

## PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

**Subject:** Mount Edgumbe Progress Report  
**Committee:** Mount Edgumbe Joint Committee  
**Date:** 17 July 2015  
**Cabinet Members:** Councillor Smith Plymouth City Council  
Councillor Duffin Cornwall Council  
**CMT Member:** Anthony Payne, Strategic Director for Place (Plymouth)  
Peter Marsh, Head of Commissioning and Asset  
Management (Cornwall)  
**Author:** Jerry Masters, Interim Park Manager  
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**Ref:** ME  
**Key Decision:** No  
**Part:** I

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### **Purpose of the report:**

This report informs members of works carried out during 2014/15. It also updates the members on events and current bookings within the park.

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### **The Brilliant Co-operative Council Corporate Plan 2013/14 – 2016/17:**

#### **Plymouth City Council**

This report links to delivering the priorities within the Councils Corporate Plan particularly with regard to raising aspirations and providing value to communities

#### **Cornwall Council**

Business Plan Immediate Priorities: Use of resources and performance management

Environment, Planning and Economy Directorate Plan priorities:

- (a) Creating a Green Cornwall
- (b) Creating a better place to live
- (c) Delivering excellent services

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**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land:**

None.

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

None.

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**Equality and Diversity:**

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No.

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**Recommendations & Reasons for Recommended Action:**

Members note the report.

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**Alternative Options Considered & Reasons for Recommended Action:**

None.

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**Published Work/Information:**

None.

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**Background Papers**

None.

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**Sign Off**

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Originating SMT Member David Draffan													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the contents of the report? Yes													

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This report informs members of works carried out during 2014/15. It also updates members on events and current bookings within the park.

## **2. Park Matters Including High Level Stewardship**

- 2.1. Work has continued in replacing 4260m of fencing across the Park, the opening up of the meadows in Penlee Woods, 7 hectares of bracken control and extensive scrub clearance works. Several fields continue to be grazed by rare breeds over the autumn and winter months. All winter storm damage has been cleared or made safe. Any and all handrails and safety equipment damaged has been replaced (i.e. along steep sections of coast path).
- 2.2. The HLS Mount Edgcumbe Parkland Plan (Stage 2) - Consolidation of Historic Structures - is being finalised and the appointment of the specialist project management team has been made to oversee the capital elements of Stage 2. The selection process was completed by a panel made up of representatives from Natural England, Cornwall Archaeological Service, Plymouth's Procurement team and Mount Edgcumbe officers.
- 2.3. It should be noted that the Formal Gardens are looking absolutely spectacular this year. We hope the Joint Committee will be able to appreciate them during the annual inspection.

## **3. Schools and College Use of Mount Edgcumbe House & Country Park**

- 3.1. Looking at the Park diary and the indemnity forms completed during this period around 3,000 school children have used the lower park in (schools led) independently organised use of the Park.
- 3.2. 450 children have enjoyed Mount Edgcumbe Ranger led Bushcraft days and educational activities provided for schools.
- 3.3. Around 120 volunteers from local workforces have joined the Rangers on work parties helping with clearance work and other land management challenges.
- 3.4. 435 individuals from 10 separate organisations have used the Park's orienteering course during this period.
- 3.5. Over 1,000 people completed the Mount Edgcumbe geocache route during this period – which has caches hidden in the Barrow Centre and the Orangery as well as across the wider landscape. There were 1,382 individual hits on the Barrow Centre cache.

## **4. Building and Park Infrastructure**

- 4.1. The mains water pipe adjacent to the house began leaking over the winter. Repair work was required to prevent a major rupture and this entailed digging up a sizeable area within the Barrow Centre to replace a seized stopcock before work could commence on replacing the damaged mains pipe beside the House.

- 4.2. There was a challenge with the sewer system at the lower end of the park with a leak causing effluent to rise to the surface in the lower avenue. After initial excavation works and a camera survey it was found to be a blockage in the pipe leading to the pump pit. The system had to be pumped out and the pipework was then jetted clear.
- 4.3. There was an issue with water ingress into the Orangery. This was caused by a number of slipped tiles, blocked guttering and the weathering of the temporary repairs that had replaced the lead flashing (stolen two years ago). The work undertaken has rectified the problem specific to the Orangery structure.
- 4.4. The Orangery toilets also had issues with a leaky roof caused by the felt on the flat roof coming to the end of its useful life and the panelling around the header tank on the roof leaking. Both the panelling and the felt on the flat roof have been replaced.
- 4.5. The catering tenant of the Orangery redecorated the interior of the building over the winter period.
- 4.6. Shekinah Mission (working with Park management) have completed the re-painting of the lower park railings and the Dry Walk car park toilets.
- 4.7. The Parks vehicle roads have been patched by Park staff in a constant cycle of reactive maintenance.
- 4.8. The Barrow Park holiday-let building work has been completed.
- 4.9. The commercial cooker and upright freezer in the Barrow Centre Stables Café had to be replaced.
- 4.10. Deterioration of the tidal defences in the lower Park continues to cause concern – especially the damage to the wall fronting the Artists Platt (the bowling green area beside the Tudor Blockhouse).
- 4.11. We are exploring alternate heating strategies for the House and Barrow Centre with the Plymouth Energy Community and the possibility of European Regional Development Funding (ERDF)

## **5. Walks, Talks and Workshops**

- 5.1. Between April 2014 and March 2015 Mount Edgcumbe delivered 35 workshops and talks across the site – with a similar number planned for 2015 -16. Together with our red-letter day events and working with third party organised events (markets and festivals) Mount Edgcumbe now delivers around 65 ‘events’ per year.
- 5.2. If one were to combine all the wedding ceremonies, receptions, conferences, workshops, talks, external third party events and our own red-letter day festivals - one would realise that Mount Edgcumbe is now delivering an average of 110 significant ‘happenings’ per year. All this with a staff of 12 with the support of FOMECP, volunteers and occasional agency staff.

## **6. Conferences**

- 6.1. For the year April 2104 – March 2015 we had 17 conference/meeting bookings using the Belvedere, Octagon Room and Earl's Garden Marquee. Looking forward we currently have 10 bookings plus a two day international conference (see below) and an 'extended use' art show (Drawn to the Valley).
- 6.2. We are working closely with Plymouth College of Art and the Crafts Council to host their internationally renowned 'Making Futures' conference. This is a major undertaking which will use all available rooms in the House, the Earl's Marquee and the Barrow Centre (it will include art and craft installations, demonstrations, lectures and breakout workshops). The organisers are bringing delegates to Mount Edgcumbe from around the world and are keen to include Mount Edgcumbe's resident community (our commercial tenants) in an exercise looking at best practice in the modern crafts world. This conference alone will generate over £16,000 for the Park.

## **7. Weddings**

- 7.1. The weddings business continues to provide a consistent and strong income stream for the Park.
- 7.2. April 2014 – March 2015 saw 23 wedding ceremonies; 22 Orangery receptions and 3 Earl's Garden Marquee receptions. The total hire value represented £58,202 of income.
- 7.3. Forward bookings for 2015/16 are 24 wedding ceremonies; 21 Orangery receptions and 7 Earl's Garden Marquee receptions. The total hire value is currently £72,722 representing a year on year uplift of 24%.

## **8. Events**

- 8.1. The main red-letter day events for Mount Edgcumbe 2014/15 have been :-
  - ❖ The Classic Car Rally & Fayre.
  - ❖ The Military Vehicle Trust Weekend (Mount Edgcumbe at War).
  - ❖ King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery Summer Camp and 'thank you' event
  - ❖ The Christmas Fayre.
  - ❖ The Stylish Homes & Garden Show.
  - ❖ Green Man.
  - ❖ The Smugglers Market.
  - ❖ The Faery Festival.
- 8.2. The Classic Car event was very successful drawing an estimated attendance of 12 – 14,000 people on the day. The event was reported as having generated a record £18.5k which was shared between the organising parties - Cornwall Hospice Care and FOMECP.

- 8.3. We helped the Military Vehicle Trust reinvent their 'Mount Edgcumbe at War' event into a much expanded and more ambitious affair in 2014 – with the addition of a (blank) firing display of 105mm field armament, heavy machine guns and light arms. Over 4,000 people visited the event on the Saturday and Sunday with Mount Edgcumbe recouping the parking fees (just over £1,000 from the car parks and £451 from overflow parking).
- 8.4. Mount Edgcumbe hosted the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery Summer Camp in September 2014. Dry Walk car park was converted into a camp with stables. The troop engaged in daily community activities and helped bring in many diverse groups to the Park. On the Saturday of their stay they put on an unofficial 'thank you' performance in the lower Park which was attended by around 3,000 individuals. We were discouraged from actively promoting the event for security reasons – which proves just how effective the draw of a good quality horse show can be in the South West (Mount Edgcumbe recouped £1,327 from 'field' parking for the event and £450 for the use of Dry Walk car park for the duration of their stay).
- 8.5. The Christmas Fayre 2014 was also very successful. It attracted over 6,000 visitors and was extended to include 83 traders alongside our commercial tenants and a comprehensive entertainment programme. The traders are carefully selected to prevent repetition of goods and allow a theme for each marquee/area of the Fayre. The 11<sup>th</sup> Christmas Fayre at Mount Edgcumbe generated £7,600 for the Park after costs were taken into account.
- 8.6. The Stylish Homes and Gardens Show was a first for Mount Edgcumbe, run by a third party and serviced by Park staff. Despite the truly awful weather on the weekend of the event it was deemed a success and the organisers broke even. For those attending it was noted that the quality of design and innovation on display was very high and was especially suited to and complementary with the interior of the House.
- 8.7. Green Man – in its second year in 2015 - was reduced to a one day event. The weather on the day was challenging, but despite that attendance was put at around 2,000 hardy souls. Feedback from traders and entertainers was good and the public thoroughly enjoyed the event. The event broke even.
- 8.8. The Smugglers Market also experienced very poor weather – but yet again everyone attending (around 2,500 people) enjoyed the event and the traders were happy. Again this event broke even.
- 8.9. The Faery Festival was a great success and brought around 1,000 campers onto the Park. They experienced good weather across the three day event and contributed £3,200 to the Park after cost.
- 8.10. Looking forward – Mount Edgcumbe will be hosting 'Run to the Fun' – the south west scouts association annual jamboree - between 25 July and 1 August 2015. The scouts will be contributing £7,000 to Mount Edgcumbe and will also help steward the Car Rally on 2 August 2015.

- 8.11. We are currently negotiating terms to secure two further red-letter day events at Mount Edgcumbe for 2016. With both of these the risk will be with the third party organisers and Mount Edgcumbe will recoup a hire fee and parking income

## **9. Promotion, Press and Publicity**

Each one of the red-letter day events above has been used as an opportunity to give Mount Edgcumbe more general visibility in the press. Each event has been supported by specific press releases and a dialogue with our press contacts resulting in coverage in local newspapers, radio and TV.

In 2015 every event has also been linked to the 'Edgcumbe 500' strapline to recognise the anniversary of Henry VIII's 'license to empark' issued to Piers Edgcumbe and the building of the great palisade fence in 1515 (for example the Green Man event press release spoke about the Green Man event celebrating 500 years of careful stewardship of the Grade I listed landscape).

In addition the House and collection have been supported by press releases, advertising and leaflets drawing attention to our marking of the 'Edgcumbe 500' anniversary by unveiling the 'Winstanley's Light' painting (recently restored - please see the accompanying hand out) – and the return to the collection of the Nicholas Condy painting 'The Court Dinner at Cotehele'.

Looking forward to 2015/16 we will produce 30,000 generic leaflets for the Park with a distribution partner scheduled to display these across Plymouth and South East Cornwall.

We are working with our commercial tenants (with their financial input) to produce a specific leaflet supporting their presence and activities on the Park to be distributed in a similar fashion.

In 2015 we have developed and delivered new sections of the Mount Edgcumbe website (with less of a 'local authority' feel) which carries the Barrow Centre message and includes all our commercial tenants and further links to their websites.

Over 10,000 Mount Edgcumbe events leaflets and posters will be produced and distributed between now and December 2015.

We are scheduled to place 60 adverts in press and publications supporting the weddings business, general awareness and specific events. These are always worked into editorial deals to give us as much mileage as possible.

Our social media presence has been a great success – with the Mount Edgcumbe Facebook page getting over 20,000 visits in the week running up to the Green Man event. We have a weekly 'audience' of regulars of over 6,000 people and have over 4,000 dedicated followers.

## **10. Occupation of Rentable Business Spaces**

- 10.1. In 2014/15 we introduced 12 new commercial tenants to the Park representing £62k of income through rents. We lost two of those tenants during the 1<sup>st</sup> year of trading.
- 10.2. In 2015/16 we have increased that occupancy to 16 tenants renting 21 commercial spaces representing a potential total annual rental income of £95k.

## **11. Recommendations**

It is recommended that Members note the report.