

**KING GEORGE'S FIELD, MILE END
CHARITY NO 1077859****REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
For The Year Ended 31 March 2009**

The trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2009. 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, and the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 (S.I. No 629, 2008).

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 Annual Management Plan is marked by independent Green Flag assessors. For the last four years, the Plan has been assessed as being in the upper quartile of all the plans that have been reviewed. The Annual Management Plan is published on the Parks section of the Council's website.

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 2008/2009. 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 2009, which also include references to the plans for future periods.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MILE END PARK

This has been another year of challenge, when Mile End Park sought to be an exemplar of good practice in general, and inclusivity in particular. The year 2008/2009 was another year of achievement, and saw the park awarded its fifth consecutive Green Flag.

The latest project, an older people's garden, was launched in December, 2008. This is a section of the park where older people can work or relax in their own piece of the Park. In an area, where over 80% of the population have no access to a private garden, this is undoubtedly a timely idea.

The year 2008/2009 also saw the introduction of enabling maps which offer people with disability pictorial maps showing step-free access to the various sections of the Park. It is hoped that these will be added to each year. Inclusive play sessions continue, and the appointment of a Play Co-ordinator, funded by the Big Lottery (Play Matters), has allowed the development of after school clubs and activities.

Play in Mile End Park also received a boost from the Pathfinder funding stream which has allowed it to develop two “Liminal Play Spaces”, in the north of the park, together with major improvements in play in the Play Park itself. This is a way of giving children the type of play where imagination is the key ingredient.

Art continues to flourish, and 2008 saw several big exhibitions which received London-wide, and, in some cases, national coverage. It is hoped that some of the organisations that exhibited in the park, in 2008, will return in 2009. The Park celebrated the annual “Love Parks” week, with the second big land draw to be held in the Park. This year, the artist chose a dragonfly to capture the imagination of young and old alike. Natural materials were used to create the 30m x 25m giant dragonfly. This is now becoming a much looked forward to event, by the local community.

A new wild meadow area was sown on Kirk’s Place so that the magnificent show of thousands of daffodils will be replaced by the colour from thousands of wild flowers, mainly poppies.

The work on bio-diversity continues to pay dividends, and the latest monitoring results reveal that the number of species of spider has risen from 133 to 137, and beetles from 158 to 179 in the space of a single year. In terms of bio-diversity, the arrival of ant hills at the entrance to the Art Park is a significant indicator that the grassland management regime is working, and the spiders that prey on ants should be the next new visitors to the Park. The grassland management of the park also contributed to the increase in sightings of sparrows, following a report on hedge sparrows which identified a lack of summer insects (needed for the diet of the young) as the cause for their decline. Mile End Park is leading the way by ensuring that it has 60% of the Park managed as wild flower areas which in turn provide a rich population of insects and other invertebrates providing a food source for the sparrow.

Capital Works

The second phase of the Skateboard Park was finally completed in March, 2009, with an official opening taking place in April, 2009. The bad weather experienced during the winter delayed the construction programme, and therefore the opening. The site is constructed of polished concrete and contains elements that are suitable to all abilities from the amateur to the professional. The site will be available to those on bikes and skates, as well as the traditional skateboarder.

An improved and wider footpath was introduced to the area occupied by Connexions to allow for the transportation of canoes and other heavy items of equipment. The cost of the work was about £7,000.

Due to the Pathfinder funding, it was possible to provide lights in the trees to provide winter play, for children, in the area away from the building, together with an outdoor musical area and an outdoor theatre area. It was also possible to provide totem poles with tepees. A series of multi-swings for people with disabilities was installed. Inside the Pavilion, lights were introduced into the fantasy room, the bare walls were covered in a woodland mural, and the supporting structures were modified to appear as trees.

An Adizone/Outdoor Gym has been donated to each of the Olympic Boroughs, and the one donated to Tower Hamlets was installed in the Wennington Green area of the park. A large Space Net was installed in the Youth Park. It is still hoped that the project to erect a solar canopy above the Go Kart track will go ahead, but this is unlikely to happen until the overall economic position improves.

The capital expenditure was funded by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. For other funding streams, the Council acts as the manager of the capital programme. 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 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. In 2008/2009, volunteer labour was used to clear weed on monthly basis, as recommended by a consultant.

Landscape Work

Landscape work continues on the entrance to Rhodeswell Road and in the Art Park in 2007, as part of a multi-phased scheme. These phases are being implemented as and when funding can be identified.

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 original Art Forum has disbanded, as it was felt that the members had contributed a huge amount of time and expertise. Fortunately, a new forum has been recruited and has re-energised the project with new ideas. The Play Forum too has had a new intake of members who have fitted in well with those remaining of the original group. The forums continue to work well producing innovative ideas for the further development of the park.

Transforming The Park Into A Community Resource

The rangers continue to be a key component in the success of the park, and the team has grown to include three additional playworkers funded from the Big Lottery. The team continue to improve the service that they deliver to users of the park.

In 2008/2009, there were over 800 corporate volunteers. In many cases, their employers have continued to make a financial contribution. It is unclear how the recession will impact on the number of corporate volunteers. To date, one of the Park's regular clients has gone out of business and a second has cancelled its planned activity.

FINANCIAL RESULTS

The net incoming resources for the year totalled £897,974, (£827,029 in 2007/2008). This included a contribution from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets of £340,768 (£283,104 in 2007/2008). There was a surplus of £28,380 for 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 £297,157 in 2008/2009 (34% of total resources expended, compared with £261,441 in 2007/2008 or 31%). Repairs and maintenance accounted for £307,176 (35% of total resources expended, compared with £325,028 in 2007/2008, or 38%).

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. There is a balance of £55,346, which will be carried forward from 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 2008/2009 year:

Councillor Lutfur Rahman (Chair)	Leader of the Council
Councillor Sirajul Islam (Vice-Chair)	Deputy Leader of the Council
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Lead Member, Regeneration, Localisation and Community Partnerships
Councillor Rofique U Ahmed	Lead Member, Culture and Leisure
Councillor Anwara Ali	Lead Member, Health & Wellbeing
Councillor Alibor Choudhury	Lead Member, Employment Skills
Councillor Marc Francis	Lead Member, Housing and Development
Councillor Clair Hawkins	Lead Member, Childrens Services
Councillor Joshua Peck	Lead Member, Resources and Performance
Councillor Abdal Ullah	Lead Member, Cleaner, Safer, Greener

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 2008/2009 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.

PRINCIPAL ADDRESS

The principal address of the Charity is the Council’s address:
Tower Hamlets Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London, E14 2BG