

Cobtree Estate Update

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

Executive Summary

An update report on the Cobtree Estate and its constituent venues and facilities.

Purpose of Report

Noting

This report makes the following recommendation to this Committee:

1. That the contents of the report are noted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee	25 January 2022

Cobtree Estate Update

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The work of the charity links directly to its charitable objectives and the corporate priorities for the council.	Leisure Manager
Cross Cutting Objectives	The work of the charity links directly to its charitable objectives and the cross-cutting objectives of the council.	Leisure Manager
Risk Management	There are no risk management implications in this report.	Leisure Manager
Financial	Financial implications from this update are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies.	Senior Finance Manager (Client)
Staffing	Staffing implications are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Legal	There are no specific legal implications at present as this report is presented for noting only.	Team Leader Contracts and Commissioning
Privacy and Data Protection	There are no new implications as a result of this update report and recommendation.	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	No impact identified as a result of this update report and recommendation. An EqIA will be required for the project phase.	Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	The Cobtree Estate works towards improving the health of our community and residents through its day-to-day operations.	Leisure Manager
Crime and Disorder	Crime and disorder implications are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies	Leisure Manager
Procurement	Procurement implications are managed day-	Head of

	to-day in line with council procedures and policies.	Regeneration and Economic Development & Section 151 Officer
Biodiversity and Climate Change	The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and there are no implications on biodiversity and climate change.	Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Cobtree Manor Park

- 2.1 The park played host to the inaugural Glow event in December 2021 and the event proved to be a great success for the park and for the borough. 24,934 people visited the event across 17 days to look at the creative and exciting light installations. This generated £9,987 in additional car park income for CMEC. At the time of writing the events company is still removing equipment from the site and a debrief meeting is still to be held. Further updates and feedback form the debrief meeting can be brought to the committee.
- 2.2 Car park income for 2021/22 stands at £89,315 at the end of Q3, which gives a positive variance of around £11,000 against the revised budget.
- 2.3 The volunteer workforce planting hedgerows as part of their corporate social responsibility work will be in the park on 25 January. They are due to plant around 2,000 hedgerow saplings around some key borders and along sections of the bridleway. The hedgerows will be planted in areas where they have the highest chance of good growth and becoming established. They will provide good natural habitat in the park and will also preserve boundaries where they need to be preserved. In time the established hedgerows will be a natural replacement to the ageing fencing. The Mote Park and Cobtree Manager has identified other similar opportunities and these are currently being explored.
- 2.4 The Council’s Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager has visited the Cobtree estate to assess suitability for additional tree planting and some natural flood prevention work. Areas and opportunities are not as suitable as first expected for flood elevation efforts, however one option at Kent Life to establish a new orchard is being investigated further to coincide with the next planting season in October 2022.

Golf Course

- 2.5 November 2021 was a successful month at the golf course, more profitable than November 2019 which was pre-Covid. The golf course manager has moved on and taken up the manager’s position at another local golf course. The operator has a temporary manager in place while the role is advertised.

- 2.6 The drainage project to improve the playing conditions on the 1st, 2nd, 9th, 12th and 18th holes is completed. It has made a big difference to the look and appeal of these holes and it has also helped with the saturated conditions in these areas. As a result water is now able to run freely and two ponds on the course are collecting increased amounts of water. This is improving the ecology of the ponds and also making them look better.

Kent Life

- 2.7 Covid Plan B restrictions introduced on 13 December 2021 required a new management plan but the Santa events were able to continue through the rest of December. The site is now in its winter maintenance period and will re-open for February half term.
- 2.8 The Cobtree Shed group has moved to its new base at Kent Life and has started reconvening sessions for its members. They are working with staff at Cobtree Manor Park to organise the removal of equipment from the Elephant House.

Cobtree Café

- 2.9 Following repairs to the flooring inside the toilets further repairs are required to the paths outside the toilets. These are being organised in conjunction with the MBC Property department and will be undertaken soon.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Committee can note the information 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.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended that the information in this report is noted.

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 update report.

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

7.1 Any comments from the Committee will be passed on to the relevant party.

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- None
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9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None