

Report Title: **Commercial Directors Report**

Report of: Lucy Fenner, Commercial Director

1. Purpose

1.1 To update on the Board on commercial activity in the 3rd quarter

2. Recommendations

2.1 To note the commercial highlights.

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3. Executive Summary

3.1 This paper provides a review by the Commercial Director on major activity undertaken in the 3rd quarter of the trading year, and a forward focus on the 4th quarter.

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

5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

6. COMMERCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Palace had 95.4% occupancy throughout October, November and December. The 4.6% where the Palace had not been occupied amounted to 5 days, which were in November. This period has been our busiest to date with over 300,000 visitors to the site across 32 different events - an increase of 100,000 visitors and 15 additional events over the same period in 2014.

On the 1st October The Wombats played their largest London show followed by the Knitting and Stitching Show. This exhibition was open for 5 days for the 2nd consecutive year and attracted over 40,000 visitors.

A tight overnight turnaround saw the team break down 200 exhibition stands and transform the space into fashion catwalk for 1200 delegates to view the new Tesco F&F clothing range. This corporate event led straight into 3 nights of music including performances from Rudimental, Major Lazor, and the Vans Warped Tour.

A number of smaller corporate conferences continued throughout a busy October and these were mainly hosted in the Panorama room. In the last two weeks of October we welcomed 2 new exhibitions: Mind Body and Soul and the OM Yoga Show, the former were previously held at Olympia.

The Classic & Sports Car Show organised by Haymarket exhibitions followed. This show brought the world's most glamorous classic cars and attracted some of the world's most highly regarded classic car dealers and some of the wealthiest and most respected collectors. The organisers were keen to ensure that all visitors to Alexandra Palace had the chance to view some of the attractions and so displayed a selection of models outside on the Beach area for non-ticket holders to enjoy.

Also in November Ernst and Young hosted their 10 year anniversary staff conference in the West Hall with 1500 delegates.

On Tuesday 7th November we hosted and delivered our largest in-house event: The Fireworks and German Bier Festival. 50,000 Tickets sold out more than 2 weeks in advance and attendees were not disappointed. The firework display was in excess of 25 minutes with an additional 20 minute laser pre-show. Other entertainment throughout the Park included; street food and craft beer, mutant waste parade, funfair, a huge bonfire, and ice skating sessions. Inside the Great Hall was turned into a huge German bier Keller where 6000 people enjoyed local musicians and the headline tribute Elton John act.

Feedback to date has been largely positive and to note that the event was delivered to an incredibly high standard. Enquiries for 2016 ticket sales have already been received. As with all major events the team will reflect and make improvements where necessary but overall our flagship event is now London's hottest ticket in November and we should be very proud of this achievement. Please refer to our fireworks video to see all the activities that took place:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AybNoxq0P5s>

Also in November Amma returned to the Palace for her 8th year with 3,500 visitors a day attending to hug the spiritual healer originally from southern India. The organ society also hosted their special film night which attracted more than 300 visitors.

December opened with 7 concerts in 8 nights. Sell out performances from Frank Turner, Chvrches, and Bring Me the Horizon were followed by 3 sold out nights of Disclosure, and to celebrate 20 years together Faithless played out the year to a sell-out crowd.

The ever popular festival village in the West Hall has really supported catering targets with high food and beverage sales on music events. The unique street food concessions including Smoke Stack, Anna Maes, Flammin Cactus and Bodeans encourage music fans to get to the venue early to enjoy an experience that offers more than just music.

Antiques returned for its busiest show of the year and attracted over 4,000 enthusiasts.

Darts returned bigger and better than ever in the last weeks of December and across the Christmas and New Year period. The increased capacity in the West Hall meant that the organiser PDC could sell 3000 seats per session. 66,000 tickets were sold in total and more than a million pounds worth of beer was consumed. The live coverage on Sky Sports reached over four million viewers across the 14 days of the William Hill World Darts Championship a 25% increase on last year, including a record audience of more than 1.7 million for the thrilling final between Anderson and Adrian Lewis.

Masters World Snooker held 14 sessions over 7 days. Viewing figures peaked at 1.4 million on the BBC. Average attendance across the sessions was 1,500 which increased to 2,000 for the final on Sunday 17th January. Ronnie O Sullivan won the tournament for the sixth time.

7. FUTURE EVENTS

Event	Event Type	Date
Excursions	Exhibition	23 rd January
Ping Pong	Sporting Event	22-24 th January
Club de Fromage on ice	Ice disco	29 th January
Feeling Gloomy on ice	Ice disco	5 th February
Antiques	Exhibition	7 th February
Slipknot	Concert	10-11 th February
Tame Impala	Concert	12-13 February
MA Healthcare	Exhibition	23-24 February
Jamie XX	Concert	26 th February
Enter Shikari	Concert	27 th February
Club de Fromage on ice	Ice disco	28 th February
RYA	Exhibition	4 th - 6 th March
Parov Stelar	Concert	12 th March
London Festival of Model Railways	Exhibition	19 th -20 th March
Andy C (Late night)	Concert	24 th March
Ally Pally German bier festival	Live Event	26 th March

At the time of writing Matchroom sport is currently setting up the West Hall to host a weekend of Ping Pong. For the first time this event will be held across 3 days (rather than the previous 2), with play on the evenings of 22nd – 24th January. The tournament features 64 players from all over the world, headed by defending

champion Andrew Baggaley of England and viewing figures are expected to reach 1.5 million. The commercial team also secured 120 tickets for 3 schools: Highgate Wood, St Paul's in Tottenham and St Mary in N8, to attend on Friday evening. This was a combined initiative with the Learning and Community team.

The 4th quarter will conclude with 8 nights of concerts including performances from Slipknot, Tame Impala, Jamie xx, Enter Shikari and one late night on Easter Thursday 3rd March hosted by DJ Andy C.

We will also host a further 6 exhibitions including Antiques, MA healthcare, Royal Yachting Association and Excursions, the latter are celebrating 40 years in the business. These exhibitions account for a total 9 open days with over 25,000 visitors expected.

The financial year ends with our very own German bier Festival. Springfest event is already selling fast and over 4,000 people are expected to attend on Friday 25th March in the Great Hall, making this event London's largest bier Keller.

8. EVENT OPERATIONS UPDATE

8.1 Table top exercise

In addition to the numerous events taking place throughout this period the events team hosted a table top exercise to talk through potential emergency scenarios and how each operational team within the venue would manage and react to them. This was a successful exercise aimed at continually improving our existing operational responses and will be repeated annually.

8.2 Venue Management Plans

Venue management plans and key operation documents have all now been updated. All departments have been briefed on these updates to ensure all events continue to be delivered to a consistent high standard.

8.3 Improvements to Egress

The Head of Events continues to implement a number of procedural additions to our standard egress plan including a different egress route for visitors when leaving the building, additional security and traffic management and dedicated cleaners in certain external areas including Bedford Road.

8.4 Outdoor Events Strategy

The Commercial team is near to completing the outdoor event strategy to ensure Park opportunities are maximised throughout the summer. This will enable us to increase our portfolio of outdoor events, attract new audiences and build on our outdoor activity benefiting park users and the local community.

8.5 Fireworks

As with all major events the team undertake a debrief of all elements and make improvements where necessary. Planning has already started for the 2016 display.

9. MARKETING

9.1 Media Coverage

The numerous events held at the Palace over the autumn attracted increased media coverage. The venue was listed in Time Out 4 times, NME 8 times, Metro 4 times and Evening standard 3 times. Our 'What's On' has estimated to have achieved over 10,000,000 views and impressions from these publications alone. The Time Out December edition listed the Alexandra Palace waterslide at the Ally Pally summer festival as the number one thing to attend in London in July 2015.

9.2 Customer data

Marketing have been focussing on digital advertising and social media platforms in order to engage with new and existing customers. This is not limited to event promotion only but also promotions for the Ice Rink, Learning and Community programmes, Park events, and activity in The Phoenix Bar & Kitchen. These platforms have provided a valuable source of customer data, which can then be used to communicate and promote future events and offers.

9.3 Social Media

In terms of social media, Facebook followers currently number (53,694), Instagram (4,892), twitter (18,800) Snap chat (100) and our database now exceeds 145,000.

9.4 Filming

For the past 12 months the team have been filming all our events and onsite activity. We have collated some fantastic footage and a show reel was created for the Christmas period to showcase all our highlights. The video has currently received 250,000 views on line. It can be viewed following this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Cs-viv8kOI>, and will be shown at the end of this meeting.

10. THE PHOENIX BAR & KITCHEN

With 300,000 visitors to site the Bar and kitchen benefited immensely and also exceeded its target for this period. This can be attributed to the high volumes of concerts in particular Faithless attracting a slightly older audience which was reflected in the higher spend per head, increased volume of high footfall and high profile exhibitions, additional footfall and additional capacity at the darts.

11. ICE RINK

- 11.1 The Cinderella on Ice pantomime took place across 14th to 21st December and proved popular with both school groups and general ticket holders, selling out 1 month in advance of the first show.
- 11.2 Club de Fromage continues on the last Friday of every month and has seen a 150% increase to Friday footfall. Club de Fromage's alternative night 'Feeling Gloomy' will pay tribute to David Bowie on Friday 5th February with the organiser pledging to give part of the proceeds of this event to the Teenage Cancer Trust.
- 11.3 The winter campaign has just launched and includes numerous promotional materials, flyers, posters, Facebook advertising, featured digital advertising, social media support and e-shots.

12. Legal Implications

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

13. Financial Implications

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

14. Use of Appendices

- 1 - End of year highlight video link, paragraph 9.4 (shown at SAC/CC meeting on 2nd February).