

**COBTREE MANOR ESTATE  
CHARITY COMMITTEE**

**25 January 2023**

**Cobtree Estate Update**

<b>Timetable</b>	
<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee	25 January 2023

<b>Will this be a Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Urgency</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	Katie Exon, Head of Property and Leisure
<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 Cobtree Estate and its constituent venues and facilities.

**Purpose of Report**

Noting.

**This report makes the following recommendation to the Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee:**

1. That the contents of the report are noted.

# Cobtree Estate update

## 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 Strategic Plan objectives for the council.	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.	Leisure Manager
<b>Risk Management</b>	There are no risk management implications in this report.	Leisure Manager
<b>Financial</b>	Financial implications from this update are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies.	Senior Finance Manger (Client)
<b>Staffing</b>	Staffing implications are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies.	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement
<b>Legal</b>	There are no specific legal implications at present as this report is presented for noting only.	Team Leader, Contracts and Commissioning MKLS
<b>Information Governance</b>	The recommendations do not impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council Processes.	Information Governance Team
<b>Equalities</b>	The report is for noting and contains no recommendations that would propose a change in service, therefore no equalities impact assessment will be required.	Equalities & Communities Officer
<b>Public Health</b>	The Cobtree Estate works towards improving the health of our community and residents through its day-to-day operations.	Leisure Manager
<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.	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement
<b>Biodiversity and Climate Change</b>	There are no direct implications on biodiversity and climate change within this report.	Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 In the last six months Cobtree Estate venues have demonstrated positive customer performance against their most recent pre-pandemic levels (2019).

### **Cobtree Manor Park**

2.2 Based on car park usage data in Quarter 3 there have been 8,028 vehicle visits to the Manor Park. This is around 35% lower than for the same period last year. The snowy and icy weather in December is partly responsible for this. Parking Services are assisting with increased patrols.

2.3 The year-to-date vehicle visitor figure (2022) of 39,000 is 27% down against the same period in 2021, however 2021 had significantly increased visitor numbers owing to the increase in park usage caused by pandemic restrictions. The snowy and icy weather in December 2022 is also responsible for the reduced parking numbers, with the park closed for 10 days. Parking Services are assisting with increased officer patrols of the park to ensure that every visitor is paying to park.

2.4 Following a successful event last year, the GLOW light festival returned to the park in December. In total 22,344 people attended the 24-day festival, despite the event having to be closed for 3 days due to bad weather.

2.5 Work is still required to the llama house in the park. Quotes from contractors have been slow and at the time of writing still require further work to make sure that all are quoting for the same level and means of repair. This item will remain on the forward plan until the repairs have been completed.

### **Cobtree Golf Course**

2.6 The Golf Course continues to attract visitors and receives consistent positive feedback on social media from those who play there. Negative comments are in the minority and most often revolve around uncontrollable weather impacts on the course condition.

2.7 The number of rounds played during Quarter 3 (October to December) is typically much less than for Quarters 1 or 2. A total of 5,100 rounds were

played in the quarter, which mirrors the number played at the same time last year and is 8% higher than both 2019 and 2020, despite being closed for around 10 days in December because of the snowy weather.

- 2.8 The venue has been used for parties and events as well as by several regular users who hold business meetings there.
- 2.9 Course improvements continue with a programme of tree and drainage works, as well as ditch renovations. The course conditions survey shows consistent improvement month-on-month. In a recent extension of some previous antisocial behaviour affecting the course, one of the greens close to the public bridleway was damaged by a motorcycle although effective repairs have been made.
- 2.10 The decision to readvertise the golf course lease and seek a new lease arrangement has now been made public with a press release sent to local media. The lettings agent has visited the site and planned the timeline for the applications process. The lettings particulars are due for release at the end of January.

### **Kent Life**

- 2.11 Overall admission numbers for 2022 were ahead of target going into quarter 4. At the time of writing the latest visitor numbers are not available from the operator to be included in this update. Qualitative reports of the fireworks and Christmas events held in November and December are positive.
- 2.12 The site is currently in its winter maintenance programme, with upgrades to the farmyard enclosures and customer areas high priority before the spring season commences

### **Cobtree Café**

- 2.13 Arrangements for the end of the lease and the letting of a new lease are progressing in line with the obligations in the contract. A report on the new arrangements will be brought to a future meeting for committee approval.

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## **3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

- 3.1 The Executive can note the information in this report.
- 3.2 The Executive can choose not to note the information in this report, however previous iterations of this committee requested regular updates on the operations of the Estate so knock-on impacts and decisions can be foreknown.

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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 update 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 party.

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## **8. REPORT APPENDICES**

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

- None