

**Cobtree Manor Estate Update Report**

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	John Foster – Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Mike Evans – Leisure Manager
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	Boxley

**Executive Summary**

An update report on the estate's day-to-day work and the work and achievements of the different sites that make up the estate.

**Purpose of Report**

To update the Committee on the work of the estate since the last meeting, which was in November 2019.

**This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:**

1. That the contents of the update are noted

**Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee	20 January 2020

# Cobtree Manor Estate Update Report

## 1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	The work of the charity links directly to its charitable objectives and the corporate priorities for the council.	Mike Evans - Leisure Manager
<b>Cross Cutting Objectives</b>	The work of the charity links directly to its charitable objectives and the cross cutting objectives of the council.	Mike Evans - Leisure Manager
<b>Risk Management</b>	There are no risk management implications in this report.	Mike Evans - Leisure Manager
<b>Financial</b>	Financial implications from this update are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies.	Paul Holland - Senior Finance Manager
<b>Staffing</b>	Staffing implications are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies.	John Foster - Head of Regeneration & Economic Development
<b>Legal</b>	Under the Council's Constitution the Committee as Corporate Trustee is responsible for all matters relating to the Charity with the exception of daily management which will be undertaken by the Director of Finance and Business Improvement. There are no specific legal implications at present as this report is presented for noting only.	Legal Team

<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	There are no new implications as a result of this update report and recommendation. .	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
<b>Equalities</b>	No impact identified as a result of as a result of this update report and recommendation. .	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
<b>Public Health</b>	The Cobtree Estate works towards improving the health of residents through its day-to-day operations	Public Health Officer
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	Crime and disorder implications are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies	Leisure Manager
<b>Procurement</b>	Procurement implications are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies	John Foster – Head of Regeneration and Economic Development & Section 151 Officer

## **2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

1.1 This report covers the period from November 2019 to January 2020.

### **Cobtree Manor Park**

1.2 Maintenance of the park over this period covers winter works. Further tree works have been completed, lifting some of the crowns and removing dead limbs. Shrubbery works have continued and grass maintenance work was carried out on the top meadow area in the arboretum.

1.3 External interviews for a new Cobtree Manager did not lead to an appointment. Further discussions with some suitable internal candidates and an internal application process have identified a candidate who will begin in the role of Cobtree Manager in due course.

### **Park Management Plan and Green Flag**

1.4 The park management plan for 2014-2019 expired recently. The Leisure Manager has begun the process of a new plan being written, which will set out the park's ambitions for the next five to ten-year period.

- 1.5 The Green Flag submission for the park must be made by 31 January 2020. Leisure Manager has agreed with the Green Flag assessors that the submission can be made by 29 February 2020, when it is hoped the new park manager will be in post, and the management plan can then be submitted for judging at a later date.

### **Visitor Numbers**

- 1.6 Analysis of the car park income for the year to date gives a figure of 48,047 paid vehicle visits to the end of December 2019. This compares to 55,051 paid vehicle visits up to the end of December 2018, which included the hot summer of 2018.

### **Cobtree Manor Park Golf Course**

- 1.7 MyTime Active will be submitting their planning application for the golf course works imminently. They had a successful Christmas period with events and parties. The course was closed for a few days because of heavy rainfall in December. The visitor numbers and usage is as expected for this time of year.

### **Kent Life Farm Attraction**

- 1.8 Kent Life won the silver award in the best large attraction category at the Visit Kent awards. They also won Silver in Tourism South East's Awards for Excellence for the best Tourism/Festival Experience for Christmas at Kent Life 2018. Christmas 2019 was very successful with sell-out grotto experiences a highlight.
- 1.9 The timber treatment works on the play barn, as agreed by Committee at the 7 November 2018 meeting, are being completed between 6 January and 24 January 2020.

### **Forstal Field**

- 1.10 Work to progress the lease to the Cobtree Young Farmers is progressing with the legal department.
- 1.11 Conversations with the OCND funding team and Natural England about creating a pond on the Forstal Field for the re-homing of endangered species displaced by housing development in the area have progressed. This proposal will require Committee approval and a report on the matter will be brought to this Committee in due course.

### **Cobtree Railway**

- 1.12 The Leisure Manager has been pursuing the Kent Life operator's involvement in the project before a report on the feasibility work is put forward to Committee. Planning Solutions would be interested in taking operation of the railway but would not be able to invest in its creation. Further discussions over the annual fee for that operation are needed.
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### **3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

- 3.1 Committee can note the information contained in this report
  - 3.2 Committee can choose not to note the information in this report, however the committee has requested regular updates on the operations of the estate.
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### **4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 It is recommended that the information in this report is noted.
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### **5. RISK**

- 5.1 This report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications.
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### **6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

- 6.1 No consultation has taken place since the last report.
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### **7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

- 7.1 Any comments from the Committee will be passed on to the relevant parties.
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### **8. REPORT APPENDICES**

- None
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### **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- None