

**Alexandra Palace & Park & Park Advisory Committee**

**On 7 OCTOBER 2008**

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

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

**1. Purpose**

1.1 To inform the Committee of the recent activities carried out in Alexandra Park

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 That the Committee notes the report.

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

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**3. Executive Summary**

3.1 This report details the activities and projects that have recently taken place in the park.

**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

### Updated items from 8 July 2008

6.1 In light of the comments made in the previous Advisory Committee the various items can now be updated:

- Warner Estate Residents Association carried out a straw poll of their members on the subject of a new pathway from the Redstone Road entrance. The members were in favour of this proposal and the Park Manager will now investigate the timescales for implementing this having regard to planning constraints and future budget approval.
- Traffic Engineers have reviewed the crossing point on Alexandra Palace Way (below the Palm Court entrance) and feel a traffic island could be installed to provide a refuge for pedestrians. Quotations for this project are being sought.

### Heritage Lottery Project

6.2 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

6.3 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 the Redston Pond for implementation during the coming winter season.

6.4 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.

6.5 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

6.6 The 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.

6.7 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.

6.8 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.

### **Green Flag Award**

- 6.9 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.
- 6.10 Two new flag poles have been erected on the south slope to display the green flag(s).
- 6.11 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**

- 6.12 John O'Conner (Grounds Maintenance) Ltd have now 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.
- 6.13 JOC(GM) are now working towards the international standards for Environmental, Health & Safety and Quality Management Systems.
- 6.14 Improvements to the depot area have been implemented and the quality of the maintenance regime has increased in many areas.

### **Park Security**

- 6.15 A newspaper report earlier in the year raised the awareness of security at the palace and concerns have been raised by others including members of this committee. A report on the Park Security Arrangements was presented to the Trustees in July 2008 and this report is summarised below in paragraphs 6.16 to 6.23.
- 6.16 Park security can be divided into four aspects:
- Alexandra Palace Security Contract
  - Haringey Council Parks Constabulary
  - Alexandra Ward Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT)
  - Police 999 response
- 6.17 The Alexandra Palace Security Department provide a 24-hour security service including CCTV monitoring, security guards, and a vehicle. The lakeside area is patrolled on foot on a regular basis and the security vehicle regularly patrols around the park at all hours of the day.
- 6.18 The security guards also attend incidents responsively – either observed on CCTV, reported by staff or reported by the public. If it is deemed necessary, the emergency services are called.
- 6.19 Haringey Council Parks Constabulary patrol the park at various times Thursday to Sunday. However their duties bring them through the park whilst travelling around the borough and they attend on a responsive basis. They also provide additional patrols outside normal hours when need arises.

6.20 The SNT patrol part of the park at least once on every shift. Their focus is to engage with the public and officers are regularly seen in the park and in attendance at events. Patrols were focussed on the skate park and lakeside area following recent incidents. It should also be noted that this is not a 24 hour service.

6.21 The statistics for the park gathered in the last year amount to:

- 112 incidents recorded by AP Security including extinguishing of barbeques, advice to unruly youths, removal of abandoned vehicles and attendance at road traffic accidents.
- The Parks Police dealt with over forty incidents. These ranged from fixed penalty notices for dog fouling and littering to returning truants to school and words of advice to unruly youths.
- The Metropolitan Police records show the following

|                 |    |               |    |
|-----------------|----|---------------|----|
| Thefts          | 3  | Weapons       | 3  |
| Robbery         | 6  | Motor vehicle | 18 |
| Drug related    | 54 | Assaults      | 2  |
| Sexual Offences | 3  | Other         | 2  |

6.22 The Park Manager holds regular security meetings with these agencies, the grounds maintenance team and café staff, all of whom are working together to ensure the park is as safe an environment as possible. The Park Manager also attends the Alexandra ward panel meeting which looks at safety & crime in the local area.

6.23 The Park Manger will also consider representations on safety from the public directly or through residents associations.

## 7. Recommendations

7.1 That the Committee note the report.

## 8. Legal and Financial Implications

8.1 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

n/a