

Committee	Dated:
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	6 July 2015
Subject:	Public
Superintendent's update for July 2015	
Report of:	For Information
Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	

Summary

This report provides an update to Members of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee on management and operational activities across Hampstead Heath, since March 2015.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the contents of this report.

Main Report

Property

1. Contractors working at the Lido for the City Surveyor have now completed all of the building works, apart from installing the café roof coping stones. The works included new full length doorways on the front and back elevation of the building, as well as a new roof and windows. The café opened for business on the 23 May.
2. The Lido boundary fence has been removed from North West wall and some repairs made to brickwork. The North East wall will be rebuilt after the summer season. An architect has been commissioned to prepare designs for a new fence to go on top of both boundary walls. Once a design has been agreed planning permission will be sought. A combination of hawthorn and blackthorn will be planted externally along the perimeter walls for added security.
3. A Team of divers completed a full underwater survey of the Lido on 27 April 2015. Possible leaks were detected from the four deep-end outlet pipes, with a significant draw being reported by the inspection diver. The blanking plate in the centre of the pool, which had been suspected as the potential source of the leak, was thoroughly tested and no leaks were reported. Therefore, the recommendation is that the outlet pipe work is pressure tested to confirm that this is the point of water loss from the pool tank. Further pressure testing will be carried out in October when it may be necessary to drain the pool for several weeks.
4. The Lido paddling pool has been relined with a non-slip rubberised safety surface and was opened from the Spring Bank holiday weekend.
5. Major works to the tanking around the Hill Garden Shelter are scheduled to start on 21 September 2015, for a period of 10 weeks.

Fleet

6. The new 'identify' has started to be applied to the Hampstead Heath vehicle fleet (see figure 1). Further roll out to cover all outstanding vehicles will commence over the summer.



Figure 1: New vehicle livery

Planning

7. **The Water House (2011/4390/P and 2011/4392/C).** Camden Council has re-consulted on an updated version of the Basement Impact Assessment, Construction Management Plan and the Ecological Assessment for the Water House development. The Superintendent commissioned consultants to review the documents and a representation was submitted to the Planning Authority on 30 April 2015. The Conservation Manager and Senior Ecologist reviewed the Ecological Impact Assessment.
8. **Athlone House (2013/7242/P) Appeal.** The Planning Inspectors issued his findings and decision on 8 June 2015. The appeal was dismissed.
9. **Parliament Hill School, William Ellis School and La Swap Sixth Form (ref. 2014/7683/P).** This planning application was recommended for approval on 12 March 2015, subject to the agreement of a section 106 agreement. Work is scheduled to commence in the autumn and the schools have been required to establish a Community Working Group. The Operational Services Manager and Ponds Project Liaison Officer recently met with the Camden Planning Officer to discuss the issues relating to the impact of vehicle movements along the Highgate Road, in relation to crossover with the Hampstead Heath Ponds Project.
10. **53 Fitzroy Park (ref: 2015/0441/P).** This application refers to the erection of a three-storey single family dwelling including basement level, green roofs at first floor and roof level, solar panels at roof level and associated landscaping following the demolition of the existing part two, part three-storey dwelling. The Superintendent registered a representation with the Camden Planning Authority on 17 April 2015 in relation to this planning application.

Events

11. The Heath once again hosted the Camden Schools Cross Country Championships on 29 April 2015. 1,500 runners from 30 schools took part, an increase in participation from last year.
12. The second Highgate Harriers 'Night of the 10,000 metre Personal Bests' took place on the 16 May 2015. This year's races included the GB trials for the European Cup and provided a free opportunity for Heath visitors to watch top class athletics.
13. The Affordable Art Fair returned to the Heath for a fourth year from 11 – 14 June 2015, with GROW London returning shortly after for a much anticipated second year between 19 – 21 June 2015.
14. The City of London Festival Hampstead Heath Family Day returns to Parliament Hill for a seventh year on 28 June 2015, 11am - 6pm.
15. The Lord Mayor's Appeal Charity swim, City Dip, will again be hosted by the Lido on the 10 - 11 July 2015. More information is available at www.thelordmayorsappeal.org.
16. The Give it a Go! Festival is now in its fourth year. This year's event, held in partnership with the London Borough Camden, will take place on 12 July 2015, 1pm - 5.30pm.
17. 17 weddings are currently booked for 2015. The first ceremony of 2015 took place on Saturday 28 March 2015.
18. The Hill Garden and Pergola were part of the Open Garden Squares event which took place on 13 and 14 June. 140 members of the public visited on Saturday, with another 180 visiting on the Sunday, some coming from as far away as Yorkshire to visit. The Head Gardener of Golders Hill Park attended the event and received positive feedback from visitors, with many saying they would be visiting the site again.

Personnel Issues

19. The year-end Performance Development Reviews have been completed and objectives are being set for 2015/16.
20. As part of the Ponds Project Planning Conditions and the Section 106 agreement, the City agreed to employ three apprentices. Camden Council has supported the recruitment process, and one apprentice has now been recruited to join the Heath's Conservation Team, with another to join the Arboriculture Team. Unfortunately Camden Council were not able to put forward any suitable candidates for the Communications apprentice role, therefore this apprenticeship will be advertised again in July, and will not impact upon the terms of the Section 106 agreement.

Heath Hands

21. A new Volunteer Development Manager has been appointed by the Trustees and will be responsible for developing and implementing the volunteering strategy for the Heath.

22. The volunteers hours for 2013/14 were 6,562, comprising of 318 sessions. In 2014/15 volunteer hours were 6,607, comprising 535 sessions – although it should be noted that of this total, 1,082 hours of volunteering, and 231 sessions, comprised of office volunteers covering the vacant administrator role. 62 new volunteers joined Heath Hands in 2014/15.

Constabulary update

23. A total of 499 incidents were dealt with by the Constabulary from 1 January 2015 to 31 May 2015. Of these, 161 related to cycling enforcement actions and 33 to dog control enforcements.
24. A total of six prosecutions have been brought to Court so far in 2015; two relate to cycling, three to dog control and one to obstructing staff in Highgate Wood.
25. Tragically, there have been two suicides on the Heath so far this year.

Men's Pond Fatality

26. On Wednesday 15 April 2015 a group of young men entered the Men's Pond from its northern bank, outside the designated swimming area. One young man got in to difficulties and sadly failed to surface. His body was recovered after 11pm the same night by divers from the Metropolitan Police, Marine Policing Unit.
27. The young men had entered the pond after closing time and from a fenced-off area that is not designated for swimming. Warning signs clearly stating that swimming is not permitted were in place at this location.
28. A combination of Lifeguards, Constabulary, Rangers, Keepers, Technical Staff and Officers worked with the Emergency Services during the rescue and recovery phases of the incident. Many members of staff returned to work after their normal hours to assist. This gave continuity to the management of the incident and vital support to the Emergency Services and to the family of the deceased.
29. The tragedy resulted in a great deal of interest from the media and we took the opportunity to emphasise that the public must only swim in the designated lifeguarded areas, during the advertised swimming hours. The Heath bathing ponds offer an opportunity to swim close to nature, but the waters are deep, cold and opaque. This is an important message for us to continue promoting amongst Heath visitors, especially as we are entering the summer season.

Conservation and Ecology update

30. The Conservation Team have re-built the Heath Extension bridge at Lamp Path (see figure 2). The wildflower meadows on Dukes Field, the Heath Extension and the Old Hockey Pitch have been cultivated and sown.



Figure 2: Re-built Hampstead Heath Extension Bridge.

31. The Ecology Team have completed the Heath's annual amphibian survey and produced the schedule for bramble cutting across the Heath this season.

Golders Hill Park update

32. The Operational Services Manager has submitted a planning application to seek permanent planning permission from Barnet Council to retain the art installation 'The Good, The Bad and The Ugly' in Golders Hill Park.
33. The eagle owl and pheasant Zoo enclosures have been re-designed with replanting throughout. The Zoo toilets were out of action between 6 – 9 April 2015 due to items being flushed down the toilet blocking the macerators. Staff acted quickly to arrange contractors to attend at short notice and the toilets were reopened on the 10 April 2015.
34. The Butterfly House has been open to the public since the beginning of April and donations have already exceeded £900.

Parliament Hill update

35. The renovations around the tennis courts continue, with new turfing replacing a section of hedging. The new Café planters have been restocked and have made a big difference to the outward appearance of the Café. The Athletics Track flowerbeds have also been replanted with perennial native species and the planters at the Traditional Playground have also been planted up with vegetables.
36. The Bull Path has been resurfaced with a tar and chip top coat to complete the programme of works to give this entrance to the Heath a more rural feel.
37. The mini roundabout at the Traditional Playground is currently out of action; replacement parts have arrived and installation has been organised. In addition, repairs to the sand pit at the One O'clock Club have been completed

and staff continue to discourage foxes from using the area and causing further damage to the play surface.

38. The Parliament Hill Water fountain has been redesigned and relocated back from the main pedestrian path and is now operational.
39. Parliament Hill Tennis courts 5 -10 were resurfaced over the winter of 2014. The courts were out of action to the public from 11 - 20 May 2015 while a top-coat was applied to complete the refurbishments. The courts are now open for the summer season.
40. The Parliament Hill vehicle barrier has been replaced.

Ranger Team update

41. The Ranger Team has carried out maintenance in preparation for the summer season including bench maintenance, bin repairs and replacement, gate repairs and maintenance, re-painting the 'no cycling' path signage and prepared the Mixed Pond enclosure for opening on 2 May 2015.
42. A sink hole (see figure 3) appeared on the Heath near the Vale of Health on Friday 24 April. The area remains cordoned off while investigations are completed. The City Surveyor is currently seeking quotes for repair works, the cost of which will be met from the City's Insurers. The Superintendent will provide an update at the meeting.



Figure 3: Sink hole at the Vale of Health.

Tree Team update

43. The Tree Team have carried out Tree Risk Sequence Inspections at South End Green, West Heath Road and Highgate Road and have removed *Massaria* branches from plane trees located within Queen's Park and along West Heath Road and Highgate Road.

An Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) nest was discovered in Queen's Park on 16 June 2015. A Statutory Plant Health Notice was issued on the 18 June 2015 by the Forestry Commission, for the City of London to carry out nest

removal prior to pupation. The Superintendent will provide an update at the meeting.

Swimming update

44. The swimming ponds opening and closing times have been reviewed and new arrangement put in place for the 2015 season. The updated and rationalised timetable will make it easier for both staff and members of the public to know when the swimming ponds are open.
45. The swimming summer season started on the 2 May 2015, coinciding with the opening of the Mixed Pond. The Lido is now operating its full opening schedule.
46. Contractors working for the City Surveyors attended site and carried out repairs to the diving board at the Men's Pond on 8-10 June. The board has been in use since 15 June. Surveys have identified that further works are needed to the jetties at the Mixed Pond and Men's Pond, these will be scheduled for the autumn.
47. The hot water system at the Kenwood Ladies' Pond failed on 8th May, on Friday 12th June a new hot water boiler was installed. A fault on the new boiler has been diagnosed and contractors working for the manufacturer will be visiting site. The Superintendent will provide an update at the meeting. Swimmers at the Kenwood Ladies' Pond are being kept informed.

Awards

48. The Heath will welcome Green Flag judges on Monday 22 June 2015, and London in Bloom judges to Golders Hill Park on 29 June 2015.

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