

REVIEW OF VOLUNTEERING UPDATE

Presented by the Head of Human Resources

SUMMARY

At its meeting on 23 November 2023 the Scrutiny Committee agreed that the focus of its next Scrutiny Review would be Volunteering (Paper S/65/23). At the Executive Committee meeting on 14 December 2023 a review of volunteering on a phased basis was noted (Paper E/832/23). This report aims to update the Scrutiny Committee on phase 1 of this review.

RECOMMENDATION

Members Note: (1) the update on phase 1 of the review of volunteering.

BACKGROUND

- 1 In November 2023 a review of Volunteering was agreed as the focus of the next scrutiny review (Paper S/65/23).
- 2 The scope of the volunteering review was noted at the Executive Committee in December 2023 (Paper E/832/23)
- 3 Due to limited capacity in the Volunteers Team a phased approach was agreed.
- 4 The scope sets out 4 phases which will be reviewed between December 2023 and February 2025.

PHASE 1 OF REVIEW

- 5 Phase 1 sets out the following areas to review:
 - Explore ways to achieve closer contact/involvement with volunteers by Board Members.
 - Raise awareness of the volunteering activities taking place with Members of the Authority to enable them to consider actively participating in relevant activities taking place.
 - Removal from the list of volunteers those who have made no recent contact and keeping the data list relevant and up to date.

- Investigate ways in which to encourage volunteers and partner organisations to report their volunteering hours and demographic data to the Authority so that we can build a more accurate picture of volunteering within the Park.
- Audit current provision of volunteers across the Regional Park including roles and demographics in-house and to include the collection of data for venues that fall within the Leisure Services Contract (LSC) (managed by Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL)).

PHASE 1 UPDATE

6 Work has commenced on phase 1 of the review and below is an update on each area.

7 Closer contact/involvement with volunteers by Board Members

John Bevan, Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, attended the January Volunteers Committee meeting face to face with volunteer representatives giving them a chance to feedback directly to the Scrutiny Committee Chairman on anything they would like to see improved. A very positive meeting and the minutes will be circulated to all volunteers and staff involved in managing volunteers.

8 A request has been made to the PR Comms team to raise awareness of volunteering activities through their newsletter to Members of the Authority to give them more information on how to actively participate in activities if they wish.

9 Removal from the list of volunteers those who have made no recent contact and keeping data list relevant and up to date

New "access" categories on the database have enabled the Volunteers Officer to filter volunteers and label those confirmed as active.

| | |
|---|-----|
| Access status | |
| Active | 444 |
| Newly registered (not yet started volunteering) | 16 |
| Under review (being chased to confirm status) | 66 |
| Retired | 809 |

10 Investigate ways in which to encourage volunteers and partner organisations to report their volunteering hours and demographic data to the Authority so that we have a more accurate picture of volunteering within the Park

This was raised at the Volunteers Committee meeting in January and our Volunteers Officer is currently working to improve communications with British Canoeing and British Cycling so that we get more information post events. The Volunteers Officer has also compiled a list of partner organisations and encouraged staff to make any updates as needed.

| Site / venue | Partner organisations |
|---|--|
| Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre | England Hockey - Hockey Makers, GLL |
| Lee Valley VeloPark | Bikeworks, British Cycling, Full Gas Cycling, GLL |
| Lee Valley White Water Centre | British Canoeing, Lee Valley Paddlesports Club, GLL |
| Lee Valley Marina, Stanstead Abbots | Hertford Regional College – art students |
| Bow Creek Ecology Park | Queen Mary University of London |
| Gunpowder Park | CHEXS – conservation, Gunpowder Park Run, Hertford Regional College - Students with additional needs - Gunpowder Park project |
| Middlesex Filter Beds | Clapton Green Gym |
| Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park | London Legacy Development Corporation - wildlife surveys GLL |
| Tottenham Marshes | Stonebridge Lock Coalition, Engine Room - Tottenham 10 (10k run & walk) |
| Walthamstow Marshes, Leyton Marsh, WaterWorks Centre Nature Reserve and WaterWorks Fields | Lea Bridge Conservation Volunteers |
| Park wide | British Trust for Ornithology |
| Amwell End | Ware In Bloom |
| Broxbourne - various | Broxbourne Health Walks, Lee Valley Wombles |
| Broxbourne Old Mill and Meadows | Saplings Begin Ltd |
| Clayton Hill | Nazeing History Workshop - walks |
| Fishers Green | CHEXS – conservation |
| Pindar and Cheshunt Country Walk | Active Herts - Wednesday Wellbeing Walk, Herts Police - Children and Young People Team, Herts Young Mariners Base – walks |
| River Lee Country Park - various | Epping Forest MTB - Cycling for Health, Lee Valley Wombles, Capel Manor College students, Hertford Regional College - conservation tasks for students from various departments |
| Turnford Brook | Wormley & Turnford Big Local - Walks programme |
| Waltham Abbey Gardens | Orchard Project |
| Waltham Common Lock | Canal & River Trust |
| TBC | University College London |

- 11 **Audit current provision across the Regional Park including roles and demographics in-house and to include the collection of data for venues that fall within the LSC (managed by GLL)**

Active volunteering roles

| Roles available | Department |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Bittern Roost Watch Volunteer | Biodiversity - various open spaces |
| Butterfly Surveyor | |
| Butterfly Admin Volunteer | |
| Mink Monitor Volunteer | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Dragonfly Surveyor | |
| Reptile Surveyor | |
| Bird Surveyor | |
| Invertebrate Surveyor | |
| Bat Surveyor | |
| Events Volunteer | Events - various open spaces & venues |
| GIS Officer | GIS - Volunteers Office |
| GIS Fieldwork Volunteer | GIS - various open spaces |
| Holyfield Hall Farm Assistant | Holyfield Hall Farm |
| Learning and Engagement Volunteer | Learning & Engagement - various open spaces & venues |
| Kitchen Garden Volunteer | Myddelton House Gardens - Kitchen Garden |
| Ornamental Garden Volunteer | Myddelton House Gardens - Ornamental Garden |
| Events Volunteer | Myddelton House Gardens & Bowles Cafe |
| Conservation Task | |
| Litter picker | Rangers - various open spaces |
| Honorary Warden (Volunteer Ranger) | |
| Rye House Gatehouse Assistant | Rangers - Rye House Gatehouse |
| Livestock Checking Volunteer | Rangers - Cheshunt Marshes |
| Sensory Walks Volunteer | Sport and Active Recreation - various open spaces |
| Walk Leader | Volunteers & Sport and Active Recreation - various open spaces |
| Walk Support | Volunteers and Sport & Active Recreation - various open spaces |
| Volunteers Committee Member | Volunteers - meetings at Myddelton House |
| Admin Assistant | Volunteers - Volunteers Office |
| Public Information and Wildlife Assistant | Wildlife Discovery Centre |
| Have a Go Lesson Assistant | |
| Yard Assistant | Lee Valley Riding Centre (GLL) |
| Vet Student Placement | |
| Activity Instructor Volunteer | Lee Valley White Water Centre (GLL) |

- 12 Currently no volunteering roles at Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre, Lee Valley VeloPark and Lee Valley Ice Centre.
- 13 Springfield and Stanstead Marinas would like to consider introducing volunteers but do not have the capacity at the present time to manage them. They will review the situation in the future if resourcing levels change.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- 14 Work is also currently taking place around equality, diversity and inclusion.
- 15 The current gender make-up of volunteers is:
- Male = 53%
 - Female = 45%
 - Other/prefer not to say/non-binary = 2%
- 16 7% of volunteers consider themselves to have disabilities.
- 17 The current age make-up of volunteers is:

- Under 16 years = 0%
- 17-25 years = 6%
- 26-44 years = 22%
- 45-64 years = 40%
- 65 and over = 32%

18 The current ethnic make-up of volunteers is:

- White British = 73%
- Ethnic minority = 16%
- Prefer not to say = 11%

19 Terms of Reference for our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Forum has been sent to all staff and volunteers. Those wishing to become representatives of the forum must submit their name by 19 February 2024. Once representatives are elected, meetings will take place quarterly.

20 A meeting is scheduled with GLL to discuss Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

FUTURE PHASES OF REVIEW

21 **Phase 2 (results to be presented at June 2024 Scrutiny Committee)**

- Investigate how our data compares to similar organisations / charities across the UK.
- Investigate how our data using new gender categories compare to that of the Office of National Statistics.
- Investigate new and innovative ways to incorporate new partnerships into our programme based on the increasing interest we have received.
- Investigate how links from riparian boroughs are fully exploited to maximise the opportunities for local communities to access the Regional Park via volunteering.

Phase 3 (results to be presented at November 2024 Scrutiny Committee)

- Evaluate the cost and health benefits generated for volunteers within the Lee Valley Regional Park.
- Assess the potential for additional roles and opportunities to expand.
- Future proofing the volunteer programme and reaching a wider diverse participant.

Phase 4 (results to be presented at February 2025 Scrutiny Committee)

- Benchmark against regional statistics.
- Investigate how the Authority fully maximises funding opportunities for volunteers.

22 Investing in Volunteers renewal agreement signed by LVRPA and Volunteer Now (award provider). Work on reassessment will commence later this year. An official update to be sent out to all volunteers, staff and Authority Members when assessor arranges the date of their introductory session.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

23 There are no environmental implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

24 There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

25 There are no human resource implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

26 There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

27 There are no risk management implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

28 There are no equality implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----|---------------------------|
| LSC | Leisure Services Contract |
| GLL | Greenwich Leisure Limited |

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE REPORTS

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|-----------|----------|------------------------|-------------|
| Executive | E/832/23 | Review of Volunteering | 14 Dec 2023 |
| Scrutiny | S/65/23 | Review of Volunteering | 23 Nov 2023 |