



ALEXANDRA PARK AND PALACE CHARITABLE TRUST BOARD

18th September 2025

Agenda Item 8

Report Title: Chief Executive Vision and Goals Update Report

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

Purpose: To inform the Trustee Board of Alexandra Park and Palace Charitable Trust on progress in 25/26

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 – NA

1. Recommendations

1.1 For the Trustees to Note the contents of this report

2. Executive Summary

2.1 This report updates the Trustees on progress to date in the financial year 25/26 and aligns with the Trust's Vision to **"Create a Sustainable Home for All That We Do."** The work highlighted under each Goal have been selected based on progress made since the last Board report. The Vision and Goals can be found in Appendix 1.

3. **Provide Great Entertainment and Culture for All: Accessible and welcoming, we will continue to challenge ourselves to gain better understanding of our current and future audiences and their needs, ensuring our Cultural and Entertainment programme reflects the tastes and innovations of the time. We will support and develop opportunities for artists to showcase their talents and reach new and diverse audiences.**

3.1 **The Summer Series** took place throughout July in the Park. Outdoor performances included Teskey Brothers, Black Keys, Alex Warren, Leon Bridges, The Kaiser Chiefs plus the inhouse promoted Kaleidoscope festival headlined by Faithless, Goldie & Sara Cox. Net Promoter Score across the series was rated excellent, this is achieved through customers surveys results. The Summer series will return in 2026.

- 3.2 **Theatre Production** Alexandra Palace and Wise Children collaborated and coproduced on Alfred Hitchcock's "North by North West" adapted by Emma Rice. The production successfully ran over a two-week period.
- 3.3 **Theatre events** included family productions, The Dinosaur That Pooped, Ministry of Science, Tom Gates Live on Stage, Dinosaurs Live and the Great camping adventure plus All of Cthulhu, a show of mystery.
- 3.4 **Exhibitions & Community events** included The ABTT theatre show, an exhibition of specialist theatre suppliers, the Profile Awards and Haringey Box Cup, London's largest amateur boxing event.
- 3.5 **Market research** Working with consultants Savanta, Market research is being carried out throughout the summer to support our understanding of audiences, customers and donors. This work will help us engage more effectively with new and diverse audiences, while strengthening our connections with existing customers. The project will also support us with overall brand positioning.
- 3.6 **Public Relations** Premier PR have been appointed as Alexandra Palace new PR agency supporting us to explore all opportunities and increase brand awareness for the venue and charity.
- 3.7 **Leisure** The ice rink continued delivering its courses and public skate throughout the Summer. The team are also preparing for the hockey season to start in September. The boating lake pedalos and pitch and putt remained open for all to enjoy, with promotional offers available for families. The boathouse cafe is scheduled to reopen in the Autumn.
- 3.8 **Phoenix bar and Pizzeria** The pub continued to maximise from sales on good weather days and benefited from the summer series of events.
- 4. **Build Climate Change Resilience: *Actively responding to the climate change emergency, we will strive and challenge ourselves to take the Palace off grid within a generation, lessening our impact on the environment, reducing our energy consumption and harnessing the parkland to build climate resilience.***
 - 4.1 Discussions continue with the Zero Carbon Accelerator (ZCA) as we look for options to deliver our aim to reach net zero. The government has closed our best potential source of funding, the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. We are working with the ZCA team to develop a delivery program and source suitable funding.
 - 4.2 We are working on the two projects that were awarded grants from the Haringey Community Carbon Fund. These projects are to install solar panels on the boat house and secondary glazing in the CUFOS (old station) building.

5. Protect Our Heritage Assets: *Reverse the decline in the heritage asset by raising the funds needed to tackle the backlog of conservation and infrastructure repair and maintenance across the estate. We commit to utilising innovative sustainable materials and methods at every opportunity.*

5.1 We continue to make meaningful progress toward reversing the decline of our heritage estate, with a wide range of essential repair, refurbishment and modernisation works completed or underway.

5.2 **Boating Lake Jetty Repair** We are pleased to report the successful completion of essential repair works to the Boating Lake jetty a key infrastructure upgrade that ensures the safe and enjoyable return of boating activities for our visitors.

5.3 This project involved the full removal of the existing decking boards and the replacement of all underlying joists. The decision to undertake a complete structural renewal was driven by the need to guarantee long-term safety and stability, particularly in preparation for the lake's reopening to the public.

5.4 The works were carried out with careful attention to the surrounding environment and operational needs of the site. Our team coordinated closely with contractors and in-house maintenance staff to deliver the project efficiently and with minimal disruption to the wider park.

5.5 **East Court cafe** As part our commitment to improving visitor facilities whilst preserving the historic fabric of the building, we are close to completing a comprehensive refurbishment of the East Court Cafe. This work not only enhances the functionality and safety of the space but also ensures compliance with modern food service standards all whilst remaining fully reversible and sympathetic to the character of the building.

5.6 The project began with the complete removal of the temporary cafe infrastructure. In its place, a new floated floor system was installed, designed to carry all necessary café services within its structure. This upgrade has eliminated the trip hazards previously caused by surface-laid cables and pipes, creating a seamless and safer environment for both staff and visitors. The new floor is constructed as a single, continuous surface, fully washable and robust enough to withstand the rigours of a busy catering operation.

5.7 To further support food safety and hygiene requirements, the café's perimeter has been lined with durable, wipeable wall finishes. These materials allow for easy cleaning and maintenance while also offering a neutral, professional backdrop to the refreshed space. A full upgrade of the electrical system was also

undertaken, delivering a stable and future-proofed supply to support both current catering equipment and any future additions.

- 5.8 Importantly, all works have been carried out with a strong focus on reversibility and non-invasive construction. No elements have been fixed to the historic fabric; instead, the installation is entirely self-supporting, protecting the heritage value of the East Court. Services such as power and water have been routed in a flexible, modular way, enabling potential layout changes in the future without major disruption.
- 5.9 This project marks a significant step forward in the ongoing enhancement of our visitor amenities, delivering a clean, modern café environment that remains true to the spirit of conservation-led improvement across the Palace estate.
6. ***Safeguard Our Green Lung for London: We will implement new technology and innovation to help local habitats and species thrive in our 196-acre park, whilst encouraging diverse audiences, new visitors and new communities to engage with and benefit from our unique environment through outdoor interpretation, events and activities.***
- 6.1 The prolonged spell of hot and dry weather has had an impact on the Park with water levels in the lakes and ponds reducing. The aerators in the boating lake were serviced by contractors to ensure an adequate oxygen supply in the water during the hot period. A new set of 'no BBQ' signs has been distributed around the Park to help manage fire risk.
- 6.2 The Park Team has been continuing maintenance through the hot weather; visitors number have increased and the team collected 14 tons of rubbish from the Park in June 2025.
- 6.3 Michael Conway, the John O'Conner contract manager recently celebrated 30 years working at Alexandra Palace. Michael raised the Park's 18th Green Flag in June to celebrate.
- 6.4 Maintenance work is planned in the play area and skate park in September and a closure will be required. The rubber safety surfacing around the play equipment will be repaired and patch repairs will be made to the surface of the skate park. The oak trees in the play area will be reduced as part of their ongoing maintenance.
- 6.5 Sensitive tree safety work has continued around the site and the oak processionary moth control program was carried out to reduce the numbers of this invasive pest.
- 6.6 A colony of bee orchids flowered near the paddock car park. These delightful plants appeared in 2023 and following a change to the mowing regime have

flowered twice. The hummingbird hawk-moth has also been spotted patrolling the meadow and bramble near the pitch and putt course.

- 6.7 As part of the Savanta market research work, a focused set of questions around Park users have been created and will be part of our qualitative research - these surveys will take place over a couple of days in the Park, Boating Lake and East Court to capture people when they're visiting (rather than attending an event).

7. *Protect Our Archives And Share Our Stories In Innovative Ways: Celebrating our heritage and growing our reputation in the sector, we will provide environmentally sustainable facilities for the care of our valuable collections and archives to tell our stories and enable access to a wider range of people.*

- 7.1 Three new archive volunteers have enlisted this year and one has just completed the listing of Val Paley's collection which was accessioned in 2021. Our ambition is to create a display and interpretation of Val's contribution as a Trustee since 2017 and her activism dating back to the 1970s. The papers and memorabilia give us a very personal insight into the last 50 years of AP history from a local stalwart supporter of the Park and Palace.
- 7.2 We were encouraged to submit an application for the Business Archives Council cataloguing grant, having come a "close second" in 2024. If successful, the project will begin in September and will further increase access to vital historic company records.
- 7.3 The archives were used successfully in the first quarter to enable Facilities in responding to external queries as well as for ongoing maintenance and restoration projects.
- 7.4 We are working with volunteers on articles to be submitted jointly by Hornsey Historical Society to the Ham & High paper for their regular heritage feature.
- 7.5 Project plan and collation of assets and stories for the celebration of 35 years of the Ice Rink to engage all the current skaters and encourage community participation, has been submitted to the Leisure Operations Manager and IR General Manager for approval. A temporary display in the East corridor and skate hire is planned for install this Autumn.
- 7.6 Sales and Curatorial teams are collaborating to commission a virtual tour from Headbox, of the historic BBC Wing. It will replace the previous BBC Taster app (*Civilisations*) VR tour created by EEVO. This will allow public to access the studios when guided tours are not available, sold out, or not suitable for visitors with some mobility needs.

8. **Inspire And Engage Our Communities:** *Taking inspiration from our eclectic history and inspiring cultural assets, we will collaborate with our communities and partners providing a range of creative and engaging events and workshops, to help people of all ages and backgrounds gain skills, explore their creativity and improve their well-being whilst cultivating warm and affectionate attachments to everything we do.*
- 8.1 **Projects:** All these projects were successfully delivered by the end of Q1. Highlights include the outdoor Shakespeare performance *As You Like It* on 28th June in the outdoor learning area, followed by *Green Creates* on 2nd July. On 5th July, the PAS end-of-year showcase and the YAC performance (15 Actors in a Time of War) were both held in the theatre. *Palace Uncovered* took place on 7th and 8th July, offering immersive learning experiences for secondary schools exploring the Belgium Refugee crisis in 1914.
- 8.2 **Young Creatives Network** Eight network members participated in DJ Masterclasses at DICE headquarters on 30th July. On 7th August, a table reading of a new play by emerging playwrights was held in CPAV. YCN members also led the creation of the annual Skate Jam festival on 26th July, which drew an impressive crowd of 500 attendees.
- 8.3 **Wild in the Park - Outdoor Learning Programme** On 12th August, Community Focus sessions were delivered in the outdoor learning area, supporting young adults with disabilities. These sessions were led by Laura Fox and formed part of our inclusive learning initiatives.
- 8.4 **Biblio Buzz 2025** The winner of the libraries award facilitated creative writing workshops at Wood Green and Marcus Garvey libraries. The Biblio Buzz Library Ceremony was held on 2nd August to celebrate young readers.
- 8.5 **Pinhole London** On 21st August, a pop-up camera obscura installation was set up on the south terrace. The event encouraged audience engagement and feedback, blending art, science, and public interaction.
- 8.6 **Looking Ahead to September** We're preparing for several exciting community events. *La Feria*, a Latin community festival, will take place on 13th September outside the Phoenix Pub. On 20th September, we'll be part of the **Haringey Age Well** Festival, with a specially curated Alexandra Palace zone.
- 8.7 **Volunteering** July saw continued momentum in volunteering across the site, with a small group supporting the Fundraising & Development department's **Summer Celebration**, assisting when we hosted *Green Creates*, and helping set the scene for the workshops for *Palace Uncovered* by sharing the story of Belgian refugees at the Palace. Our gardening group kicked off a new project in the Campsbourne area, transforming raised beds and engaging with the local community. Café Palais volunteers welcomed visitors and joined in crafting

activities, while our Theatre Assistants supported the children's theatre programme. Looking ahead, August remains busy with volunteers for the first time joining the panel to shortlisting books for **Biblio-Buzz 2026**, ongoing archive projects, and for the **Open House Festival** in September, where volunteers will lead BBC Studio tours. We'll also be holding our annual **volunteer social**, hosted by Emma, to bring the team together and share updates on future plans.

9. **Strengthen Our Overall Resilience: *Safeguarding the assets for future generations, we will fortify our governance and raise funds through diversifying our revenue streams. This will include introducing a donor programme, building our corporate partnerships in line with our Values and attracting visitors all year round to the Park and Palace, creating a dynamic and sustainable future for the charity.***
- 9.1 **Individual Giving** Launch of the new individual giving programme has progressed this summer, aiming to increase investment in the Park and Palace. Initial launch of our **Founding Ally Pally Patrons** scheme in June to current supporters saw members join at each of our three membership levels, giving from £600 a year upwards. Promotion for **Name a Bench and Name a Seat** dedication schemes and **Gifts in Wills** is planned for Autumn 2025. This will be followed the relaunch of our regular donors' programme, giving from £3 a month, as **Ally Pally Supporters** in Spring 2026.
- 9.2 **Trusts and Statutory Grants** Trust and Statutory fundraising continues towards both Creative Learning programming and small-scale capital projects supporting Creative Learning in a challenging grant fundraising climate.
- 9.3 **Capital Fundraising** The next phase of the Trust's capital fundraising will renew sites across both the Park and Palace, ensuring that Ally Pally can bring joy to future generations. Potential capital projects for the next phase of the restoration of the Park and Palace have been scoped and prioritised according to their potential to impact towards the Trust's Vision and Goals in four areas:
 - **Community:** increasing wellbeing of North London communities
 - **Climate:** bringing the Park and Palace to Net Zero
 - **Conservation:** repairs to sustain the fabric of the Palace and Park against the impacts of climate change
 - **Commercial:** updating essential facilities serving the events programme and income generation
- 9.4 **Strategic Plan** Work is underway to develop the charity's Strategic Plan. The Plan will consider the potential capital measures included in the next phase of our restoration and set out our delivery programme, alongside targets for social and economic impact. A draft plan will be available to Trustees to review towards the end of the year.

- 9.5 **Improving Connectivity** EE will be deploying 5G infrastructure across the site to enhance connectivity for all users. This same approach is being taken with other service providers, who will be deploying similar infrastructure.
- 9.6 **Rooftop Adventure** Construction has begun for the venue's new attraction "Summit, Alexandra Palace Rooftop Adventure". This is a partnership between Alexandra Palace and the operator Wire and Sky. A ten-year lease has been agreed. Subject to the completion of the works, the attraction is planned to open in the Autumn.
- 9.7 **IT and Network Resilience** We continue to improve our IT capabilities by replacing older systems with more modern solutions which create new opportunities and efficiencies:
- Our event planning system Artifax is being replaced by a new system called Infor which is currently in the installation and data load phase. Infor will improve business continuity, consistency, communication, overall management and delivery of events and other activities.
 - Our HALO reporting and checking system has been rolled out further and a number of improvements were implemented.
- 9.8 In our plan to improve our use of Office365 capabilities and remove our reliance in on-site IT hardware we have started the migration of the organisation to SharePoint/OneDrive.
- 9.9 **Improving digital security** We have established a project with a project manager to gain Cyber Essentials accreditation from the UK Government scheme; our Cyber Virus protection solution was reviewed and uplifted; and we have improved physical access controls to our main Server and Communications equipment room.
10. **Restore Derelict Spaces: *Adopting an adaptive reuse approach to restoration, we will bring currently underused, inaccessible or derelict spaces back into use, unlocking potential and enabling us to welcome everyone through our doors with a wider range of activities, entertainment and experiences.***
- 10.1 **Boating Lake Project – Phase One Completion** We are pleased to confirm the successful delivery of Phase One of the Boating Lake improvement programme a foundational upgrade focused on enhancing safety, functionality, and the overall visitor experience.
- 10.2 This phase centred on the complete rewiring of the boat hire facilities, ensuring all electrical systems meet current safety standards. As part of the works, new general and emergency lighting was installed throughout the operational areas, significantly improving visibility, safety and energy efficiency.

- 10.3 In parallel, we undertook a full refurbishment of the public toilet facilities. This included updated fixtures, improved lighting and refreshed finishes, all aimed at elevating the customer experience and supporting increased visitor numbers during peak boating season.
- 10.4 These upgrades represent a critical first step in the wider transformation of the Boating Lake area. By addressing core infrastructure and customer-facing amenities, we are laying the groundwork for a more welcoming, reliable, and enjoyable lakeside environment.
- 10.5 Work continues to build the case for an Expression of Interest application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a major grant towards the next phase of the North East Office Building Project.

11. Establish new, Exciting Partnerships: *Amplifying our purpose of enriching lives, we will strive to form stand-out partnerships with universities, colleges and creative institutes and employers to support skills development and career opportunities for people of all ages*

- 11.1 **Haringey Music Service Relocation:** Mark Civil (Head of Creative Learning) and Louise Johnson (Head of Strategic Planning and Projects) are currently working with core Alexandra Palace teams to finalise lease arrangements for the relocation of Haringey Music Service, with a move-in date confirmed for 30th October 2025.
- 11.2 **Council Lease Progress:** Dan Early (Head of Haringey Music Service) recently toured the site with the Haringey Council lease team. The lease has been informally signed off, pending final documentation.
- 11.3 **Partnership Development:** A strategic meeting is scheduled for September between AP, North London Music Hub and BBC Concert Orchestra to explore joint programming opportunities and establish a two-year roadmap for collaborative initiatives. Updates will be provided to Trustees at future meetings.
- 11.4 **Governance and Representation:** Mark Civil (Head of Creative Learning) and Melanie Fry (BBC CO) are set to join the North London Music Hub Board once it is formally established. Dates for board curation are to be confirmed.

- 11.5 Haringey Music Service was named as a secondary partner in a recent capital funding application submitted to Arts Council England. The bid proposes the redevelopment of the Transmitter Hall to support a broader range of partnership-led activities. In addition to enhancing collaborative provision, the redevelopment is designed to unlock increased commercial use of the space, generating sustainable income to support the Creative Learning department's long-term growth and impact.

13. Legal Implications

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

14. Financial Implications

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

15. Use of Appendices – None

16. Background Papers – None