

Committee(s)	Dated:
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee	9 November 2015 23 November 2015
Subject: Hampstead Heath Events Programme, January – September 2015	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Information

Summary

The following report details the success of the Hampstead Heath Events Programme 2015, up to the start of November 2015.

To date, the 2015 Programme has comprised 106 sports, well-being and cultural events, which have engaged with approximately 72,800 members of the public. The Programme enables Hampstead Heath to showcase its excellent facilities and to highlight the charitable contributions of the City of London Corporation, before a regional, national and international audience. At the same time, the events provide excellent entertainment and learning opportunities for Heath visitors, reach out to new visitors, and foster good partnership working with local councils and community organisations.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the continued success of the Hampstead Heath Events Programme in engaging with audiences, attracting new visitors to the Heath, and working with partners to provide a valuable service for the local community and beyond.

Main Report

Background

1. Some Hampstead Heath events, such as cross-country running and the fairs, have taken place for many years and are part of the fabric of London life. As a result of the success of the Olympics and of our own Hampstead Heath events in 2012, the Leisure & Events Manager has developed a number of events, designed to attract new audiences and increase the well-being of our customers. Crucially, these events also stimulate income generation for Hampstead Heath and help increase donations to our partner charitable organisations.

2. Since 1989, the City of London Corporation has introduced an extensive range of additional events covering sports, well-being, culture and entertainment. Taken together, these traditional and new events provide a valuable resource, very much appreciated by local people.

Current Position

3. The 2015 Hampstead Heath Events Programme consists of over 106 sports, well-being and cultural events, culminating with the Christmas Day swim at the Men's Pond. The 2015 programme is proving particularly popular, despite the Events Programme budget being reduced this year from £29,000 to £19,000.

Review

4. The English National Cross-Country Championships were held at the 'home of cross-country racing', Parliament Hill, on Saturday 21 February. An impressive 5,288 runners finished across the 10 races, nearly 600 up on the previous record and including 2,005 finishers in the Senior Men's race over the gruelling 12km course. The Senior Women's record was also beaten, while the two youngest age groups in action saw record entries of 433 for the under-13 girls and 395 for the under-13 boys. This is extremely encouraging for the future of the sport and for our desire to see more young people being fit and active. The DailyTelegraph national newspaper said of the event that it is '...one of most magnificent sights you can watch in running, and arguably in all sport', and '...one of the greatest, most epic events you can ever be part of'.
5. The Highgate Harriers Night of the 10,000m PBs, on Saturday 16 May, also received excellent media coverage, including a four-page spread in Athletics Weekly which stated that 'This ground-breaking event continues to go from strength to strength...the event lived up to its name as more than two thirds of the competitors set Personal Best times.' Race organiser Ben Pochee said 'I'm immensely proud to work with such proactive partners as the City of London Corporation, to create an event that is on course to become Europe's leading 10,000m event.' The event attracted over 2,000 spectators and drew elite international competitors from Switzerland, Belgium, Sweden, the Netherlands and France. Encouraging young people to take part is integral to the event and it began with two Inter-School Youth Relays. The climax of the day was the British & English Championship Races, with the winners of the men's and women's races going on to be selected for Team GB's European Cup squad that competed in June. World Snooker Champion Ronnie O'Sullivan and David Bedford OBE presented prizes to the winners of each race (figure 1).



Figure 1: A winning runner being presented with their prize by Ronnie O'Sullivan.

6. As a mark of its continuing success, it has been announced that next year's event (figure 2) will be the official Rio 2016 Olympic Great Britain Trials. Ben Poachee said, 'I want to say a huge thanks to all of the City of London team who have been pivotal in helping us achieve this accolade, it really has been a great advertisement for our partnership and what's possible with a small group of can-do people.'



Figure 2: Save the Date flyer for 2016 event.

7. The Affordable Art Fair welcomed 17,500 visitors over 4½ days, with £3.5 million of artwork purchased. These figures represent 10% and 30% increases on the respective 2014 results, illustrating the increasing popularity of the event.

8. GROW London welcomed 10,720 visitors, a 34% increase on last year, showing that this new event is starting to establish itself very well. We are currently in negotiations to bring back both events to Hampstead Heath for the 2016 season.
9. Well over 160 people in more than 30 teams took part in the 17th Hampstead Heath Duathlon on 13 September (figure 3). This is a true community event, managed in partnership with Hampstead Rugby Club and Parkrun. It is exceptionally popular, as it provides an opportunity for participants to swim in each of the Heath's swimming facilities, as well as run between them. The fastest woman finisher arrived back at the Athletics Track in an impressive 35mins, 15 secs. The fastest man was back in 32 mins, 22 secs, while the first team back from 33 entrants to win the Duathlon Cup were yet again the Swiss Cottage Swim Club, with a total time of 1hr, 45 mins, 36 secs.



Figure 3: Participants of the 17th Duathlon swimming at the Lido.

10. In order to fit within the reduced Events Programme budget, the bands did not start performing until early June this year. Nevertheless, this year's music programme for Parliament Hill and Golders Hill Park bandstands was particularly diverse, with 28 bands performing on weekday evenings and Sunday afternoons. The most popular was old favourite 'Elvis', one sunny Friday evening in July, when over 2,000 revellers were royally entertained by the 'King of Rock'. These Friday night concerts at Parliament Hill have been a particular success and are fast becoming a cornerstone of the local cultural calendar. There were, for example, over 1,000 people at Dan Carrier's Music Night, featuring the Dig It Sound System and well over 600 for John Etheridge's café show.
11. The City of London Festival's Hampstead Heath Family Day in June brought a colourful extravaganza for all the family, with performances, workshops, street theatre and other events from across the globe. There were samba drummers,

gospel choirs, flamenco dancers and brass bands, ending with a carnival headdress finale parade. Over 2,000 visitors enjoyed a spectacular day.

12. Despite gloomy overhead conditions, more than 3,000 people came to Hampstead Heath one Sunday in July to enjoy the annual Give It A Go! Festival. The joy of this event is that it is all about participation, with young people being the principal audience. Climbing, BMX biking, dance, fencing, athletics, football, rugby, bowls, croquet, assault courses and the launch of the world's first T3 lawn tennis court (figure 4) were all on offer, plus many more sports available for those keen to Give It A Go. The event is held in partnership with Camden Council and many other sport and well-being providers in the Borough. The idea is that young people get a 'taste' of what's on offer and can then find out where they can continue doing it locally in the future. There was also a display laid on by the Metropolitan Police Service and music with rock'n'roll favourites The Bruvvers and reggae star Sista Beloved.



Figure 4: World's first T3 lawn tennis court.

13. The City Dip charity swim took place over two days in July at the Parliament Hill Lido. Around 50 people took part and raised £600 for the Lord Mayor's Appeal. All enjoyed the event, although it was a shame that this year the Lord Mayor himself was unable to attend.
14. Bank Holiday fairs have taken place on three sites on or beside the Heath for many decades. In association with the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain, the City arranges the fairs on the upper fairground site off Spaniards Road over the Easter weekend, and at the lower fairground site beside the East Heath Road at Easter, Whitsun and August Bank Holiday weekends. In general fairs continue to attract lower attendances and this year again was no exception. The long-term viability of the fairs is a matter of concern to the Showmen's Guild and it continues to attract very small audiences for the Bank Holiday residencies, with a number of plots left vacant. However, the Heath continues to make a fairly substantial revenue from these events, and we are currently exploring ways to

reduce the fairground footprint, to make the car park available for paying customers, thereby creating more revenue. We are also evaluating a new model for managing the fairs, which involves offering the administration and management back to the Showmen's Guild.

15. On Saturday 19 September, on a beautiful sunny morning, nearly 200 people took part in the inaugural Jubilee Hall Trust (JHT) outdoor Heath Trail Run, which was got under way by 'celebrity starter' David Bedford OBE. The main 10 km run featured runners of all abilities, including first-timers who had been offered free coaching and training at JHT's own Armoury Gym in Hampstead, as well as seasoned runners. The top finisher completed the hilly course in just 39 mins, 22 secs. The JHT charity worked with local partners including the City, Parkrun, Highgate Harriers and London Heathside, who all fielded competitors for the race. Alongside the main event, there were 30 runners of all ages who completed the free 2 km Family Flash Dash. Almost two-thirds of these were completely new to running, so it was a fantastic accomplishment for all of them!
16. The two events were envisioned as a way to encourage and inspire local people to be more active by setting them a challenging goal. The event was debated at the Sports Advisory Forum, which agreed to a one-year trial; 54% of the entrants lived in Camden, while 24% worked or studied in the Borough. Almost three-quarters of participants did less than the Chief Medical Officer's recommendation of 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week, and 39% said they ran less than once a week. On the plus side, 99% said that they intended to keep running after the event! To encourage those locals from the least-active areas to enter, JHT carried out a targeted mail drop to the 5,000 most deprived postcodes in Camden, which led to more than 10% of the runners coming from these traditionally hard-to-reach areas.



Figure 5: Jubilee Hall Trust start of the 10km run.

17. Zippo's Circus came to the Heath in October for its annual family-orientated event, which has featured on Hampstead Heath for over fifteen years and remains constantly popular, receiving a substantial number of visitors each year. The circus is a rare cultural event, in that it attracts an audience that encompasses all ethnic and cultural backgrounds. As such, in recent years it has been able to form strong links with local community groups and stage unique tailor-made performances.



Figure 6: Zippo's Circus performers.

18. The Zippo Management Team has always operated to the highest standards, ensuring the circus is presented in a safe controlled environment. This year we received glowing reports from the Port Health & Public Protection Animal Health & Welfare Services of the City of London who were very complimentary about the animal husbandry of the circus. In addition, the circus enjoys a good working relationship with the Heath Management Team, making sure there are weekly briefings. Performances are timed to ensure minimal impact on local residents, with no performance finishing later than 9.30pm, often earlier. The circus has always shown a commitment to site care, is responsible for daily litter clearance and any post-event reinstatement. The circus also pays a substantial rental for staging the event on the Heath.

19. Our Education Centre staff run a series of events throughout the year, concentrated on school holidays. Bat walks continue to be extremely popular with all age groups and do an excellent job of highlighting the exceptional wildlife value of the Heath. Mini-beast discovery drop-in sessions can attract 50 or more people, who look for invertebrates under logs and make associated crafts and models. The Rookie Rangers Wildlife Club aimed at 8-12 year olds carries out activities such as pond-dipping, looking for invertebrates, tree ID, shelter-building and the like. Parents have to pre-book and pay £10 in advance for the day and

most sessions are fully booked. The Club is especially valuable, as children can come month after month and build relationships as a team and with the Heath.



Figure 7: Competitors at the 14th Hampstead Heath Conker Championships.

20. The 14th Hampstead Heath Conker Championship took place at 2.30pm on Sunday 4 October, at the Parliament Hill Bandstand. The aim is to keep this old tradition alive and to engage Londoners with their environment. While the competition can be fierce it is, of course, a fun family day out. The event held in 2011 still holds the Guinness World Record for the largest conker championship ever held, with 395 participants. This year we had another glorious day, with well over 300 competitors and the winners were presented by our chief judge and past chairman Jeremy Simons.
21. Throughout the Events Programme, there has been a great deal of media coverage, including several London-wide TV and radio pieces. Indeed, the Leisure & Events Manager has managed to secure a regular appearance on the BBC Radio London Saturday Breakfast Show.
22. All the events available to the general public were as usual advertised in the Hampstead Heath Diary, which remains as popular as ever with 40,000 copies being printed and distributed, and with many more viewing it on-line.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

23. The Events Programme directly supports the Open Spaces Business Plan 2015/16 – 2017/18 vision and objectives through 'The preservation of our open spaces for the recreation and enjoyment of the public' and to 'Improve the health and well-being of the community through access to green space and recreation.' Aim 4: to 'Promote opportunities to value and enjoy the outdoors for recreation,

learning and healthy living.’ and also contributes to the Improvement Objective 4: ‘Market our services and provide events and opportunities to learn for all within our communities.’

Conclusion

24. Despite the budget for entertainers and equipment being reduced from £29,000 to £19,000, this year’s Programme has built on the successes of previous years, as well as introducing new initiatives. We have continued to create entertaining and engaging programmes of activities, which have been well-supported by our enthusiastic customer base. With the Service Based Review and the need to ensure value for money and efficiencies, detailed work is currently underway to look at every aspect of the Events Programme to determine the total true costs, including all staff time, so that we can better plan the type and extent of events to organise in future for the benefit of visitors, and ensure value for money.

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