

Committee Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	Dated: 9 October 2017
Subject: Superintendent's Update	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Discussion
Report author: Bob Warnock – Open Spaces Department	

Summary

This report provides an update to Members of the Hampstead Heath, Consultative Committee on management and operational activities across the Heath since July 2017.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Members note the contents of this report.
- Superintendent is seeking Members views in relation to trialling Shire horses within the Events Strategy for the Heath.

Main Report

Events

1. Give it a Go (16 July 2017). An estimated 5,000 people took part in over 20 different types of sport including fencing, track and field athletics, tennis, ping-pong, volleyball, and football to name but a few. It was well supported by Heath sports groups including Little Foxes Football Club, Hampstead Heath Rugby Football Club and the Highgate Harriers. Free tennis coaching was provided as part of the Lawn Tennis Association's (LTA) 'Great British Tennis Weekend'. Other facilities on offer were the NHS, providing free health checks and information on stopping smoking, and Transport for London, who were encouraging people to cycle/walk to work more often.
2. Overall, all the Heath teams provided excellent support with regards to set up and breakdown, and the Heath Learning and volunteer teams also delivered support in the form of family friendly arts, crafts and games, ushering and providing information to members of the public. In conjunction with this year's event, the Mayhew Animal Home provided a very popular dog shows and pet friendly stalls. As ever, this great, family friendly free event was a success due to the collaboration of many of the Heath's user groups, staff, volunteers and the London Borough of Camden.

3. Water awareness week (24–28 July) was well attended with over 30 children taking part each day.
4. The Summer Fair (26–28 August) proved to be a very busy weekend owing to exceptionally good bank holiday weather.
5. The City of London was delighted to host this years 'One Man and His Dog' sheep dog trials, which were filmed by BBC Countryfile on Parliament Hill. The sheep dog trials will be broadcast on Sunday 24 September, and will feature segments on nature conservation across the Heath.
6. 295 people and over 30 teams took part in the Duathlon, hosted in partnership with the Hampstead Rugby Football Club.
7. The Jubilee Hall 'race for your life' Charity Run took place on 16 September. The run was started by British triple jumper Nathan Fox.
8. Moscow state circus arrives on Hampstead Heath on 27 September. Ten shows will take place over 5 days.
9. The 16th Annual Hampstead Heath Conker Championships will take place on Sunday 1 October 2017.
10. Work continues on finalising the Open Spaces Events Policy with the development of guiding principles for managing events at Hampstead Heath, currently in preparation. It is proposed that a small Advisory Group is established to assist with this work.

Shire Horses

11. On 9 July the Chairman of HHHWQPC received a petition signed by 139 predominantly local signatories. The petition stated, 'We the undersigned, respectfully request the City of London to consider having Shire horses to take over some of the functions on the Heath at present performed by motor vehicles'.
12. The Superintendent reported the petition to the HHHWQPC on 17 July 2017, and confirmed that an investigation would be undertaken.
13. The Superintendent has visited Richmond Park and met with the Assistant Manager to discuss Shire horses, as there is a long history of working horses operating within Richmond Park. Following a recent review The Royal Parks have transferred ownership of the Shire horses to 'Operation Centaur', who The Royal Parks now have a contract with to provide working horses for a number of specific operations and events each year.
14. The Superintendent arranged for the lead petitioners to undertake a site visit to Richmond Park to obtain a detailed briefing on the operational requirements, implications and benefits of integrating Shire horses into the management of a public open space.

15. The initial investigation has determined that the cost of outright ownership of Shire horses would be prohibitively expensive; however, it is clear there could be an opportunity to work in partnership with a working horse specialist provider to incorporate Shire horse demonstrations within the Heath's events programme.
16. The petitioners feel this would be beneficial to the Heath in terms of community engagement and could have an educational and therapeutic role besides undertaking appropriate tasks such as pulling the waste cart, mowing and other heavy jobs such as extracting timber. There would be opportunities to involve local schools, volunteers and sponsors/adopters. In addition, Dray rides have proved immensely popular in other parks.
17. The Superintendent has contacted 'Operation Centaur' to establish the indicative cost of Shire horses visiting the Heath for a heritage event during the summer of 2018.
18. Superintendent is seeking Members views in relation to trialling this initiative within the Events Strategy for the Heath.

Cycling

19. The Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager has commissioned Consultants to undertake an assessment of the condition of the shared-use pathways. In keeping with the Heath's natural aspect, the Consultants will be making recommendations to improve the surface and drainage along these routes. These will be discussed by the Pedestrian and Cycling Working Group. The Superintendent is in the process of recalling the Working Group, and arranging a meeting in October 2017. The Group will also consider improving the waymarking and signage on the existing shared-use paths and strategies to promote responsible cycling on the Heath.

Planning

20. **Garden House, Vale of Health. 2017/2529/P**
Details of tree protection in relation to various alterations and extensions to existing dwelling house. The Superintendent commissioned an independent review of the Basement Impact Assessment and hydrological study. The Superintendent will submit representations to the London Borough of Camden (LBC) regarding structural stability and underground hydrological issues that will impact on the Vale of Health Pond.
21. **The Water House, Millfield Lane. 2017/3692/P**
Proposals to erect a single storey side extension, 2 storey front infill extension, and part single part two storey rear extension, including facade and roof alterations to main house and front wing; erection of a side extension to outbuilding in rear garden to be used as ancillary habitable accommodation; and landscaping works including external ramps. The Superintendent has raised concerns regarding the impact on veteran and mature trees adjoining

Millfield Lane, including whether there is adequate root protection provision within the Construction Management Plan.

22. **North Fairground Site, Vale of Health 2017/4346/P**

Current application for a Certificate of Lawfulness for use as a site for seven static caravans for residential occupation. The Superintendent will submit a representative to LBC stating the proposal represents a material change of use and as such the certificate should be refused.

23. **42 Hampstead Lane, HGY/2017/1710**

Proposed demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling. The Superintendent commissioned an independent Basement Impact Assessment and hydrological study to assess the impact of this basement on the Heaths ponds. The study has confirmed that the proposed works will not impact upon the hydrology of Hampstead Heath.

24. **The London Borough of Barnet's Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document, Public Consultation.**

The document identifies the benefits of creating and retaining open spaces and green infrastructure across the Borough. The Superintendent submitted representations supporting the implementation of the Green Infrastructure SPD, but requesting the need for more specific policy relating to protection of the District Parks such as Golders Hill Park and the Heath Extension.

25. **Peabody Trust Archway Campus.**

The Archway Campus proposal seeks a residential-led mixed use development on a former university campus. The Superintendent submitted representations to Peabody Trust outlining that the City of London has no objection to the overarching principle of the proposal to provide additional homes within the London Borough of Islington, however, the City is seeking to ensure the proposal does not result in any inappropriate development that would result in significant harm to views into and from the Hampstead Heath and in particular views from Parliament Hill.

26. **Euston Stations Planning Brief - Key Principles Public Consultation.**

The Brief was developed by LBC in consultation with Transport for London, for the redevelopment of Euston Station and the surrounding area into a transport interchange with substantial surrounding development. The Superintendent submitted representations to the LBC seeking to ensure the Brief does not result in any inappropriate development that would cause significant harm to views into and from the Hampstead Heath and in particular views from Parliament Hill.

Trees

27. Oak Processionary Moths

In total 84 new trees, hosting 184 nests were discovered on Hampstead Heath in 2017. These were all removed by Contractors by the last week in July. A total of 117 trees have been affected since 2015. The Heath's Tree Team have started noting nests in neighbouring trees at Brookfield and the bordering the

Heath Extension. The Forestry Commission will confirm in October whether the Statutory Plant Health Notice will be retained (spraying all trees and removing all nest).

28. Chalara (Ash die back)

This has been noted on the Heath in low levels. The disease is not currently believed to be spreading.

29. Storm damage

The weekend of the 20 August was particularly wet and windy which led to a couple of large tree failures at Golders Hill Park and a number of large limb failures across the Heath.

30. This is an exceptional mast year with many oak limbs especially drooping under the weight of the acorns. This may lead to snapped branches during rain and wind events.

Constabulary

31. Four cyclists have been prosecuted for breaching the Heath's bylaws.

32. The Constabulary Sergeants are continuing to attend Metropolitan Police Briefings in relation to New Year's Eve celebrations.

Kenwood Nursery Yard resurfacing and drainage works

33. Contractors engaged by the City Surveyors Department have recently completed resurfacing and drainage works at Kenwood Nursery Yard. This has been a significant project to improve the hardstanding at this operational yard and to construct a comprehensive drainage system to manage surface water run-off.

City of London (Open Spaces) Bill 2016

34. The Bill is due for its last Commons stage on 10 October 2017. If no Members of Parliament request a debate, the Bill will pass into the House of Lords shortly afterwards.

Koi Herpesvirus (KHV)

35. Fishing is currently suspended across all ponds due to an outbreak of KHV at the Model Boating Pond. The long term implications are yet to be confirmed by the Fish Health Inspectorate. The Superintendent will update Members at the meeting.

Memorial Bench project

36. Work continues on updating contact details for benches with dedications where records have lapsed over time. Over recent months Supervisors have placed notices on benches which invite people to come forward with information about

the history of the bench. Updating the sponsorship database is a key step in implementing improvements to the Heath memorial bench service to achieve the objectives of reducing the waiting list and providing a high quality, self-funding sponsorship programme.

Hampstead Heath Ponds Project

37. The Hampstead Heath Pond Project won the 'Large Scale Permanent' Award at the Big Biodiversity Challenge Awards on 14 September. The Big Biodiversity Challenge is organised by CIRIA, the Construction Industry Research and Information Association, their challenge is to invite constructors to add one new biodiversity enhancement to a construction site, development or existing building. A link to the results is below.

<http://www.bigchallenge.info/2017-winners>.

Bob Warnock

Superintendent of Hampstead Heath

T: 020 7332 3322

E: bob.warnock@cityoflondon.gov.uk