



## **ALEXANDRA PARK AND PALACE CHARITABLE TRUST**

### **BOARD MEETING**

**4 NOVEMBER 2024**

**Report Title:** General Update

**Report of:** Emma Dagnes OBE, Chief Executive, Alexandra Park & Palace

**Purpose:** To inform the Trustee Board of Alexandra Park and Palace Charitable Trust activities and the events programme.

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - N/A**

#### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 To note the content of this report and any advice from the Advisory and Consultative Committees.

#### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 This report provides Trustees with a general update on activities and the events programme. including Creative Learning, Park, Property and Events activity.
- 2.2 The information was provided to the Advisory and Consultative Committees at their respective meetings on 7 October and were invited to provide advice or feedback to the Trustee Board accordingly.

#### **3. Planning and Strategic Project Updates**

##### **3.1 Park Projects: The Grove, SE Corner and Playground/Skate Park**

Following a review of the feedback received on the Grove public engagement project and the Playground/ Skate Park survey, the team are working on a plan for next steps for further engagement and co-collaboration. All Park projects will be part of a wider capital fundraising campaign.

##### **3.2 North East Office Building (NEOB) Repair Project**

The amended Listed Building Consent application was approved by the Council in early September.

Work on site has continued to progress – brickwork construction and repairs are nearing completion, and works to the new roof begin imminently.

The latest programme indicates a mid-November finish. The contractor will be keen to claw some of this time back.

### 3.3 Changing Places Facility

Works are now complete, and the Changing Places facility was officially opened on 11 September.

### 3.4 EC Cafe Restaurant

Following the completion of RIBA (Plan of Work) Stage 2 (concept design) and a cost estimate exercise, a soft market test will take place later this month. Prospective catering partners will be invited to site for a tour.

### 3.5. Bollards on Alexandra Palace Way

Currently red and white blocks are in place along Alexandra Palace Way to prevent drivers parking on the pavement which leads to anti-social behaviour, littering and damage to the paving. Consideration is being given to using bollards as a permanent solution. A permanent installation is likely to require planning permission and/or listed building consent so the Advisory and Consultative Committee are asked to consider the proposal and whether they have any advice for Board.

The scheme is currently unfunded, but the details are being finalised so the project can be costed and then broken into phases to be carried out over several years a funds become available. The bollard proposed is a standard type available 'off the shelf' to ensure that replacement of damaged bollards in future is possible. The bollards will be placed 2.25m apart to prevent vehicle access and the final number will depend on the gaps between existing street furniture (such as lamp columns and bus stops).

Figure 1: example bollard



### 3.6 North bridge structural remedial works

Extensive surveys have been conducted to establish the current condition of the North Yard bridge, a scheme has been planned and we aim to submit our proposals to Haringey planning department imminently.

## 4. **Maintenance, Repairs & Improvements Since Last Reported**

### 4.1 General Maintenance

A recently appointed bricklayer has made a fantastic start on tackling fabric repairs, beginning with the rebuilding of the North Yard retaining wall, which is now weatherproofed and ready to last another 150 years.

Other significant efforts include upgrading the fire alarm panel in the Palm Court security office, enhancing the WiFi connectivity completion of the Ice Rink referee changing room refurbishment.

Various other repairs and upgrades across the site included replacing broken steps, fixing bollards, moving staff from the Theatre into the South East office building and installing new pumps in the boiler room.

### 4.2 Safety Upgrades

Upgrades to our Electrical Distribution boards and emergency lighting system continue across the estate.

### 4.3 Energy Efficiency

Our buildings showed potential for energy efficiency improvement in various areas including continual work on our BMS controls and heating system infrastructure, LED lighting upgrades and feasibility studies to support future progress. We have recently installed two new Grundfos pumps in our boiler room, which will dramatically increase the efficiency of our heating system, continue to replace light fittings with LED replacements and have started work on our south terrace lighting upgrade while keeping the look and feel the same.

### 4.4 Ice Rink

A hefty 760Kg compressor was replaced in the Ice Rink Ammonia Plant. Plus, we've revamped the ventilation system with specially designed "socks" to improve air movement without melting the ice, aiming to eliminate condensation and fog issues that posed poor visibility on the ice. An additional 56Kg of Ammonia was added to the system as an ongoing maintenance regime.

## 5.5 Other projects

- 5.5.1 **Phoenix Bar toilet upgrade project:** Work has started to take place to upgrade these toilets to ensure a more welcoming environment for our visitors; a strip out of the 1980 sanitaryware has been completed.
- 5.5.2 **Phoenix Bar window restoration:** Essential work has taken place to the windows and doors on the West side of the building. Repairs have been undertaken, and joinery has been prepped for a change of colour – the same dark bronze green (a heritage colour) that has been used on the East.
- 5.5.3 **Phoenix Bar upgrade:** The maintenance team have removed the internal timbers of the aging 1980's bar, replacing them with steel frames and hygienic services. This upgrade also includes new stainless steel shelving throughout, enhancing both functionality and aesthetics.
- 5.5.4 **The Johnson servery:** A strip out of the Johnson servery has taken place after a leak from the upstairs toilets saturated the kitchen below. The full strip out has been followed by replacement of electrics and a new floor has been laid. We aim to instal a new stainless-steel bar in its place.

## 5.6. Long-Term Planning/ Plant Machinery

- 5.6.1 **Box Office re-roofing:** The long-standing leak in the box office is to be addressed. The ageing Air Handling Unit (AHU) that was in the way has been renewed and is awaiting delivery and will be refitted on the new roof.
- 5.6.2 **Palm Court Suites:** Major upgrades include a new A/C unit and enhanced emergency lighting, ensuring comfort and safety. The emergency lighting and distribution boards in the kitchenette have been upgraded

## 5.7 Emergency Works

- 5.7.1 **Water main replacement:** We have undertaken a full replacement of our galvanised steel water main (which burst last year) into a new poly pipe with adequate isolation and service points along the run.
  - 5.7.2 **Boating Lake boundary wall:** Planning works for the boundary wall are in hand.
  - 5.7.3 **North Bridge Phase 1:** Works will be starting to stop current water ingress and prevent further deterioration of the steel fabric.
- 5.8 Routine services and special projects continue including smoke vent repairs, ammonia plant maintenance, sprinkler system servicing, lift maintenance while meticulous attention to standards are being upheld.

#### 5.9 Looking ahead:

- October routine servicing to our fire detection and door entry systems, water treatment systems, emergency lighting inspections and we are constantly exploring improvements to our current systems to maximize energy efficiency.
- We have some minor works planned that will make significant difference to our Visitor Services team by ensuring their place of work in the East Court is more comfortable, while also looking at the issue we have with the East Court toilets.
- Decorations will commence on the East Court doors and brick work repairs will continue to move around from the East Court entrance towards to south terrace.

## 6. **Park & Environmental Sustainability**

### 6.1 **Wetlands Project**

A contractor has been appointed to undertake Phase 1 of the project to manage surface water and create a new reed bed habitat. The £50,000 is an initial amount to fund phase 1 of the project. The commencement date is not confirmed at the time of writing, but the project will be completed by the end of March 2025. This project will involve creating and re-landscaping ditches to improve ground conditions, increasing aquatic habitats by making the channel system more sinuous (curvy) and by removing trees to increase light penetration.

### 6.2 **Notice Boards**

Refurbishment of Park notice boards is underway, at the time writing two have been completed and a third is being worked on. Repairing the timber in the existing boards was chosen as a more sustainable option than replacing them with new ones. The Park map and surrounding information is undergoing a redesign and these will start appearing in the refurbished boards in due course. The side panels are being overhauled so the information can be kept up to date more easily in future.

### 6.3 **Grounds Maintenance**

The Park team have continued to work in all weathers over the summer to maintain the Park. The annual meadow cutting has taken place and the arisings removed from site. This operation is intended to reduce nutrient levels in the soil to allow more opportunities for wildflowers to bloom among the dominant species. The Park team have been reviewing the outcome of the engagement work in the Grove to identify short term actions that can address some of the issues raised. The first of these is to give the pedestrian entrance to the Grove at Muswell Hill (gate 9) some attention this autumn to make it more welcoming.

#### **6.4 Gardening volunteers**

The volunteers again prepared the ground and sowed the seeds for the wild flower display alongside the golf course. They have also been involved in rose pruning and caring for the plants in the theatre courtyard.

#### **6.5 North London Hospice Owls**

The Park hosted four Owls as part of the North London Hospice trail. These colourful statues were designed by various people, including Matt Lucas and were located at the East Court, Garden Centre, Boating Lake and the Grove.

### **7. Creative Learning**

#### **7.1 Creativity Camps**

4 Creativity camps were delivered over August, including DJ workshops, puppet making, comic book and video game design, with 43 young people attending over this time.

#### **7.2 Exhibition: By the People: 150 Lifetimes**

- Key initiatives still to be completed: timeline, audio trail, digital online platform launch, and staff/volunteer training
- Online digital learning resource launching on 25/09, including a teacher training webinar aimed at Haringey primary schools to increase school visits

#### **7.3 By the People: Volunteer Contributions**

- 950 hours delivered by volunteers in roles such as curation, tour guiding, workshop support, and program ambassadorship
- 2,000 images and stories captured for the archive, enhanced by new images from the exhibition's supporting materials
- Engagement target: 300 school pupils; currently achieved: 387 pupils and 48 teachers directly engaged, with an additional 1,120 indirectly

#### **7.4 By the People: Media Coverage**

- Significant media presence: Funding announcement featured on BBC News, The Evening Standard, and Time Out; unveiling covered by ITV London and local newspapers
- Short film showcased at Smile Charity Film Awards: 86,453 views on TikTok, 800 attendees at the ceremony, 2.7 million via live stream, and 5,115 directed to the Unit website

#### **7.5 Tours and volunteers**

- BBC studios identified as growth area
- Over the past year we have grown our tour offer with our dedicated group of tour guides and stewards delivering a series of tours around the Theatre and also the BBC Studios.
- The tours have been part of our ongoing 150th celebrations and give visitors a behind-the-scenes look at spaces not normally accessible to the public. Approximately 34 delivered over the year

## 7.6 Young Creatives Network

- Community radio project currently being planned – key partners include DICE, Jessica Sammut, BBC Learning, Bruce Castle and more.
- Currently working on application for further 3 years of funding from Esmée Fairbairn; key theme placemaking, local people affecting policy and change.

## 7.7 Café Palais Initiative

- Monthly gatherings for older adults (50+) and those with dementia, offering activities like Singing for the Brain and Kaos Choir – sessions begin again in September
- 430 opportunities provided annually (excluding Kaos and U3A data)
- Outreach to 19 residential homes planned, with an application to the National Lottery Community Fund for expansion

# 8. Human Resources

8.1 People Strategy – Alexandra Palace took part in the Best Companies B-Heard staff engagement survey and was accredited with *Ones to Watch* accreditation with good levels of engagement. This is an exciting baseline as we launch our three year people strategy that has been developed in line with our new Vision and Goals.

8.2 Alexandra Palace will be signing as members of the CIISA (the Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority). It's a new organisation that exists to uphold standards of behaviour across the creative industries and to prevent and tackle bullying and harassment. (ciisa.org.uk).

# 9. Events

9.1 Alexandra Palace has been nominated in the London Venue and Catering Awards for Most Versatile Space and Best Unusual or Unique Venue.

9.2 We hosted a series of shows over the bank holiday weekend on the Terrace including Gok Wan – Isolation Nation, Norman Jay's Good Times and more recently Fred Again... Album Launch Performance on Friday 6 September.

9.3 The Terrace also hosted a free Haringey Library Service community event called La Feria Family & Culture on Saturday 31 August.

9.4 The Theatre ends its three week tenancy of *An Inspector Calls* on Saturday 21 September

9.5 Fireworks Festival – Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November and Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2024

Details of the Fireworks event build have been shared with the Advisory and Consultative Committee and local stakeholders. The build will begin in the Park on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October.

The Park and Alexandra Palace Way will be **closed from 2pm on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October until 3pm on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November**, except for The Grove, which will remain open throughout. More detail can be found at <https://www.alexandrapalace.com/fireworks-festival-information-for-neighbours/>

- 9.7 Event Noise Complaints: The table below displays noise complaints for the current year to date.

Noise complaints recorded for the 2024/5 Year, since 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024		
Date	Event	No. of complaints
8 June	The Grove Community Event	3
12 July	Bombay Bicycle Club	2
13 July	Kaleidoscope	6
18 July	Suede+Manic street preachers	6
19 July	Tom Odell	8
20 July	Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds	2
25 August	Gok Wan	3
26 August	Norman Jay's Good Times	5
August	Summer Series in general	3
Total noise complaints 2024/25 to date		39

- 9.8 Members are encouraged to regularly review on our *What's On* pages at <https://www.alexandrapalace.com/whats-on/> and may still ask questions during or in advance of meetings.

## 10. Legal Implications

The Council's Assistant Director for Legal & Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no comments.

## 11. Financial Implications

The Council's Chief Financial Officer has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no comments.

## 12. Use of Appendices – None

## 13. Background Papers – None