

Oversight and Governance

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Mount EDGCUMBE JOINT COMMITTEE

Date: Friday 19 August 2022
Time: 10.00 am
Place: Belvedere Room, Mount Edgcumbe

Committee Members–

Plymouth City Councillors-

Councillors Shayer (Co-Chair), Carlyle, McDonald, Salmon, Briars-Delve, Kelly and Rennie

Cornwall Councillors-

Councillors Alvey, Ewert, Lennox-Boyd, Pascoe, Tivnan, Worth and Daw

Co-opted Members - Mr G Edgcumbe, Sir Richard Carew Pole and Mr D L Richards.

Members of the Committee are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

For further information on attending Council meetings and how to engage in the democratic process please follow this link - <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/accesstomeetings>

Tracey Lee and Kate Kennally
Joint Clerks

MOUNT EDGCUMBE JOINT COMMITTEE

AGENDA

- 1. To Note the Appointment of the Joint Chair (Plymouth City Council) and to Appoint a Joint Chair from Cornwall Council:**

- 2. APOLOGIES**

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Joint Committee Members.

- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

- 4. MINUTES**

(Pages 1 - 8)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2021 as a correct record.

- 5. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

To receive reports on business, which in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

- 6. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED REPRESENTATIVE**

The Joint Committee will be asked to consider the appointment of a Co-opted Representative.

- 7. Presentation on the Mount Edgumbe Woodland Plan: (Verbal Report)**

- 8. Mount Edgumbe Revenue Outturn 2021/22: (Pages 9 – 14)**

- 9. Park Managers Report: (Pages 15 – 22)**

- 10. Friends of Mount Edgumbe Country Park Update: (Pages 23 – 26)**

Mount Edgcumbe Joint Committee

Friday 19 November 2021

PRESENT:

Councillor Shayer Joint Chair, in the Chair.

Councillor Ewert Joint Chair

Councillors Carlyle, Corvid, Daw, Lennox-Boyd, McDonald, Partridge, Pascoe, Penberthy, Salmon, Tivnan and Worth.

Co-opted Representative: Mr G Edgcumbe.

Apologies for absence: Councillor Alvey and Sir Richard Carew Pole and Mr D L Richards.

Also in attendance: Chris Burton (Park Manager), Kat Deeney (Head of Environmental Planning), Kate Farmery (Head of Business, The Box), David Marshall (Business Development Manager), Sarah Partridge (Asset Manager), Victoria Pomery (CEO The Box, Observer), Helen Prendergast (Democratic Adviser) and James Watt (Head of Land and Property).

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 11.45 am.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

1. **To Note the Appointment of the Joint Chair (Plymouth City Council) and to Appoint a Joint Chair from Cornwall Council**

The Joint Committee noted the appointment of Councillor Shayer (Plymouth City Council) as Joint Chair for the municipal year 2021/22.

The Joint Committee agreed the appointment of Kate Ewert (Cornwall Council) as Joint Chair for the municipal year 2021/22.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the code of conduct, Kate Ewert declared a private interest in minute 31 as her step brother owned a chalet at Treninnow and Wiggle Cliff.

3. **Minutes**

The Joint Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2020 are confirmed as a correct record.

4. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

5. **Appointment of Co-opted Representative**

The Joint Committee agreed that Mr Ged Edgcumbe, the Chair of the Friends of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park is confirmed as a Co-opted Representative for the municipal year 2021/22.

6. **Presentation on the National Marine Park**

Kat Deeney (Plymouth City Council) provided a presentation on the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park which included –

- (a) the Council had been awarded through the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Horizons Fund £9.6m;
- (b) the funding was split into two phases -
 - a two year development phase, 10% of funding to test, trial and develop projects (July 2021 to June 2023);
 - five year delivery phase (following approval);
 - investment in physical assets, social and engagement programmes and in digital;
 - four physical Gateway sites and digital Gateway;
 - community access improvements;
- (c) there would be four hubs which included -
 - Tinside Pool and Cove – Health and Wellbeing Hub;
 - Mount Edgcumbe – Marine Heritage Hub;
 - National Marine Aquarium – Nature and Environment Hub;
 - Mount Batten Peninsula – Recreation Hub;
- (d) Digital Park (linking audiences to the wonders of The Sound) -
 - bringing the National Marine Park to life using cutting edge technology, research and innovation;
 - Digital Gateway, utilising existing assets including Smart Sound, The Box and the Immersive Dome;
 - engaging new audiences, bringing STEM to life, to create immersive experiences of being in, on and under the Park to all and the potential for national and international outreach;
 - sustainable investment, jobs and economy;
- (e) the National Marine Park next steps were as follows -

- mobilise the development phase of the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the National Marine Park project (listening, piloting and developing activities);
- recruit an interim National Marine Park CEO;
- evolve the governance of the National Marine Park;
- accelerate the delivery of the People's Park in the Sea.

The main area of questioning related to –

- (f) how the River Tamar would link to the National Marine Park and whether a map of the Park could be provided in order to identify its boundaries;
- (g) whether the governance arrangements would unite all of the communities;
- (h) the need to involve not only city and unitary councillors but also district and parish councillors (from those areas bordering on the Park) in the governance arrangements and at an early stage;
- (i) sought clarification that councillors and communities in Cornwall (that bordered the Park) would also be engaged in this project;
- (j) emphasised the need to engage with all relevant communities with regard to this project.

The Committee noted the presentation on the National Marine Park.

7. **Mount Edgumbe Revenue Monitoring 2021/22**

Kate Farmery (Head of Business, The Box) presented the Mount Edgumbe revenue monitoring 2021/22 report which detailed the quarter two position of Mount Edgumbe for the financial year 2021/22.

The report highlighted –

- (a) that Covid 19 had an inevitable impact on the Park's ability to meet the 2021/22 income targets; however, proactive interventions from the Park management and effective relationship management with tenants, together with ensuring all income generating opportunities were pursued when the pandemic allowed, had mitigated against this;

- (b) an additional budget forecast requirement was being reported of £34k and in addition there remained a potential risk of £0.40k which was as a result of visitors staying at home and therefore not using the Park, plus a loss of rental income also due to the impact of the pandemic;
- (c) budget setting continued for 2022/23; the joint authority subsidy had been removed and a review of existing and future income streams for Mount Edgumbe continued; this included the new holiday property and the Trenninow chalets and the revenue implications of proposed new capital projects; it was expected that the new budget would be set in the new year;
- (d) the risks that could affect the monitoring position included the rental income (estimated risk of £14k of written off rent income invoices due to the Covid pandemic) and Covid 19 income loss in 2021/22 (this assumed that Plymouth City Council's share of 75% of MCHLG income to cover the losses had been received in full).

The main area of questioning related to whether the joint authorities had applied for (emergency Covid grant funding (from the Government) for Mount Edgumbe, in order to help mitigate against the loss of income, as a result of the pandemic.

The Joint Committee agreed to note -

- (1) the financial position contained in the report together with the risks, issues and any mitigating actions;
- (2) the capital programme and proposals to be presented to Plymouth City Council's Investment Board.

8. **Park Activity Report November 2021**

Chris Burton (Park Manager) presented the Park activity report that highlighted the works and activities carried out in the Park which included the following –

- Park matters;
- buildings and Park infrastructure;
- events;
- business development;
- weddings.

The report highlighted that –

- (a) the Park had been fully open since July 2021; the Park had remained open throughout the pandemic, although some services had been limited, in line with Government guidelines; there was a sense of pride in the Park at being able to stay open to walkers, local residents and visitors; this had only been possible by working in partnership with its tenant businesses, who had been under significant stress during the pandemic;

- (b) despite the challenges, most of the businesses had been able to survive; a couple of business had left but had since been replaced; Rebecca Day 360 (provided humanitarian business solutions around the world) now worked at the Barrow Centre and Enigma Solicitors had also taken an office in the main building; this had been made possible by offering rent payment holidays, working with the tenants to offer the best service possible whilst also looking for new ways of delivering the core business;
- (c) the Park would receive just under £1m for the development of the Maritime Heritage Centre at the Garden Battery; fundamentally, this project would deliver one of the five proposed National Marine Park Gateways as a major physical access point and centre for engagement of the public in the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park (the Marine Park had been awarded £9.6m from the Heritage Lottery Fund's Heritage Horizon programme);
- (d) the last 12 months had seen a 'boom and bust' scenario with holiday lets; there had been a surge in bookings and almost full occupancy across the portfolio; however, the accommodation had been closed for three quarters of the time it should have been open; the cleaning regime had been adapted which had inevitably increased costs but this impact had been mitigated against through the high levels of occupancy.

The main area of questioning related to –

- (e) whether the use of solar powered parking machines had been investigated and whether there were any plans to install electrical charging points in the Park;
- (f) whether consideration had been given to employing youth offenders to work in the Park on a volunteering basis;
- (g) sought clarification -
 - as to when work on the Maritime Heritage Centre would commence;
 - as to whether events such as Wonder Nights would be taking place;
- (h) whether consideration had been given to using volunteers from the Plymouth Good Neighbours scheme (Plymouth City Council had joined forces with community groups and charities across the City to provide a central place for people register to help).

The Joint Chair (Councillor Shayer) took this opportunity on behalf of the Joint Committee to thank the staff at Mount Edgcumbe for their work to ensure that the Park remained open during the pandemic in a Covid safe way.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

9. **Friends of Mount Edgumbe Country Park Update**

Ged Edgumbe, Chair of the Friends of Mount Edgumbe presented the update report from the Friends of Mount Edgumbe which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) the Friends' vision was to work in partnership with the Park management by jointly agreeing funding requirements and projects; to continue to support the Park and to preserve, or assist in the preservation of Mount Edgumbe Country Park for the benefit of the public, as a place of historical, botanical, horticultural, architectural and natural beauty;
- (b) there had been a number of changes to the Committee which included the key posts of the Chair and the Treasurer; at the Special General Meeting held on 5 September 2021, all posts on the Committee had been filled which had been the first time in some years; there had also been a change in policy to remove 'ex-officio' members from the Committee;
- (c) during the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, the Friends' membership had reduced and the number of new members being signed up was extremely sporadic; since May 2021 and the easing of some of the lockdown restrictions, membership numbers had slowly risen back to pre-pandemic levels (circa 620); currently there was an encouraging increase in new members; a series of membership drives for 2022 were being considered, not only to increase numbers but also to try and attract families and a broader range of age groups;
- (d) during 2021 the Friends had provided £26,795 of funding for projects in the Park which included a utility vehicle for use by the gardeners (£12,345), fencing material for the deer fence (£5k), a tool to assist in erecting the deer fence (£3,450), bedding plants (£4k) and mannequins for the Blitz Exhibition (£2k); Lambert Lodge, the Friends' second-hand bookshop had re-opened in June 2021 and was attracting new members and also raising some much needed funds; the Lodge was also providing to be an extremely useful information centre for visitors to the Park;
- (e) the Friends supported the future vision of the Park and would continue to work with the Park management to make it a success; however, there were concerns relating to the speed and timing of the zero funding from the local authorities, particularly in the aftermath of Covid 19; the Friends were keen to understand how much support the Park would receive from Plymouth City Council and Cornwall Council with regard to the review of the condition of the Park, the buildings, contents, vehicles and plant;

- (f) it had been agreed to investigate an increase in the car parking charges for the Summer Fayre and Car Show for the 2022 event; it was proposed to change the cost from car parking of £10 per car to a charge for all adults over 18 of £5; this would impact primarily those arriving from Plymouth on the Cremyll Ferry who previously would have entered the event free of charge; the rationale behind the change was the greatly increased use of time-consuming card payments which would reduce the rate at which the cars could enter the car parks and the likely impact of this on the highway with queuing and obstruction.

The Joint Chair (Councillor Shayer), on behalf of the Joint Committee thanked the Friends of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park for their continued valued support of the Park.

The Committee noted the report.

10. **Exempt Business**

Agreed that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

11. **Treninnow and Wiggle Cliffs Ground Lease Report**

James Watt (Plymouth City Council) presented the update report on renewal of Treninnow and Wiggle Cliff ground leases and the next steps. These properties formed part of the wider Mount Edgcumbe Country Park estate.

Following a robust discussion, the Joint Committee agreed the recommendations (as contained within the confidential report).

The Joint Committee requested that all income generated from the chalet business is ring-fenced for the Park's future sustainability with the assignment fees being used to support the Park's capital programme.

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Mount Edgumbe Joint Committee



Date of meeting:	19 August 2022
Title of Report:	Mount Edgumbe Revenue Outturn 2021/22
Lead Member:	Councillor Pat Patel (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Culture, Leisure & Sport)
Lead Strategic Director:	Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place)
Author:	Christopher Burton, Mount Edgumbe Park Manager
Contact Email:	Chris.Burton@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	2021/22
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This presents the final outturn position of Mount Edgumbe for the financial year 2021/22 and confirms the 2022/23 budget.

Recommendations and Reasons

It is recommended that Joint Committee:

- Notes the financial position contained in the report along with the risks, issues and any mitigating actions
- Notes the capital programme and proposals to be presented to Plymouth City Council's Investment Board

Alternative options considered and rejected

None

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This monitoring report links to delivering the priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The 2022/23 budget has been built into the medium term financial plan and will be used to update both Authorities for budget monitoring

Financial Risks

Monitoring of commercial project delivery times and ensuring they perform in accordance with budgets set, with continued focus to sensibly capitalise on existing assets, to generate new and / or more income as soon as possible.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

None

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

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Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

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Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Draffan

Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes

Date agreed: 08/08/2022

Section I**I.1 Revenue outturn 2021/22 - Financial summary**

Business Type	2021/22 Budget			2021/22 Outturn			Variation to Budget	Comments
	Income	Expenditure	Net	Income	Expenditure	Net		
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
Staffing & Operations	(79)	545	466	(111)	577	466	0	
House	(41)	38	(3)	(23)	76	53	56	COVID scarring - social distancing. May improve due to Sunday Opening.
Gardens	0	12	12	(7)	12	5	(7)	
Grounds	(27)	125	98	(36)	132	96	(2)	
Trading Activities:								
Alpacas	0	0	0	0	15	15	15	New activity for 2022/23
Conferences	(4)	1	(3)	(1)	0	(1)	2	COVID scarring - social distancing
Rents	(158)	26	(132)	(153)	37	(116)	16	Bad Debt being chased (section 4)
Chalets	(199)	0	(199)	(199)	0	(199)	0	On target new contract
Parking	(91)	3	(88)	(98)	3	(95)	(8)	On track
Special Events	(38)	28	(10)	(36)	18	(18)	(8)	COVID scarring
Holiday Lets	(126)	66	(60)	(223)	107	(116)	(56)	Positive COVID scarring
Glamping	(9)	5	(4)	(18)	10	(8)	(4)	COVID scarring
Weddings	(40)	13	(27)	(42)	8	(34)	(7)	COVID scarring
Misc. Activities	(5)	0	(5)	(3)	0	(3)	2	COVID scarring - social distancing
Total Operations	(817)	862	45	(950)	995	45		
Subsidy								
Cornwall CC	(45)		(45)			(45)		
Plymouth CC	(45)		(45)			(45)		
Total Deficit / (surplus)	(90)		(90)			(90)		

1.2 Commentary

The mitigation measures and tight management controls implemented to address the impacts from COVID-19 have proved successful resulting in the budget being balanced for 2021/22. There remains a potential financial risk of £47k moving into 2022/23– see section four below.

Section 2

2.1 Revenue budget 2022/23

Business Type	2022/23 Budget		
	Income	Expenditure	Net
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Staffing & Operations	(9)	574	565
House	(34)	43	9
Gardens	0	14	14
Grounds	(27)	151	124
Trading Activities:			
Alpacas	(8)	8	0
Conferences	(1)	0	(1)
Rents	(156)	33	(123)
Chalets	(364)	0	(364)
Parking	(91)	7	(84)
Special Events	(38)	28	(10)
Holiday Lets	(216)	120	(96)
Glamping	(16)	13	(3)
Weddings	(50)	17	(33)
Misc. Activities	(1)	3	(2)
Total Operations	(1,011)	1011	0

Section 3

3.1 Approved capital programme

Project	Funding	Prior Year £	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	Total £
Mount Edgcombe Cremyll Car Park	Service Borrowing	66,775.00	3,225.00	0.00	70,000.00
Mount Edgcombe Commercialisation	Service Borrowing	621,885.14	34,218.18	180,366.68	836,470.00

Section 4**4.1 2022/23 Risk Register**

Risks are recorded below to reflect those activities that may happen and could affect the future monitoring position.

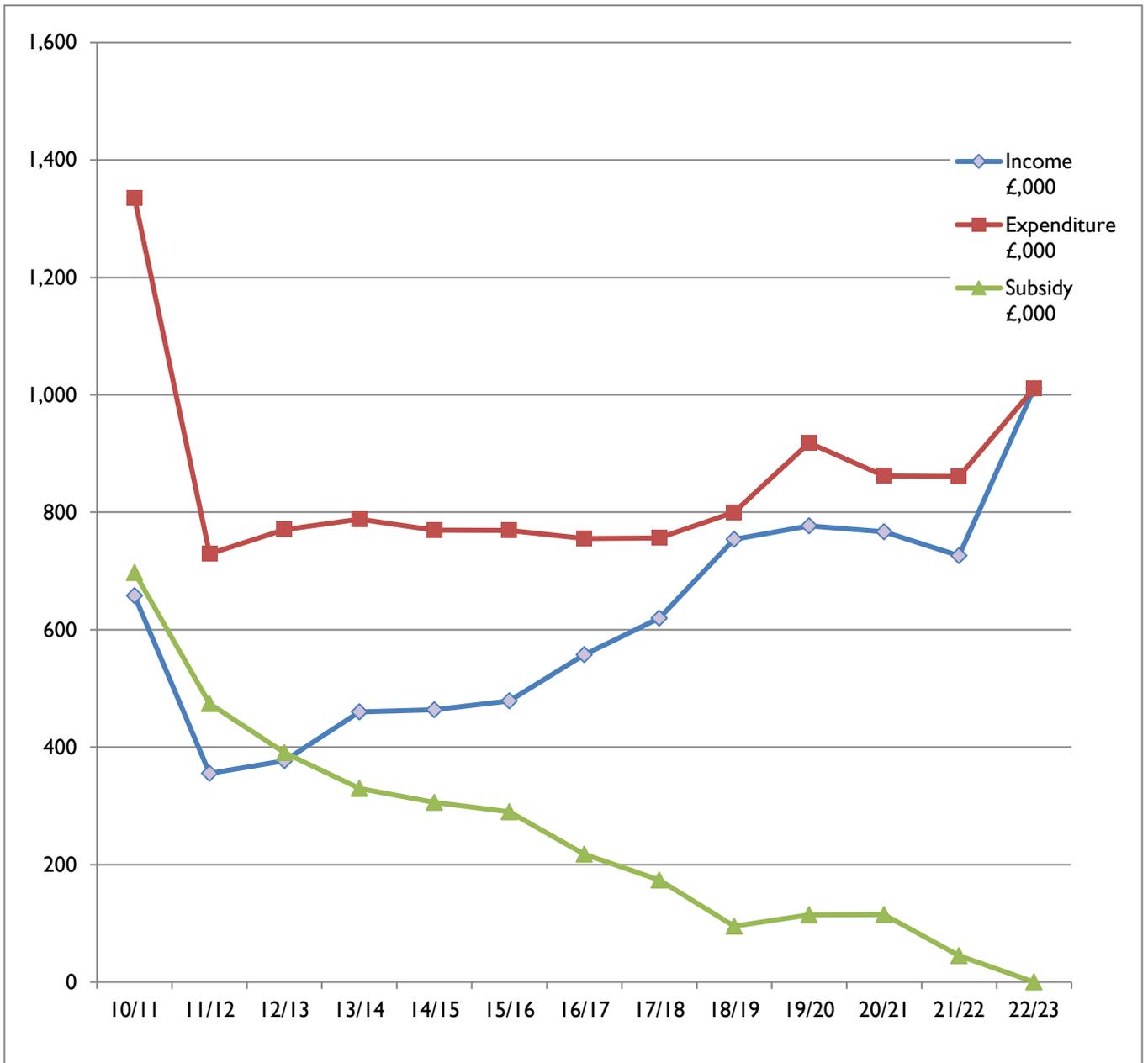
Mt Edgcombe		£'000s
Rental income	Estimated risk of £16k of written off rent income invoices due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic.	16
Energy price rises	Estimated risk of £31k as prices set to rise substantially during the year. This is a 50% increase on 22/23 budget for energy costs.	31

Section 5**5.1 Recommendations**

It is recommended that Joint Committee:

- Notes the financial position contained in the report along with the risks, issues and any mitigating actions
- Notes the capital programme and proposals to be presented to Plymouth City Council's Investment Board, subject to a detailed business case

Mount Edgumbe Income, Expenditure and Subsidy



Mount Edgcumbe Joint Committee



Date of meeting:	19 August 2022
Title of Report:	Park Activity to August 2022
Lead Member:	Councillor Pat Patel (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Culture, Leisure & Sport)
Lead Strategic Director:	Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place)
Author:	Chris Burton (Park Manager)
Contact Email:	chris.burton@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	n/a
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The report provides an update on activities in the park from November 2021 to August 2022

Recommendations and Reasons

The Joint Committee will be asked to note the update.

Alternative options considered and rejected

N/A

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

In line with the Council's priorities, the Park provides a vibrant cultural offer.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The financial implications are set out in the revenue monitoring report which is included as a separate agenda item.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

N/A

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

N/A

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

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Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
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Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Draffan											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 03/08/2022											
Cabinet Member approval: <i>Approved via email</i> Date approved: 09 August 2022											

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report informs members of the works and activities carried out since November 2021.

2.0 Park Matters

- 2.1 The Park has settled into a 'new normal' and has been working without restriction for some six months now. I am writing this report at the start of one of our busiest event seasons, the public certainly has an appetite for events once more despite the cost of living challenges. The Park has a real sense of direction at the moment with many visual improvements, such as new signage, restoration of the seats, and the Barrow Centre roadway.
- 2.2 The Park today is very different to how it was a few years ago, we now have a thriving holiday let portfolio and we are home to some 23 different businesses, employing well over 60 people making us a medium employer in the Rame peninsular. We have perhaps just as importantly reduced the tax payer burden through our various commercial activities to zero this year, a major undertaking that I and my staff are very proud of. I believe the Park looks better, feels more welcoming and is well on the way to developing its full potential.
- 2.3 The Park as outlined at the last meeting will be the recipient of just under £1 Million for the development Maritime Heritage Centre at the Garden Battery. Fundamentally, this project is about delivering one of 5 proposed 'NMP Gateways' – major physical access points and centres for engagement of the public in the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park - featured in the City's £9.58m funding award (2021) under the Heritage Lottery Fund's Heritage Horizon programme. This will involve the development of the Garden Battery a building previously not open to the public into a Heritage Centre telling the story of the development of Plymouth Sound and acting as a hub for all things heritage in the area. Tenders have been completed for the design work and initial start-up meetings are taking place.
- 2.4 The Park is many things to many people, it's a place full of designations and historic buildings but also a place to kick a ball around and relax on a summers evening. Balancing the various needs and interests of its community and ensuring its continuation as an area of free greenspace, is key to future development. Having achieved zero budget, and financial security, we will be looking at developing over next 18 months a costed 10 year plan to address the infrastructure needs. This is a second phase of planning and investment as opposed to financial fire-fighting, whilst the Park Management must still retain its ability to be able to respond to and try out business development activities, this commercial freedom has got us to where we are today.
- 2.5 The Park has struggled by with only one maintenance operative for the last few years despite the addition of ten more holiday lets that demand quick and efficient repairs often at out of hours times. This year we have a new three day a week maintenance position that starts in August. This will enable us to start on the backlog of maintenance issues and service the holiday let portfolio.
- 2.6 The Tree House Project (to develop a tree house in woodland adjacent to Lady Emma's cottage as part of our holiday let portfolio) is under review, after initial feedback from both CC Planning and also Historic England that they might object to this proposal. The Park Manager is investigating an alternative project: a Wild Breeds Centre based in Barrow Field. Initial planning enquiries have been favourable about this and it could provide both something to do for our younger family visitors and a potential income generator for the Park. The Park Manager is drawing up a business case for this, for future exploration with the Committee and other stakeholders.

- 2.7 The first sections of deer fencing of almost 2.8km has been completed. The total perimeter is 4.6km. It is hoped to have completed this fencing work by next summer, a major undertaking by the Ranger force. A deer census has taken place this winter, in order to assess population and inform management. There has been a deer herd at the Park since 1515 and it is an integral part of the landscape. The existing deer fence was in a very poor state.
- 2.8 The Park will negotiate a new Stewardship agreement as land owner at Rame Head with Natural England this year as the old one ends.
- 2.9 A major infrastructure work replacing the dirt path into the Barrow Centre has been completed to time and budget, and has been a real success with both the general public and the businesses there. It has also gone a long way to mitigating the flash flooding events that often took place effecting businesses in the Barrow square.
- 2.10 The Park continues to replace its aging vehicle fleet, the latest addition of which is a new Landover Defender this has replaced the aging Ford Ranger which has gone to see its days out on gardening duties within the Park. It is planned to phase in vehicle replacement over the next four years as we are now in a situation where we spend more on 20 year old vehicles than they are worth. Again this is being considered in the new budget.
- 2.11 We have a new Ranger replacing one that has left, this is a new additional post that was started some three years ago. The new Ranger comes to us with a good deal of experience and we welcome her to the Team. The Park continues with its 'Tree Safety Management Plan' to which is now added the spectre of Ash Dieback, with surveys taking place on a rolling programme and removal as necessary this may represent a pressure on existing budgets as this national issue is dealt with. There is no doubt that this will have implications for the work stream and funding of the Park. This is a national problem however and national contingency funding is being put in place. The Park is in the process of removing the worst of the infected trees with some 30 having been removed so far. The issue of Ash Dieback has been raised on the corporate risk register.
- 2.12 The Park's Austrian volunteers have returned and have worked a six month placement that has been a great help and we hope to continue with this arrangement in the foreseeable future. The scheme is run through European funding through a partner CUBIC and essentially supplies two people one gardener and one ranger for the Park.
- 2.13 A new Education Centre is being developed with the FOMCP (Friends of Mount Edgcumbe) in what was the old fire station, the owner of the fire engines decided to sell them, this was opportune as we were trying to decide on locations for an education centre. Children from across the peninsular have created a series of frescos that will adorn the walls based on a time line of Mount Edgcumbe, in a partnership project with the local schools and Awenek Studio CIC.
- 2.14 The Black Bee Reserve has been managed by staff and volunteers with around a dozen new colonies distributed around the South West. This is a great step forward in terms of supporting the reintroduction of this native species, Mount Edgcumbe is really on the biodiversity map for its ground breaking work with this project.

3.1 Buildings and Park Infrastructure

- 3.1 The English Garden House, will receive remedial treatment to prevent water ingress this year in the first of a series of works to stabilise and make good this important building, the building was re designated to Grade 2* and put on the risk register by Historic England and as such will be eligible for grants to restore it. In the first instance this will involve securing emergency funding to replace the roof and protect the assets from further deterioration due to weather ingress, something that has been a problem since the lead was stolen some time ago.
- 3.2 This Main House has had remedial works to the roofs of two turret rooms and has had an improved roof drainage system installed that allows for sudden downpours. These weather events are all the more likely in the future and were not envisaged when the house was built, so far they have been tested a couple of times and worked well.
- 3.3 The Main House is being run on a guided tour system this and is working well, reducing staff overheads with visitor numbers remaining much the same since the Blitz display was installed. The Blitz display has received very favourable comments and is accompanied this year by a display of Japanese porcelain loaned by Dr Tim Foster.
- 3.4 There has been a planning application for a high ropes course by Blue Dot Adventures (an existing business partner on the Park) in the woodland above the dripping well. This ambition has been discussed at previous JC and the Park Management support this application dependent on final design works. After meetings with Historic England it was decided that the inclusion of zip wires across the Amphitheatre would however be too intrusive and would not be compatible with the Parks landscape and for those seeking to enjoy the area quietly. The Park Management continue to support the high ropes course which would be non-invasive to the trees and have a lot less impact on the Park attracting younger age groups with an exciting offer.
- 3.5 Over a hundred specimen trees have been planted and protected in the amphitheatre, thanks to funding from the Friends. This area has long been associated with planted specimen trees and will in time return to its former glory. The trees are all labelled and will add an arboretum like atmosphere to the Park.
- 3.6 Students from the Arts University of Plymouth, Formerly Plymouth College of Arts, are displaying several art installations throughout the Park as part of their 2021 season and these are well worth a look.
- 3.7 Both play areas were closed over the winter for extensive refurbishment the lower area will open this summer, the top Barrow Centre play area will take longer due to supply chain issues.
- 3.8 The Tudor Block House has had iron railings and a gate fitted to prevent access to the upper storey replacing the rather unsightly marine-ply board. Power has been reinstated to the Garden Battery to help future proof the building.

4.1 Events

- 4.1 The Park has a full summer programme of events and has seen the return of its core events such as Christmas Fayre, The Green man, and the Classic Car Show. This year will also see the

thriving partnership with Miss Ivy Events continue with events such as Caribbean Family Fun Day, Ice Cream Festival and Summer Fete.

- 4.2 The Christmas Fayre took place despite Covid restrictions and was a great success. We attracted high levels of attendance. The Fairy Festival, Green Man along with the Caribbean Family Festival also took place prior to this meeting.
- 4.3 The Fairy Festival also returned this year as will the Armchair Adventure Festival which proved a great success last year and we hope to grow this event as time goes on. The Park will continue to develop third parties events for a ground rent or % of turnover.

5.0 Business Development

- 5.1 The Park continues to develop its holiday let portfolio, with Rame Head now completed. We now have nine holiday lets and hope to add more perhaps developing current Gardeners accommodation and relocating them. Currently building costs are prohibitive and supply chain is at best creaking so no further builds are planned in the next year or so. A pricing review took place this summer with Classic Cottages, which resulted in small income increases and some re-banding.
- 5.2 The holiday let portfolio saw the introduction of Rame Head Lookout <https://www.classic.co.uk/holiday-cottage/desc-4634.html> in May. The Holiday lets continue to perform with high levels of occupancy, post Covid. The impact of the cost of living crisis will have has yet to be seen but the market for holiday lets at least at the moment seems buoyant. Building them and securing the supply of materials is another issue however. Orangery Lodge and Lady Emma's Cottage, and Cremyll Cottage have received a makeover this winter as part of the continuing maintenance regime of the property portfolio.
- 5.3 All our car parks now use a 'RingGo' system that enables telephone (none cash) parking payments. Cremyll car park will receive a chip and pin machine this summer and will be the first of a phased replacement of the old machines that are now some 20 years old, in most cases and reaching the end of their operational life.
- 5.4 Alpaca trekking is now in place and is proving to be very popular. This initiative in itself has provided two new local part time jobs.
- 5.5 The development of the Heritage Centre will allow some funding for business development that will include a new survey to ascertain up to date visitor figures, demographics and usage identifying current trends and (perhaps more importantly) any gaps in who is not coming to the Park. This will enable us to target the hard to reach groups highlighted by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and develop a marketing strategy.
- 5.6 The opening of the 'Farriers' in last July breathed a new lease of life to our catering offer in the Barrow Centre and was very well received by the public and staff! It has provided a consistently good level of service, and the difference is plain to see.
- 5.7 The Park will be implementing previously agreed changes to the Lease agreement at Trenninow Chalets this autumn, which once fully delivered will have a significant impact on the Park's financial wellbeing.

5.8

6.0 Weddings

6.1 A very full wedding season is upon us as we play catch up with those weddings that were not able to take place over the last couple of years due to the pandemic. We have 10 marquee weddings and a total of 38 weddings in the House this year. A good season by any measure.

7.0 Summary

- 7.1 The Park has moved in recent years from having a subsidy approaching £450,000 to one of zero per Council, a significant success that we should all be proud of. The Park now has 23 businesses employing around 60 people.
- 7.2 The Park still faces several infrastructure and repair bills that will need to be addressed in the future, A properly costed plan once likely budgets are known will help with the prioritisation of this work through a 10 year development plan.
- 7.3 The Park looks forward to the gradual return of its volunteers, on whom it relies for ongoing delivery of service excellence. The Park also acknowledges the generous help of the Friends throughout this year.
- 7.4 We look forward to working with the Committee and other stakeholders on the next phase of the Park's development.

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FRIENDS OF MOUNT EDGCUMBE COUNTRY PARK (FOMECP) (CHARITY NO. 295261)

Report to The Joint Committee, July 2022

This paper provides an overview of the FOMECP vision and Executive Committee structure and an update on activities, priorities and future plans for the FOMECP.

Our Vision

To work in partnership with the Park Management by funding – jointly or independently – mutually agreed projects.

To continue to support the Park, as set out in our constitution: ‘to preserve, or assist in the preservation and enhancement of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park, Cornwall, for the benefit of the public, as a place of historical, botanical, horticultural, architectural and natural beauty’.

Committee Changes

Following an Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the FOMECP membership on 3rd April 2022, The FOMECP Executive Committee comprises:

Officer Posts:

- Chairman – Ged Edgcumbe was re-elected.
- Vice Chairman – Alan Drummond was elected.
- Treasurer – Carol Drummond was re-elected.
- Membership Secretary – Post remains vacant – Ged Edgcumbe will cover until the post is filled.
- Secretary – Glenis Edgcumbe was re-elected.

Committee Posts:

- Neil Rugg, Tony Hutchins, Steve Creese, Anne Creese, Mike Tong, Teresa Tong, Harry Vosper, Janet Vosper and Rozanne Griffiths-Woodcock were re-elected.
- One Officer post (Membership Secretary) and one Committee post remain vacant.

Policy Changes

As required by Charity Commission requirements, the FOMECP Constitution and Policies were recently reviewed and all proposed changes were submitted for approval at the FOMECP AGM held on 3rd April 2022. All of the proposed changes were agreed by the membership. An overview of the changes is as follows:

- **FOMECP Constitution** – in addition to a number of grammatical amendments, changes were made to membership categories to better reflect diversity and a new ‘joint life’ membership; the removal of the Ex-Officio posts – which removes the need for the Park Manager and Council Representatives from being Trustees and thus allowing them to attend FOMECP Executive Committee meetings (should they choose to do so) without exclusion due to any conflicts of interest; a change to permit on-line meetings of the Executive Committee and a change to allow the storage of FOMECP documents in a secure online account.

- **Finance Policy** - changes were made to clarify the permitted trading activities undertaken by the FOMECP and to increase security for online payments (i.e. bank transfer).
- **General Policy** – changes were made to update the FOMECP internal complaint process; to clarify how Committee members can formally approach the Charity Commission; to assist Committee members during debates and subsequent voting on proposals made at meetings and to link the General Policy to other relevant FOMECP policies.

Membership

During the COVID 19 pandemic, and subsequent lockdown, FOMECP membership figures reduced and the number of new members being signed up was extremely sporadic. Since May 2021 and the easing of some of the lockdown restrictions, membership numbers have slowly risen back to pre-pandemic levels. During the lockdown period, FOMECP membership numbers dipped as low as 550. However, on the 31st May 2022, membership of the FOMECP stood at 664, which is an extremely encouraging number that reinforces a continued support for the FOMECP and the work it does at Mount Edgumbe.

Financial Update of The Year to Date

The cancellation of events during the pandemic significantly impacted on our fund-raising efforts. Despite this, in 2021 the FOMECP provided £26,795 of funding for projects in the Park, and thus far in 2022 we have supported 4 significant projects; bedding plants (£3,500), an Education Shelter (up to £7,500), resurfacing of the road adjacent to the Barrow Centre (£20,000) and the repair of 2 statues (Athena & Diana the Huntress) located close to Mount Edgumbe House (£10,000) – a total of £41,000.

The Education Shelter detailed above is currently under construction with a scheduled completion date of end June/ early July. The Shelter is using a large garage/stable at the Barrow Centre, which was previously used to house a display of a fire engine & fire fighting equipment– The Shelter will have six murals painted by local schools/community groups depicting six separate periods of time (e.g. Medieval, Bronze Age, Tudor etc.) at Mount Edgumbe. In addition the Shelter will have a series of posters depicting British trees and wildlife; equipment for school children to view local insect and plant life and a model of HMS Beagle and a narrative on Charles Darwin. The shelter will be equipped with benches and coat pegs, and will be used by school groups visiting the Park.

The repair of the statues (Athena & Diana the Huntress) is Phase 1 of a project we hope to continue in the future – subject to the availability of funds - to repair as many of the statues in the Park as we can.

In addition to the funds already provided in 2022, the FOMECP have also agreed to fund the restoration of a traditional Cornish hay wagon, which the Park manager hopes to display in a prominent area just above the Barrow Centre once the restoration is complete. The estimated cost of the restoration is £3,000. The FOMECP are also committed to a Park/ FOMECP funded collaborative project to undertake a much-needed refurbishment of the toilets located near the Orangery in the lower part of the Park. Work is already underway to secure an architect to provide design work prior to a request for tenders from building firms to complete the work. Specific timings and costs for the project have yet to be formally agreed.

The full annual accounts can be viewed on-line at fomecp.org.uk.

Park Funding

The FOMECP are well aware of the strain on both Plymouth City and Cornwall County Councils budgets – particularly in light of the impact the Covid-19 pandemic had on Council incomes/

expenditures. The FOMECP also applauds the enormous efforts by the Park Manager and his staff in working towards zero funding.

Notwithstanding this, the FOMECP remains concerned at the lack of support/funding to enable proper investment in restoring and maintaining the many historic/listed buildings in Mount Edgcombe Park – some of which are already in a critical state - and we are keen to understand if funds could be made available in the future to assist in this matter.

FOMECP Events

The FOMECP, assisted by Park staff, manage 3 main events per year. They are:

- **Summer Fair & Car Rally** – the annual Summer Fair and Car Rally is scheduled to take place on Sunday 7th August. The event is jointly run with Cornwall Hospice Care. In addition to providing a fantastic day of fun for the many thousands from Plymouth, Cornwall and beyond that visit the event, it also acts as a significant source of income for both Charities. Organisation and preparations prior to and on the day of the event are labour-intensive, and in addition to the excellent support provided by the Park Manager and his team, we require a large number of volunteers to enable us to run the event in a safe and efficient manner. Unfortunately, since the easing of covid lockdown restrictions, volunteers have been extremely difficult to recruit and failure to secure a sufficient number of volunteers could jeopardise our ability to hold the event.
- **Easter Egg Hunt** – On Sunday 10th April, the FOMECP held its annual Easter Egg Hunt in the Park. The event is a traditional Easter Egg Hunt whereby participants (children with their parents/guardians) collect a clue sheet and follow a pre-planned route answering a series of questions and at the end are rewarded with an Easter egg.

On the Sunday, 766 children participated and a further 177 during the following week (which was half-term week) – giving a total participation of 943 children; which when parents/guardians etc. are added, the event attracted circa 2500 people into the Park. Organisation and management of the event required a total of 32 volunteers - which included 10 from the Open Doors International Language School (ODILS) in Plymouth – and in addition to providing a fantastic day out for families, it raised £1,900 for the Charity.

- **Halloween Trail** – The FOMECP annual Halloween Trail event is scheduled to take place on Sunday 30th October. As with the Easter Egg Hunt, this event is aimed at children and previous events have attracted similar numbers to that of the Easter Egg Hunt detailed above. Past events have been extremely successful, but require at least 30/35 volunteers to manage in a safe and efficient manner and are susceptible to the early winter storms/gales.

2022/23 Actions in Discussion

1. Continuing to support the Park and work in a collaborative manner with the Park Manager and his team on mutually agreed projects
2. Recruiting for the vacant posts on the Executive Committee and a volunteer(s) to run and manage the FOMECP online presence – e.g. FOMECP website, Facebook etc.
3. Encouraging our existing FOMECP members and local visitors to become active volunteers for all events held in the Park
4. Continuing to promote and support traders in the Park

Prepared 26 June 2022

Ged Edgcombe - FOMECP Chair

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