

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
For The Year Ended 31 March 2008**

The trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2008. The financial statements are subject to audit, and are shown on pages 7 to 9 of this report.

The legal and financial information set out below forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the constitution, and the Statement of Recommended Practice-Accounting and Reporting by Charities, as published by the Charities Commission in March, 2005.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

King George's Field Mile End is a registered charity. It is referred to throughout this report as the "Charity".

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The sole trustee of the Charity is the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, which delegates its responsibilities to a Committee called the King George's Field Trust Charity Board which directs the affairs of the Charity and acts as the Charity's trustees. The affairs of the Charity are directed by the Board of Trustees. The trustees meet formally annually or as and when strategic direction is required. For Mile End Park, the original master plan, directed by the Trustees, is in the final stages of implementation. There is a formal agenda for meetings which is agreed in advance between the Chair of the Trustees and the Chair of the Mile End Park Partnership Board that meets quarterly. The day to day running of Mile End Park is delegated to the Director of the Mile End Park. The Mile End Park Partnership comprises two other bodies and the local authority. That board meets quarterly, and examines the progress made in the park. For Mile End Park, an Annual Management Plan is produced, which is geared to the annual Green Flag competition, and looks at the park for the period January to December. The original Trust Deed, and the subsequent variations, which are referred to below, also dealt with the use of other open space and park areas, within what is now the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. These other areas are managed by other Council employees.

The members of the King George's Fields Trust Charity Board are also those Councillors who are, for the time being, the Cabinet members of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Mile End Park has its own Annual Service Plan that covers, amongst other matters, the major strategic, business and operational risks. The Service Plan covers the period April to March, and is used to inform the overall Communities, Localities & Culture

Directorate plan and individual performance targets. In practice, there is an overlap between this and the Annual Management Plan, but the emphasis and content may vary. The Service Plan is peer-reviewed triannually, and was initially published on the Council's web-site during 2006/2007. In respect of the other park and open space areas, the Council has similar strategies to deal with business and operational risks. The Charity Board is satisfied that systems are in place to monitor and control all areas where there is an identifiable risk with financial, operational, or reputational implications.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITY

The Charity's objectives are set out in the Trust Deed, dated 9th November, 1965, and a Deed of Variation dated 29th January, 1997. They are as follows:

To preserve in perpetuity the covenanted land and to apply the land to such charitable purposes as are set out in the Recreational Charities Act 1958, including the construction of indoor recreational facilities, subject to the approval of the National Playing Fields Association and the Charity Commission in respect of any additional purposes.

Generally, the Charity maintains the area of Mile End Park as a park and open space for the recreation of the general public, including but not limited to the inhabitants of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The other park and open space areas are managed to achieve similar objectives

In detail, the following activities were carried out in Mile End Park during the year ending 31 March 2008, which also include references to the plans for future periods.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MILE END PARK

Capital Works

Work was carried out to add shutters to the ends of the Art and Ecology Pavilions in order to deter the covered areas being misused and to deter further arson attacks (at a cost of £32,000). The early indications would suggest that this has proven effective.

A new pump has been installed in the Art Park to move water over the cascade which will assist not only the aesthetics of this part of the park but will also help combat the proliferation of blanket weed.

On the Green Bridge, the automatic watering system was restored at a cost of £5,000. This will allow the replanting of trees on the bridge in the forthcoming autumn/winter planting season (2008/2009).

An order was placed for a new multi-use games area as part of the third phase of the Adventure Park development, and the installation will begin early in 2008/2009. The expenditure in 2007/2008 was £30,000.

The capital expenditure was funded by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The work was supervised by Council staff and private consultants, and carried out by private contractors. As such, the expenditure is shown in the Council's accounts.

Resolving Design Issues

The shutters at the end of the Pavilions have been mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

The relocation of the electric sockets above floor level and the repair of the lighting in the Ecology and Play Pavilions were referred to in the report for 2006/2007, and were carried out in 2007.

The establishment of algae in the Ecology Lake and the Art Lake continues to be a major battle. This has continued to be tackled with the application of barley straw. This is a long-term solution, but, unfortunately, the aquatic plants that were placed in the Art Lake, in a bid to reduce the algae, were overcome by blanket weed, and establishment was non-existent. In 2008/2009, it is the intention to use volunteers to clear weed on monthly basis, as recommended by a consultant.

In the Terrace Garden, a cage was especially constructed to act as a filter for litter and blanket weed, to try to ensure that the fountain pump worked properly. This was very effective for several months, but its long-term effectiveness has still to be put to the test.

Landscape Work

Landscape work began on the entrance to Rhodeswell Road and Art Park in 2007, as part of two multi-phased schemes. These phases are being implemented as funding can be identified. The first phase included the replanting of two entrance beds on Rhodeswell Road and the planting of Birch Grove outside the Athletic Stadium reception. Further work to both these schemes will be carried out in 2008/2009.

Forums

The three forums (Art, Ecology and Play) continue to flourish and make a significant contribution to the park. The Friends Of Mile End Park are also represented on each forum. The forums continue to work well producing innovative ideas for the further development of the park. For example, further inclusive play sessions have been incorporated into the planning of the play programme, and it is noticeable that the parents of children with disability are now visiting the Play Park outside the advertised sessions; this is a real break through. The Ecology Forum's advice has been followed, and, as well as establishment of a wild-life hedgerow, it was continued to extend this policy to other areas of the park. Three exhibitions of a month's duration took place in the Art Pavilion, including a Heritage Lottery Fund national photographic competition.

Transforming The Park Into A Community Resource

Establishing the park as a community resource remains a priority, and every activity is aimed at achieving this. There are some early signs that this is becoming embedded in the minds of some of the local community, for example, two families asked to take an active participating role in the Halloween event rather than merely being entertained by the staff of the park. In March, a member of the public sent in a photo of swans in the park because he thought that Council staff would appreciate it. This is evidence that the park is beginning to have strong associations with members of the local community. Increased usage of the Play Pavilion was another important target and during the year there was a full programme of activity seven days a week, including

the presence of health workers who offer fortnightly sessions to the parents of young children, and one session targeting fathers.

The rangers continue to be key component in the success of the park, and, despite staff changes, the team continue to improve the service that they deliver to users of the park. The introduction of a universal telephone number means that members of the public can now contact a ranger at any time they are on duty.

In 2007/2008, there were over 700 corporate volunteers, which was above the target of six hundred. Corporate volunteers continue to make a financial contribution. If current bookings continue at the same level, it is possible that the 2008/2009 figure will be about eight hundred, which is the capacity that the park is able to deal with.

Bio-diversity continues to be a key feature of the park, and, in 2007, 135 species of spider, and 156 species of beetle were recorded. These were increases from the previous year's figures of 124 and 140, and indicate that the policy on bio-diversity is having a significant effect

In 2007, the park made a successful bid to the Big Lottery Fund which has resulted in a three-year grant to fund a full-time and part-time play worker for the park. This will allow for the establishment of an after-school club, and will dramatically change the ethos of the Play Park. It is hoped to have someone in post by June 2008.

Extreme Sports Area

This project has been beset with challenges, due to the presence of contaminated land, and the requirements of the planning authority and the increased building costs. However, the site has now been cleared, and the two arches closed to prevent further fly tipping. Due to financial pressures, the implementation of the scheme will occur in phases, and it is intended to complete the external section during 2008.

Lea Rivers Trust

In March, 2008, the Lea Rivers Trust ceased operations, and as a result, closed down all the projects that it was responsible for. This has inevitably left a gap of provision at the Ecology Pavilion. The rangers have had training in those aspects of service delivery that it was felt that they could take over. Although this will be a fraction of the previous project, it will at least allow a degree of continuity. The tools and equipment, related to the project, have been donated to the park by the Lea Rivers Trust, and will be used by the rangers.

FINANCIAL RESULTS

The net incoming resources for the year totalled £827,029, (£816,059 in 2006/2007). This included a contribution from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets of £283,104 (£313,850 in 2006/2007). The Charity made a deficit of £21,037. This amount was offset against the surplus of £48,003 carried forward from 2006/2007. The balance of £26,966 was carried forward to 2008/2009.

The Charity continued to rely on a number of sources for its income, in addition to the financial contribution from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Within Mile End Park, these included Commercial Rents from properties located in the Green Bridge

shops, and fees and charges from the letting of other facilities in the park, e.g. Connexions, Electric Go-Karts, and the hire of pavilions. The sources of income are shown in more detail in the attached financial report. There are no Restricted Funds or Endowment Funds, as defined within the Statement of Recommended Practice, 2005.

The Charity is grateful to all who provided it with funds to enable it to carry out its work within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

The largest items of expenditure continue to be the cost of staff salaries, and the work of maintaining the park areas and buildings within them. Staff salaries accounted for £261,441 in 2007/2008 (31% of total resources expended, compared with £241,221 in 2006/2007 or 31%). Repairs and maintenance accounted for £325,028 (38% of total resources expended, compared with £269,921 in 2006/2007, or 35%).

Full details of the Charity's revenue income and expenditure are given in the accompanying financial statements.

INVESTMENT POLICY AND PERFORMANCE

The Charity has no investments.

RESERVES POLICY

Since the sole trustee is the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, which meets in full the Charity's net expenditure, the Charity's funding is secured. In previous years, the Trust Charity Board has therefore not needed to set up any financial reserves to protect against any unforeseen fluctuations in income or expenditure. In 2007/2008, there was a deficit of expenditure against income, of £21,037. This amount was offset against the surplus carried forward from 2006/2007 of £48,003. The balance of £26,966 was carried forward to 2008/2009.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trust Charity Board is required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity as at the Balance Sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure for the year then ended.

In preparing those financial statements which give a true and fair view, the Board should follow best practice and

- (a) select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- (b) make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- (c) state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- (d) prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the Charity will continue on that basis

The Board is responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity, and to ensure that the financial statements comply with the relevant statutory requirements.

The Board is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity, and are hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

THE CHARITY TRUST BOARD

The board consisted of the following Councillors who served during the 2007/2008 year:

Councillor Denise Jones	Leader of the Council
Councillor Sirajul Islam	Deputy Leader of the Council
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Lead Member, Regeneration, Localisation and Community Partnerships
Councillor Abdul Asad	Lead Member, Employment and Skills
Councillor Shafiqul Haque	Lead Member, Development
Councillor Clair Hawkins	Lead Member, Children's Services
Councillor Shiria Khatun	Lead Member, Culture
Councillor Joshua Peck	Lead Member, Resources and Performance
Councillor Abdal Ullah	Lead Member, Cleaner, Safer, Greener
Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman	Lead Member, Health and Wellbeing

However, when they meet as the Board, their key decision-making must, as trustees, be in the best interests of the park and open space areas, within King George's Field.

AUDITORS

The accounts for 2007/2008 are subject to audit. The Charity's auditors will be the Council's External Auditors, which is the Audit Commission.

BANKERS

The Charity's bankers are the bankers for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, which is the Co-operative Bank,

SOLICITORS.

The Charity's solicitors are the Legal Service of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.