

## PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

**Subject:** Park Activity to September 2016  
**Committee:** Mount Edgumbe Joint Committee  
**Date:** 8 July 2016  
**Cabinet Members:** Councillor Jordan (Plymouth City Council)  
Councillor Mrs Duffin (Cornwall Council)  
**CMT Members:** Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place)  
Peter Marsh (Head of Community and Asset Management)  
**Author:** Chris Burton (Park Manager)  
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**Ref:** MEP /gen  
**Key Decision:** No  
**Part:** I

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

This report provides an update on activities in the park in the 2015/16 financial year to end of June 2016.

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

Delivering excellent services and maintaining service through income generation.

### **Cornwall Council:**

Corporate Business Plan Priorities 2016/2020 will include:

- Stewardship of our Assets
  - Partners Working Together
  - Healthier and Safer
  - Engaging our Communities
  - Driving the Economy
  - Essentials for Living
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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:**

N/A

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**Equality and Diversity:**

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No.

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**Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:**

The Joint Committee note the report.

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**Alternative options considered and rejected:**

N/A

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**Published work / information:**

N/A

**Background papers:**

Title	Part I	Part II	Exemption Paragraph Number						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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**Sign off:**

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Originating SMT Member													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the content of the report?													

## **1.0 Introduction**

This report informs members of the works and activities carried out since Nov 2015.

## **2.0 Park Matters Including High Level Stewardship**

- 2.1 Work on the Natural England High Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme for various follies within the Park has been going ahead through PWH who have been appointed as Project Managers of the buildings works. Work is on schedule and will be completed by September. Eleven follies and structures have received restoration archaeology works restoring them to their former glory.
- 2.2 Parking has been stopped immediately adjacent to the house and this area will be a converted into an Elizabethan Knot Garden along with seating and interpretation of the old house that was bombed in 1941. This will be completed in the Queens 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday year and will be commemorated as such. Funding of £20,000 from the 'Friends' will pay for this.
- 2.3 A purpose built disabled parking area has been put in place adjacent to the new Knot Garden.
- 2.4 New signage for the Park in keeping with a Country Park is being introduced at the main entrances to the Park, with the rest of the Park to follow. These signs are being produced in house by one of our very talented 'Peremps'. A stack sign of businesses present at the Barrow Centre will help push visitors up to the centre.
- 2.5 The Ornamental Bridge over the haha has been installed.
- 2.6 Work on the area opposite the Deer Garden has been completed leaving a tidy managed area.
- 2.7 General HLS work continues with fence work, scrub clearance and tree management.
- 2.8 The Park now has a Tree Safety Management Plan in Place. A good deal of tree safety work took place this winter. The Avenue has been replanted with Limes and protection cages.

## **Buildings and Park Infrastructure**

- 3.0 Work has been undertaken (and continues) in and around the Barrow Centre to uplift and refresh the general presentation of the built environment. Work on the Orangery has continued and most of the huge Georgian windows have been repainted.
- 3.1 A programme of building repairs is now being undertaken. West Lodge has once again been made habitable and will provide an income once more for the Park; it will also be protected and available for further development as a holiday let in future years.
- 3.2 Over-winter maintenance in the main house has been carried out and the house is now open to visitors.
- 3.3 The Park is seeking to develop a long term commercial use for a number of its buildings including the English Garden House that will form part of a Heritage Lottery Fund bid to create a 'Landmark Trust' style holiday let.

## 4.0 **Events**

- 4.1 Between November and July we hosted over 50 walks, talks, and workshops; these comprised of in-house talks, walks and creative workshops including an in-depth focus on the Tudors, the Fifth Earl, Crochet workshops, garden tours, dowsing for beginners, bat walks, Easter Bunny Hunt, Ceilidh Dance and an introduction to Earls Garden.
- 4.2 Mount Edgcumbe has hosted 'Park Run' every Saturday morning since January. These events have proved very popular with a strong turnout enabling Café traders to open early.
- 4.3 The Christmas Fair was again a great success this year with 4830 people attending over two days. Income to the park was just short of £12,000.
- 4.4 The Green Man event was smiled on by the weather and had over 8000 people in attendance. This generated £7898 of income but staff costs are not included in this.
- 4.5 Faery Festival was a great success with at least two fine days of weather, this event made the Park around £4,000 of clear profit as it is run by an outside business. We hope to develop more events like this one where staffing costs are kept to a minimum and capacity and risk are passed onto a third party.
- 4.6 In April we had the 'Disc Golf National Championship' hosted at Mount Edgcumbe. The event attracted the fledgling stars of this new sport and has generated considerable press coverage.

## 5.0 **Business Development**

- 5.1 The Park currently raises £478,000 in income from its various activities, events, property, parking, weddings, leases and rental incomes. The Park costs around £750,000 to run. The shortfall has historically been funded from LA contributions. The Park, which is free to access, does not charge an entrance fee. By maximising existing assets such as holiday lets and business concessions, it is hoped to meet the reduced LA funding over the next five years.
- 5.2 We have rented three new business units to 'Kits Guitars', 'Elsie Hates Harvie' (a jewellers) and unit 2 to 'Chris Thorn Studios'. We have also rented the North Tower room to Selvana, a company that carries out conservation work in Belize.
- 5.3 Negotiations over the installation of a high ropes course are currently under way.
- 5.4 Holiday lets have been running since March and marketed through Classic Cottages. They are going very well. This is a steady income stream that will be developed over future years.
- 5.5 A Business Development Plan is being developed which will focus on potential income streams for the park over the next five years.
- 5.6 The Park is developing a new web site to complement its very effective Facebook and Twitter accounts. The Facebook account has 5540 followers and Twitter, 212.
- 5.7 The Park currently employs around 40 individuals in its business franchises which along with the 13 staff makes the Park a major employer in the Rame peninsular.

## 6.0 **Weddings**

- 6.1 We currently have 22 weddings and 10 marquee receptions for 2016/17. The bookings for 2017/18 are so far 9 weddings and 9 marquee weddings. That compares with 24 weddings and 7 marquee receptions delivered in 2015. The Park Manager is in the process of properly budget costing weddings to be able to clearly look at profit margins and set prices accordingly.