes of the previous Hampstead Heath Sports and Well-being Forum held on 28 November 2024 were reviewed and accepted as presented.

4. Actions and matters arising

4.1 Provide clarity on funding, budgets and processes

- a. Officers caveated that budgets affecting the Heath are complex, but that there are generally three ways physical assets are invested in and/or maintained:
 - i. Cyclical Works Programme (CWP): repairs and maintenance projects that are required on a cyclical / life cycle basis that are funded and delivered by the City Surveyor's Department.
 - ii. Planned Preventive Maintenance and Repairs Programme: planned preventative maintenance and reactive repairs that are funded delivered by the City Surveyor's Department
 - iii. Capital projects: one-off funding for new/significant projects, funded centrally (eg, Athletics Track Project)
- b. Capital Projects described in 4.1.a.iii also require risk and contingency budgeting. The Athletics Track Project required additional funding from the Local Risk budget.
- c. Bill offered his thanks to the Chair and Deputy Chair for their work securing funding for the Athletics Track, noting how hard it is to get funding.

- d. There is a project management system at the City Corporation, which is currently being updated.

4.2 Give it a Go event

- a. Officers mentioned that after a review, it has been decided that 'Give it a Go' (GIAG) will not be run by the City Corporation this year due to low numbers recently and lack of Officer capacity, which the group acknowledged and understood.
- b. Some groups will offer their own open sessions on Sunday 13 July.
- c. Officers and the Camden Council representative noted that they will be happy to promote any individual events.
- d. Officers mentioned the need for clubs to monitor club / sport uptake after these events to gauge the success of these days.

4.3 Historical survey results

- a. Officers confirmed they were unable to locate any historical surveys of sports users on the Heath.

5. **Presentation by Heath Hands: *Heath Hands' Health and Well-being Programme***

Colin Houston and Karin Oleinikova delivered a presentation on the work of Heath Hands (HH) and its role in social prescribing, with the aim of making the Heath a destination – offering the chance to get involved with conservation, walks, ecological monitoring and surveys, school sessions, art, mindfulness sessions and litter picks. The presentation is attached for reference. Specific points made include:

- a. The traditional volunteer model might not be fully suitable for the future; HH are rethinking this model to further promote access.
- b. The charity is considering increasing sessions to include weekends and improving access to those at work. Developing greater flexibility in the scheduling of activities will allow greater engagement from differing backgrounds.
- c. Heath Hands seeks to continue to diversify its membership and remain accessible to the surrounding community
- d. The Forum noted and celebrated the expansion of HH in the last few years and its evolution to take on responsibility. The future of HH will involve developing

more sessions, more well-being initiatives, diversifying to increase access, and reaching out to different boroughs.

ACTION: (COL) to send newsletter link to Heath Hands for events and linking up.

ACTION: (HH) Heath Hands to connect with Camden, who can offer support: funding, comms support, alignment of strategies to offer more collaboration.

6. Discussion on presentation and well-being programmes on the Heath

A conversation ensued from the above presentation, and the main points were:

- a. Members would like to get involved to help out with planting and conservation, advertising this to their respective groups and members who are keen to participate.
- b. Groups can propose ideas for planting projects and volunteering at operational meetings and Officers will assess feasibility and capacity.
- c. Heath Hands to consider the management plan and consider which conservation projects they could communicate to particular groups and collaborate on in future.

ACTION: (COL) to create an annual report to summarise the sports, events and activities held on the Heath each year and their impact on well-being.

7. Updates from City of London Corporation:

Officers gave an update on the various facilities on the Heath:

a. Lido and Ponds

- i. PJ raised that the Lido during winter is increasingly popular, with up to 400 swimmers a day in winter. The sauna continues to be a very popular draw.
- ii. Women have been transferred to Mixed Pond for refurbishment works.
- iii. Electrical works at the Lido led to its closure for 10 days.
- iv. Work undertaken to the terraces at the Lido, as well as a planning application for more PV panels on the roof.
- v. Funding has been secured for roller shutters on observation huts at the Men's and Mixed Ponds.
- vi. Men's Pond jetty and diving board have been refurbished and reinstated.

b. Athletics Track

- i. Track refurbishment: a 12-month review and inspection has been carried out and it has passed successfully. It was noted lanes one and two have more wear and tear as is expected and is typical; we are looking into encouraging runners to use the other six lanes more.
- ii. UK Athletics donated money for a new hammer net installed recently.
- iii. Officers are looking at funding to repair the shotput area.
- iv. Officers have ordered new starting blocks and hurdles and are trying to source a new container on track to house equipment.
- v. We have retained TrackMark certification until 2029.
- vi. As previously mentioned, there will be no Night of the 10,000m PBs this year, but this will hopefully return in 2026.
- vii. Highgate Harriers rep. raised the application for 5000m event taking place on 4 July that they had submitted in October, which was being reviewed by officers, expressing concern in the review timeline and asking for clarity on new sports event applications so that they can be submitted with sufficient time for Officer review and, if approved, event planning to occur, which officers will provide.

c. Cricket

- i. Officers have been liaising with Capital Kids Cricket (CKC) in West Ham Park and Whitechapel in East London, to engage local kids in cricket, with potential to introduce on the Heath.
- ii. It was mentioned there is West Hampstead Cricket as well as quite a lot of cricket clubs locally with junior teams. We should leverage these too, including liaison with Canons Cricket Club.
- iii. DB mentioned she has contacts here and would be happy to get involved to connect and amplify.

d. Events update

- i. There will not be the events Night of the 10k PBs or GIAG in 2025, but it is hoped both events will return in 2026.

ACTION: (Events Manager) to ensure that the event application form(s) captures necessary information to review event proposals and the process is reviewed to ensure that necessary information is obtained, in sufficient time, to ensure that approved events can proceed with all necessary timescales for successful delivery.

ACTION: (CW) work with Camden on Cricket outreach.

8. Agenda for next meeting

It was decided that one or two of the following would be chosen:

- i. GIAG 2026: Further discussion required as decided in respective agenda item.
- ii. Sporting events on the Heath: How events are applied for and proposed.
- iii. Supporting the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy: How do groups and users support delivery?
- iv. Well-being: Return to this topic with updates from clubs to support the overarching development of the Heath strategy.

9. AOB

- a. The Chairman and Superintendent thanked the Forum for the lively discussion in the first of the newly oriented Sports & Well-being Forum, reflecting that the focus allowed for important issues.
- b. Defibrillators – a member brought up that one is required on the Heath Extension. Our defibs don't appear on the national list because then they become public-use defibs and there is not only process around offering these to the public in terms of access and maintenance, but in the event of an emergency it could be that these are not available, and there is the risk they are not returned or are vandalised.

ACTION: (CW) to consider the provision of public-use defibrillators.

Date of Next Meeting: 6 November 2025

Meeting ended: 20:00