

Report Title: **PARK UPDATE (ACTIVITIES)**

Report of: **Mark Evison, Park Manager**

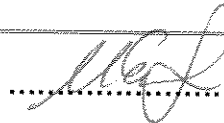
**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To inform the Board of the recent activities carried out in Alexandra Park.
- 1.2 To update the Board on the recent interest in 'the Actual Workshop'.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Board notes the report.
- 2.2 That the Board agree that the Park Manager should progress the footpath across Redston field subject to planning and budget constraints.
- 2.3 That the Board agree to advertise the Actual Workshop for letting.

Report Authorised by: **Mark Evison, Park Manager:** .....



Contact Officer: **Mark Evison, Park Manager,  
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**3. Executive Summary**

- 3.1 This report details the activities and projects that have taken place in the park.
- 3.2 The Board are asked to consider the future of the Actual Workshop building.

**4. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development (if applicable)**

- 4.1 N/A

**5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

- 5.1 No specific background papers were used in compiling this report.

## 6. Description

### Heritage Lottery Project

- 6.1 To celebrate the successful completion of the project a launch event was arranged for Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> August and was well attended. The Principle Landscape Architect for the project showed the invited guests around the park and described the main project elements.

### Park Events

- 6.2 The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) continued their programme of events over the summer. Work was carried out to replace steps and footbridges in the conservation area. Plans are being put in place for habitat works around the conservation area and Redston pond for implementation during the coming winter season.
- 6.3 The park also hosted two corporate fun-days, a charity fun-run and a sponsored walk. Considerable diversity of bird life has been discovered in the area of scrubland close to the cricket field and two bird-watching walks have taken place with over fifty species being spotted. A new leaflet with details of the waterfowl commonly seen at the boating lake is now available from the lakeside café.
- 6.4 The Farmers' Markets on Sunday mornings continue to be as popular as ever. The organisers are very proud to announce that the Alexandra Palace market recently won a Time Out award for 'best local food market' which has further raised the profile of this regular event.

### Park Concessions

- 6.5 The new pitch and putt course has been very popular this summer, despite the inconsistent weather. The operator has set up a kiddies putting area and plans to start coaching sessions next season.
- 6.6 Work will be carried out over the closed season to improve the greens and make the course more environmentally friendly. The conservation volunteers will be planting a native hedge to increase the habitat for insects and bird life.
- 6.7 The lakeside café and grove cafe have both been busy over the summer. The reopening of these facilities has increased the user numbers and turned what were often quiet, empty areas of the park into busy focal points for the community.

### Footpath across Redston Field

- 6.8 The Warner Estate Residents Association (WERA) voted at their AGM on 7 July to request the Park Manager progress their proposal for a hard-surfaced footpath across Redston Field. The path is intended to link the Park Avenue North entrance to the Lower Road. A plan showing the approximate route is attached as Appendix A.
- 6.9 The WERA members discussed the impact of the path and its finished surface material. The members requested a gravel-type finish to help the path blend in to the park.
- 6.10 An informal inquiry has been made to the Planning Department of Haringey Council but as yet, no response has been forthcoming.
- 6.11 It is recommended that the Board agree that the Park Manager should progress the footpath across Redston field respecting budget and planning constraints.

### **The Actual Workshop**

- 6.12 Following a long occupancy by Haringey Council as an education centre for young disabled people this building became vacant some years ago.
- 6.13 The building was advertised to let in 2006 together with the cafés and other concessions in the park. This competitive tender did not bear fruit and the building remains empty.
- 6.14 A number of inquiries have been made over recent months and the interest is such that the trustees should now consider the advertising the opportunity for use of this building.
- 6.15 Recent proposals received fall into four categories:
- Soft-play and children's activities.
  - Restaurant or Café use.
  - Centre for teaching art and community use
  - Children's drop in centre/crèche
- 6.16 The Board is asked to consider these outline proposals and decide if any of them are not a suitable use for the building.
- 6.17 The Board are also invited to suggest any other uses they would wish to see for this building.
- 6.18 Officers can then collate the uses deemed suitable advertise the opportunity in the local press and 'Leisure Opportunities' magazine.
- 6.19 Progress on this item will be reported back to trustees at a later date along with the financial implications once advert response has been evaluated.

### **Green Flag Award**

- 6.20 The Civic Trust awarded Alexandra Park its first Green Flag Award for 2008-09. This reflects the hard work carried out by all of the staff and volunteers involved over the last twelve months.
- 6.21 Two new flag poles have been erected on the south slope to display the green flag(s).
- 6.22 Work is in progress towards retaining this prestigious award next year. Strategy meetings are in place with the grounds maintenance team and the park management plan, which is a key document, is under review.

### **Grounds Maintenance**

- 6.23 John O'Conner (Grounds Maintenance) Ltd have been working on site since May 2008. All of the staff working for the previous contractor have been retained and the transfer went very smoothly. JOC(GM) have now established the work patterns required and have been successfully maintaining the park to a high standard and their efforts have been an essential part of the successful bid for a Green Flag Award.
- 6.24 JOC(GM) are now working towards the international standards for Environmental, Health & Safety and Quality Management Systems.
- 6.25 Improvements to the depot area have been implemented and the quality of the maintenance regime has increased in many areas.

### **Boating Lake Improvements**

- 6.26 The Park Manager has been in discussion with the Environment Agency to establish proposals to improve the boating lake for fish and anglers. The Alexandra Fishing Club and the pedal boat operators were also consulted on the proposals
- 6.27 The proposals include construction of two additional fishing platforms and new aquatic planting to increase the habitat available as refuges for fish from predators and as spawning areas.
- 6.28 The Environment Agency would offer grant funding to cover a large portion of the costs.

### **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1 That the Board notes the report.
- 7.2 That the Board agree that the Park Manager should progress the footpath across Redston field subject to planning and budget constraints.
- 7.3 That the Board agree to advertise the Actual Workshop for letting.

### **8. Legal and Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The cost of the path to across Redstone field has not yet been agreed, if sufficient funding from this years budget is not available the project will be delayed until next financial year.
- 8.2 The path may also require planning permission, if this is the case funding will not be committed until permission is given.
- 8.3 The proposed grant from the Environment Agency will require some matched funding to be provided, this cost will be reported back to the board at a future date.
- 8.4 The income from the proposed letting of the 'Workshop' cannot be evaluated at present and a further report will be provided to the Board before any commitment is given to potential tenants.
- 8.5 The LBH Chief financial officer and the Trust's Solicitor have been sent copies of this report.

### **9. Equalities Implications**

- 9.1 n/a

### **10. Use of Appendices/Tables/Photographs**

- 10.1 Appendix A: Proposed footpath across Redston Field.

**Appendix A:**  
Proposed footpath across Redston Field

