

**OUTWOODS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
9TH OCTOBER 2019**

PRESENT: Councillors Bailey, Campsall (Vice-chair), Fryer (Chair), Morgan, Parsons, and Tillotson.
PB, CN, GM and JN.

Tony Thory and Nita Rao, ArtSpace Loughborough
Rita Gries, Idverde

Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces
Senior Green Spaces Officer
Democratic Services Officer (NC)

APOLOGIES: Councillors K. Harris, Poland, and RE

1. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

Disclosures of personal interests were made as follows:

- (i) by PB who farmed land adjacent to the Outwoods.
- (ii) by JN who lived on land adjacent to the Outwoods.
- (iii) by Councillor Bailey who farmed land adjacent to the Outwoods.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 31st July 2019 were agreed.

3. SCULPTURE TRAIL 2019 UPDATE

An evaluation report regarding the Sculpture Trail 2019 was submitted (item 4 on the agenda).

Tony Thory and Nita Rao attended the meeting to present the highlights of their report and made the following comments:

- during the event 26 pieces of art were installed over 1.25 mile trail in the Outwoods.
- the Open Weekend had been attended by over 3000 visitors and 700 people had taken part in the workshops. It was estimated that between 16-30,000 visitors attended the event over the 6 weeks and the feedback received had been overwhelmingly positive.
- there had been concerns raised about car parking and a small amount of vandalism of two art installations had occurred.
- the plans for the Trail in 2020 was to arrange a similar sized event to this year but to run for a longer duration, starting later in May and finishing in August. There would be a move away from an opening event and have smaller ongoing

projects around the trail with Arts projects for specific community groups. It was hoped this would alleviate the car parking issues seen this year.

Tony took the opportunity to thank the volunteers, Arts Council, National Forest, the Borough Council, its teams, Idverde and the Outwoods Management Committee for their support.

Committee members discussed how to resolve carparking issues and how improving signage around the trail and adding signs to direct the public to using other entrances and car parks would be beneficial.

The Head of Cleansing and Open spaces noted that immediately after the event visitor numbers had appeared to increase, particularly with respect to using the trampers which were now fully utilised. In response to concerns over car parking, he stated that when the event opened this year, it had coincided with the opening of the play area and the height of the bluebells in flower, which would have impacted on the number of visitors. On reflection it would have been advisable to stagger the events and that the Council would have an improved carparking plan in place in future.

AGREED

1. that the proposals for the Sculpture Trail event to be held next year as submitted to the Committee at this meeting be supported in principle;
2. that a further report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee setting out the detailed proposals by ArtSpace Loughborough for the Sculpture Trail 2020;
3. that ArtSpace Loughborough be invited to attend the next meeting on 29th January 2020 of the Committee to present the proposals.

4. NESTBOXES IN THE OUTWOODS

A late report regarding the provision of nest boxes for two bird species was submitted (item 5 on the agenda).

Rita Gries, an RSPB officer on secondment to Idverde attended to present the report and explained that the woods were a perfect habitat for redstart and spotted flycatcher and that although these species had not been recorded in the Outwoods, they had been seen in the surrounding area. Funding was being sought from local groups to build nest boxes and volunteers from RSPB would be asked to monitor their use.

Trustees discussed the following:

- whether events like the Sculpture Trail would significantly impact the nesting birds due to the larger number of visitors, it was explained that the boxes would be located further in the woods away from primary paths.
- that there was no record of any species currently in the woods and that RSPB volunteers could be recruited to complete breeding bird surveys and species surveys of birds, flowers and insects once a month to obtain a base line. The

Outwoods could also participate in nation wide initiatives like the Big Garden bird watch or Butterfly count.

- Species information could be shared with national databases and mobile phone apps could also be used by the public to record sightings. Signs advertising particular mobile phone apps could be located in the carpark to encourage visitors.

AGREED

1. that the Committee welcomed installing nest boxes as a good initiative;
2. that the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces liaises with Idverde to arrange for the nest boxes to be installed before March 2020;
3. that Rita Gries be invited to the next meeting of the Committee on 29th January 2020 to present an update.

5. OUTWOODS CONIFER FELLING PROGRAMME UPDATE

A report providing an update of the conifer compartment felling was submitted (item 6 on the agenda).

The Senior Green Spaces Officer stated that once a biodiversity list had been supplied, Natural England would provide consent for the practical works on the gateway to be completed. The contract company was on standby for getting the works done and it was anticipated this would be completed within the next two weeks. There were some concerns regarding the drop to the verge but a temporary fix would be applied to reduce the drop using concrete. The Council's Communications team would be publicising the work starting from next week to ensure members of the public were fully aware of the programme and the reasons why trees were being felled.

In response to questions the Senior Green Spaces Officer explained that:

- concerns had been highlighted by the County's Highways Department regarding the brow of the hill, but as the number of lorries would not be significant, their movements could be controlled to fit in with quieter traffic periods. Options to control traffic using flags or traffic lights were being researched to ensure compliance with the road's 60mph speed limit.
- Staff from Idverde and council officers would provide an onsite presence throughout the duration of the work, in particular to manage pedestrian access.
- 10 x A1 signs were being prepared to locate around the woods near to the carpark and the site of the felling.

Trustees discussed the following:

- the route the lorries would take to transport the felled wood away from the Outwoods, as there were some concerns regarding the use of Snells Nook Lane and the crossroads between the lane and Nanpantan Road. It was mentioned that the contractor had worked at other remote sites and that it was their responsibility to ensure it could travel along a particular route.

- the height of the 10 year old oak trees to be planted and whether a scheme could be introduced for Year 7 children in the borough to adopt a tree, so the child could watch the tree maturing. Similar projects had been introduced elsewhere in the country and there were opportunities to link this scheme with other projects the Council managed like the Native Tree give-away in November and the Community Tree Planting Programme where the Council had committed to plant 100,000 trees over four years in different locations across the Borough.

The Committee were shown a short video that would be made available to the public via social media explaining the felling programme.

AGREED

1. that the Senior Green Spaces Officer investigate how the wood felled in Jubilee Woods by the County Council was transported away from the site, to check with the contractor its anticipated route and circulate the response by email to the Committee;
2. that the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces investigate linking the planting of trees in the Outwoods to other Council schemes and inviting school children to adopt trees across sites in the Borough;
3. that to assist in the administration of the matter, any questions or comments received by Trustees of the Committee regarding the conifer felling work be forwarded to the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces for his action.

5. HIGH WINDS PROTOCOL

A report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces regarding the high winds procedure was submitted (item 6 on the agenda).

The Senior Green Spaces Officer presented the report and explained that in preparing the protocol he had considered the whole site and applied similar criteria as was used by the National Trust. The actions that would be taken in the event of high winds depended on area usage and dwell times. The car park and toilets were considered high usage and the Rangers hut was also identified as high usage, because although it wasn't open to the public it was frequently used by the Rangers and therefore had a high dwell time. The main footpaths had been categorised as medium usage.

In response to questions the Senior Green Spaces Officer stated that:

- the protocol would be activated when wind gusts reached above 40mph as determined by the Met Office. The rangers would be on site to make the decision in consultation with council officers.
- the wind speeds had gone above 40mph approximately 3-4 times in the last year, and there had been only one occasion when the woods had been closed and the predicted wind speed had not been reached.

- the inspection that would take place before the woods were opened again would include inspecting all the trees around the carpark and a cursory drive around the main routes to check for hanging branches, trees uprooted etc.
- if something dangerous was found, the area would stay closed to the public and the tree team contacted, but actions to be taken would be determined on a case by case basis.

AGREED that the protocol be approved for implementation.

6. OUTWOODS CARPARK OPENING TIMES

A report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces was submitted (item 8 on the agenda).

The Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces stated that the gates would be installed after the conifer felling work had been completed, and that the opening times for the carpark would be as proposed in the report.

Trustees discussed whether using dawn to dusk criteria would be more appropriate based on sunrise and sunset times, but it was explained that this could lead to misunderstandings as to when dawn and dusk actually was and that as the contract operator would be opening and closing the gates following a route along with managing other sites, it would be logistically more efficient to have specific times. The winter closing time was considered by some Trustees to be a little late, particularly as it would be dark by 8pm. However it was noted that the public may wish to walk dogs after work and that the later closing time would only prevent cars from entering the carpark as one way plates would allow cars to leave.

AGREED that the proposed opening times be approved subject to monitoring and review over the following year to determine if the times were still appropriate.

7. OFFICER UPDATE REPORT

A report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces was submitted (item 9 on the agenda). The Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces drew the Committee's attention to the following:

- (i) Charnwood Forest Regional Park – the bid had been submitted and the Council would know in February whether it had been successful.
- (ii) Events Barn – as stated in the report.
- (iii) Car Park Charging – the robbery of money from the car parking machine had cost the Council in lost income and time in replacing the machine, which had taken longer than anticipated. A card reader would be retro fitted which would reduce the amount of cash left in the machine overnight. Once the visitor centre was open the installation of CCTV could be considered.
- (iv) Visitor Centre/cafe planning application – it wasn't certain if the application would be submitted to the Plans Committee at its November meeting. Trustees

discussed whether the four Corporation (council) Trustees who sat on the Plans Committee would withdraw for the item or send a substitute with the consensus being that the members would withdraw for the item only.

- (vii) the bus lease - this was as stated in the report, and the Committee would be updated by email as required.
- (viii) Volunteer hours - as stated in the report.
- (ix) Barbed Wire next to gate – still under investigation, Trustees considered it would not be beneficial to formalise access via this route and the gate should be removed.

AGREED

1. that a donor trustee registers to speak on behalf of the Outwoods Management Committee at the Plans Committee meeting that considers the planning application for the visitor centre;
2. that the donor trustee drafts a statement to be read out at the Plans Committee meeting and circulates it to the Outwoods Management Committee by 6th November for its consideration and comment;
3. that if an objection is received to the planning application for the visitor centre that the Committee be informed;
4. that the councillors for the Outwoods Ward be contacted to see if they wish to also speak at the Plans Committee meeting when the visitor centre application is being considered.
5. that the contents of the report be noted.

8. FINANCE UPDATE

An update regarding finance for 2019/20 was submitted (item 10 on the agenda).

The Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces stated that the finance for 2019/20 presented no concerns at present.

AGREED that the information be noted.

9. ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT AT THE OUTWOODS SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

An update regarding activities and operational management at the Outwoods was submitted (item 11 on the agenda).

The Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces stated that there had been 25 new registered users for the trampers and the purchase of a third tramper could be considered once where to store it had been resolved. There were still issues with

cyclists traversing the Outwoods who were not particularly polite if challenged but it appeared to be only small number of cyclists involved.

AGREED that the contents of the report be noted.

10. A.O.B

Two matters were raised as follows:

- a picture of Alan Moss had been discovered at the Council offices from the time when he had been the Mayor of the Council. It was proposed to hang the picture in the visitor centre if planning permission was obtained. A picture of the other original donor Harry Bowler would also be sought to be hung alongside Mr Moss.
- whether Trustees would like a guest speaker to be invited to present on a suitable topic at the next meeting of the Committee.

AGREED that the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces invite a guest speaker to the next Committee meeting.

ADDENDUM - DECISIONS WHEREBY A VOTE WAS TAKEN

At the meeting of the Committee held on 6th September 2017 it was agreed that when the Committee voted by a show of hands on decisions made by the Committee that this information was documented as an addendum to the minutes (minute 2.2 refers).

Item 4. SCULPTURE TRAIL 2019 UPDATE – future proposals

It was proposed that the Committee supports the proposals outlined by ArtSpace Loughborough.

10 voted in favour
None voted against or abstained.

The proposal was carried.

AGREED

1. That the proposals for the Sculpture Trail event to be held next year submitted to the Committee at this meeting be supported in principle;

Item 7. HIGH WINDS PROTOCOL

It was proposed that the protocol be approved.

10 voted in favour
None voted against or abstained.

The proposal was carried.

AGREED that the protocol be approved for implementation.

OUTWOODS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

29TH JANUARY 2020

ITEM 4 SCULPTURE TRAIL 2019 UPDATE

Into The Outwoods Sculpture Trail 2020 – Project Proposal.

Following on from the success of the 6 week Sculpture Trail last year, we would like to extend the duration of the project to 3 months in 2020, including the school summer holidays. We will have a theme for the trail and workshops this year of ‘Sustainability and The Natural World’.

Several artworks from last years trail will return to the Outwoods, including large scale willow figures and small ceramic tree people. Adding to these will be new work from 12 commissioned artists, as well as work created for the trail through community engagement projects. Further drop-in workshops and a short artist residency will take place once the trail has opened to further inspire and engage adults, young people and children, encouraging them to explore and reconnect with this ancient woodland.

Through site specific art and creative workshops, we intend to enhance people’s relationships with art and nature, with all the physical, mental and emotional benefits associated with participation in art and the outdoors. With more emphasis on ‘sustainability and the natural world’ this year we will run a project with Outwoods Edge Primary School about the importance of the diversity of insects, creating large willow insects to become part of the trail along with drop-in workshops in the crook barn at the Outwoods. In two other community projects we will work with the Green Gym Volunteers and a Sibley youth group to create further work as part of the trail.

12 artists will be commissioned to create work for the trail. Work will be installed and/or created on site over a two week period allowing visitors to observe the process and talk with the artists. Several of the commissions will include an element of community engagement to realize the work. This will create an even greater sense of community around the sculpture trail. Work will be figurative as well as abstract using natural materials, felt, willow, metal, textiles and ceramic.

During the 3 month trail there will be a short artist residency. Visitors will be able to observe ephemeral ‘land art’ being made and for the short while that it is part of the trail. The artist will engage with the public during the residency and will run a full day drop-in workshop where visitors will be able to get creative with ‘land art’ too.

We will also hold a ‘Sculpture in the woods day’ with 4 day long drop-in trail based workshops making work to take home as well as working on larger pieces to become part of the trail. These workshops will engage and challenge adults, young people and children, enhancing their opportunity to experience and be inspired by the trail.

We will create stimulating artwork in an ancient woodland setting to engage and bring people together, creating a sense of community. For 3 months visitors will be able to take part in the trail, viewing and interacting with the sculptures. Over the 2 week installation period they will be able to engage directly with the 12 artists as they install and make site-specific work within the woods, allowing visitors to experience and gain a greater understanding of the working process. School, youth and adult groups and participants of drop-in workshops will be able to see their work become part of the sculpture trail as well as learning new skills. We are using high quality artists experienced in delivering community workshops who will bring out the participant's creativity in a unique natural environment enabling them to re-vision and revalue a local site and enliven connection to a particular space.

Tony Thory, ArtSpace Ltd

Proposed Project Timetable

Date	Description of milestone
12/03/2020	Start date. Assess final funding notifications.
12/03/2020- 16/03/2020	Finalise sculpture commissions and confirm/book artists.
12/03/2020- 16/03/2020	Finalise details for workshop program/community projects and fix dates confirm/book artists.
12/03/2020- 06/04/2020	Flyers and posters - design and print.
16/03/2020- 30/09/2020	Social media campaign / press releases.
16/03/2020- 03/04/2020	Workshop planning by artists. Finalise details and dates with participant groups.
06/04/2020 31/08/2020	Flyer and poster distribution.
08/04/2020- 29/04/2020	Map/catalogue design.
29/04/2020- 10/05/2020	Map/catalogue print.

13/04/2020- 10/05/2020	Design and production of map guide info boards, artwork/artists labels/statements.
13/04/2020- 10/05/2020	Design and production of evaluation questionnaires/set-up survey monkey.
11/05/2020- 24/05/2020	Installation of all sculpture commissions.
25/05/2020	Official sculpture trail opening.
25/05/2020- 31/08/2020	Maintenance of sculpture trail - full inspection of trail three times per week and required maintenance.
07/2020	Creative workshop day - 8 x half day public drop-in workshops staged at intervals along the trail.
31/08/2020	Official close of Sculpture Trail.
01/09/2020- 08/09/2020	Removal of all artworks from Outwoods.
09/09/2020- 07/10/2020	Collate evaluation material and produce final evaluation report / submit reports and complete all other documentation.
07/10/2020	Project end date.

OUTWOODS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

29TH JANUARY 2020

ITEM 6 NEXT BOXES FOR THE OUTWOODS - UPDATE

Suggested nest boxes for redstart and spotted flycatchers at the Outwoods

We are suggesting purchasing nest boxes made out of Woodstone, which is a mix of concrete and wood fibres. These are both more durable than traditional wooden boxes, which may rot or deteriorate, and more resistant to attacks by predators such as woodpeckers and squirrels. Another advantage is that they provide a well-insulated interior, with a more consistent internal temperature than an ordinary wooden box. This is especially important during the breeding season and ensures that young birds have a greater chance of survival.

These nest boxes by producer Vivaria (and sold on the NHBS website) have a ten-year guarantee and are made with 100% FSC certified wood. They both have a removable front panel to clean out the nest boxes. Although birds will clean their own nest boxes before nesting, cleaning the boxes out at the end of each breeding season may encourage them to be used again in future years, as it reduces parasites.

Nigel Symes, head of Sector Advice at the RSPB and woodland conservation expert, recommended we install six nest boxes for each species after a visit to the Outwoods in May 2019.

Charnwood Borough Council has accepted to cover the cost of purchasing these boxes, which will come up to £271.20 (including £7.50 delivery charge)

(i) Spotted flycatcher: Vivara Pro Barcelona (WoodStone Open Nest Box)



These open nest boxes are suitable for spotted flycatchers, as well as wrens, robins, pied and grey wagtails, song thrushes and blackbirds, and they are available in brown, green or grey to complement both natural woodland and garden settings.

NHBS price: £21.95 per box

Specifications:

- Width: 19cm
- Height: 24cm
- Length: 17.5cm

(ii) Common redstart: Vivara Pro Seville WoodStone Nest Box with 32mm Oval Hole



These 32mm oval hole nest boxes are suitable for several bird species (blue tits, tree sparrows, great tits, crested tits, nuthatches, coal tits and pied flycatchers), but the oval hole is particularly favoured by house sparrows and redstarts, who will use the larger hole to perch to defend their nests from predators and rivals. Boxes are available in brown, green or grey to complement both natural woodland and garden settings.

NHBS price: £22 per box

Specifications:

- Entrance hole diameter: 32mm (oval)
- Width: 20.5cm
- Height: 31cm
- Length: 20cm
- Weight: 6kg

Rita Gries, Idverde

OUTWOODS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

29TH JANUARY 2020

ITEM 7. OUTWOODS CONIFER FELLING PROGRAMME PHASE 1 UPDATE

1. **Current position**

The Conifer felling has been completed in compartments 1A and 12C, removing approximately 570 tons of timber. All timber has been removed from site, along with contractor's machinery and any infrastructure that they used during the operation. The brash left behind in the felled areas has been raked with a specialist forestry rake into 'windrows'. These are the lines of brash now present across each site. This is common forestry practice in order to facilitate planting, as it would be very difficult/impossible to plant through brash distributed over the whole site. Whilst looking a bit stark at the moment, when planted they will be less visible and they will rot down relatively quickly.

All paths temporarily damaged by the operation have been made 'good' to some extent but further remedial works may be necessary in isolated cases.

2. **Next steps**

The areas felled, are to be replanted this winter, before the end of March 2020. Tilhill are going to contract plant compartment 1A and supply all trees for both compartments. They are also going to provide a 3-year aftercare service for both compartments, (see Appendix 1 - restocking specification for the Outwoods 2019/20).

The Idverde Ranger team are going to replant compartment 12C, involving a variety of different groups.

A snagging list has recently been done looking at paths and areas near to the worked compartments. The Ranger team will be looking at the majority of this which involves; tidying branches, installing removed notice board and making the re-sited pedestrian entrance more welcoming. One or two areas may require larger scale works, for example the section of damaged path near the Nanpantan pedestrian entrance.

3. **Future planning**

In this year, the next area to be felled is compartment 6A and it is proposed to undertake this in October 2020. Timber would have to be extracted to the car park with a period of car park closure.

There are 7 felling years left on the original plan. Given that there has been a lack of negative feedback for the recent felling, problems with car park closure and overall disruption, it is proposed to accelerate this to a 4 year programme. This would mean felling compartment 6B adjacent to 6A in October 2020. In order to accelerate the programme, consent would need to be obtained from

Natural England. Follow up planting and aftercare would be undertaken and put in place immediately after felling.

Recommendation

That agreement is obtained from the Outwoods Management Committee to seek permission from Natural England to shorten the felling programme.

Officer to contact: James Lee
Senior Green Spaces Officer
(01509) 634928
james.lee@charnwood.gov.uk

Appendices: Appendix 1 - Restocking specification for the Outwoods 2019/20
Appendix 2 - Income/expenditure - Outwoods felling programme
2019

APPENDIX 1 - Restocking specification for the Outwoods 2019/20

General details:

Comp.	Area (ha)	Density/ha	Open space(%)	POK (%)	MB (%)
1a	1.0	1100	25	50	25
12c	0.7	1100	0	75	25

NB : POK - Pedunculate oak

MB - Mixed broadleaf (SOK, ROW, SBI, HOL, HAZ)

SOK - Sessile oak

ROW - Rowan

SBI - Silver birch

HOL - Holly

HAZ - Hazel

Planting details :

Comp.	Trees (total)	POK (no.)	SOK (no.)	HAZ (no.)
1a	1100	550	55	55
12c	770	580	40	40

Further points :

- i. Species totals have been calculated from area, stocking density and percentage totals required.
- ii. Totals for MB in compartment 1a is 275 and 12c is 193.
- iii. As there are 5 tree species identified for MB, the overall MB figure was divided by 5 to give the number per species.
- iv. Planting numbers have been rounded up to the nearest 5.
- v. From past experience it appears that ROW, SBI and HOL regenerate readily at the Outwoods. For this reason it is not proposed to plant these species, but to manage the natural regeneration that should hopefully occur.

Planting design :

Stock will be whips and planted with spiral guards, and stakes as appropriate.

This will need to be looked at in the context of each felled area, taking into account: existing paths, open space, ground conditions, ride creation, operational access tracks and future management of the areas.

Whilst the stocking density roughly equates to 3m spacings, it is NOT proposed to have a uniform planting scheme across the felled sites.

Some parts of the site will be planted at shorter spacings, whilst other parts may have greater spacings. This is to replicate more natural conditions within the wood where there are areas of increased competition. It would also give us the opportunity to monitor how natural regeneration occurs within different areas.

APPENDIX 2 - Outwoods felling programme 2019 – Income/expenditure

Expenditure

Works	Cost (£)
S171	300
Concrete in verge	2293.75
TTRO	1450
Gate and track improvements	5760
Brash raking	3010
Contract planting (1a)	1775
3 year maintenance	2965
Total	17 553.75

Income

Timber (tons)	Income (£)
571.44	24 686.20

OUTWOODS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

29TH JANUARY 2020

ITEM 8

COTTAGE CONVERSION PROJECT

Purpose of Report

To update the Committee of progress to date and outline a timetable for future work.

Current position

Planning and Construction

Highways issues raised in the last report have now been resolved and the project will go to the Planning Committee on 30th January 2020 for approval.

A decision is now expected on 31st January and the recommendation is for approval with a number of specific conditions attached. As these are expected to be pre commencement conditions, they will need to be discharged prior to commencement of the build, which will add further to the timeline.

Work has continued on the tender documents for the construction in parallel with this and following resolution of issues regarding the foundations, specifications are in the process of being finalised with the intention of publishing week beginning February 10th.

Appointment of a contractor is expected week beginning March 30th and work on site expected to commence May 4th.

The build is expected to take 18 weeks and be completed by the end of August 2020.

Café Operators Licence

Parallel to this process we will run an exercise to select an appropriate contractor to run the facility.

Following completion of the initial build, the new operator will then have a fit out period to install a commercial kitchen and other operational equipment which is expected to take 6 weeks.

The expected launch date for the new cafe is now week beginning 26th of October 2020.

Key dates on the timeline are summarised in table 1 below.

Table 1 - Project timeline

Milestones	Week Beginning
Café Construction	
Conditional Planning Approval	Jan 27th
Building Work Out to Tender	Feb 10th
Submission of planning condition discharge notice	Feb 24th
Discharge of conditions	Mar 30th
Preferred Contractor Selected and cooling off period	Mar 30th
Building Control Approval	April 27th
On Site (18 weeks build)	May 4th
Finish Build	Aug 31st
Sign off and Project handover	Sept 14th
Café Lease	
Café Lease / Tender Development	Apr 6th
Café Lease / Tender Advertised	May 11th
Café Tender Awarded	June 22nd
Launch	Oct 26th

Recommendation

That the Committee notes the report.

Officer to contact: Matthew Bradford
 Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces
 (01509) 634695
Matthew.bradford@charnwood.gov.uk

OUTWOODS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 29TH JANUARY 2020

ITEM 9 OFFICER UPDATE/ FINANCE REPORT

Purpose of Report

To update the Outwoods Management Committee on issues raised at previous meetings of the Committee and to bring new issues to the attention of the Committee, including a finance update.

Background and Update

At the meeting of the Committee held on 9th October 2019, a number of matters were raised that are ongoing. Specific reference was made to the following matters:

Charnwood Forest Regional Park – Lottery Funding

The bid is being finalised (at the time of writing the report) and is due for submission by the end of September. The outcome of the application will be known in around March 2020.

Officers are expecting a visit from the assessors in mid-February.

If successful, the bid will bring in over £3m investment into the Charnwood Forest with project delivery commencing in April 2020.

Peppercorns Café Bus

The bus left the site in early January following the end of the agreed licence at the end of December. Work is ongoing to get the cottage renovation project completed at the earliest opportunity.

Consideration could be given to allowing a short-term concession for weekend trading at the site. This could be in the form of a coffee/refreshments van.

Finance

Please find below the budget, up to 14th January 2020

Account (T)	Amount	Commit's	Total Spend Inc Commits	Current Orig Budget	Variance
Buildings-R & M	8,849.65	659.50	9,509.15	10,900.00	1,390.85
C P Machine P/R&M	4,358.33	0.00	4,358.33	2,000.00	-2,358.33
Grounds General Maint	0.00	92.00	92.00	4,300.00	4,208.00
Fencing/Gates	0.00	0.00	0.00	400.00	400.00
Seats	0.00	0.00	0.00	400.00	400.00
Mtc of Trees, Shrubs	268.00	1,222.54	1,490.54	8,800.00	7,309.46
Electricity	172.84	0.00	172.84	300.00	127.16
Metered Water Charge	76.23	0.00	76.23	400.00	323.77
Unmeasured Water Charges	263.32	0.00	263.32	300.00	36.68
Equipment Etc P/R&M	39.00	0.00	39.00	400.00	361.00
Signs	1,438.00	1,021.00	2,459.00	2,200.00	-259.00
Printing, Sta t& Copying	0.00	0.00	0.00	300.00	300.00
Consultants Fees	1,750.00	0.00	1,750.00	0.00	-1,750.00
Security Services & Charges	431.59	368.83	800.42	800.00	-0.42
Contribution	2,711.14	0.00	2,711.14	5,500.00	2,788.86
Cesspit Emptying	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
MOS Contract - Basic	94,257.90	31,419.35	125,677.25	125,700.00	22.75
MOS Contract Variations	947.51	0.00	947.51	200.00	-747.51
Grant Contribution	-10,463.56	0.00	-10,463.56	-14,300.00	-3,836.44
Fees & Charges Misc	-135.00	0.00	-135.00	0.00	135.00
Car Parking Charges	-17,898.61	0.00	-17,898.61	-25,000.00	-7,101.39
Rent - Land	-6,664.00	0.00	-6,664.00	-5,000.00	1,664.00
Controllable	80,402.34	34,783.22	115,185.56	119,600.00	4,414.44

Car Parking Income

The income received via the car parking machine is as follows:

	Banked 17-18	Banked 18-19	Banked 19-20
April	£0.00	£2,763.25	£3,503.00
May	£87.00	£3,200.60	£4,407.00
Jun	£1,906.20	£2,376.85	£2,403.50
Jul	£1,918.60	£2,265.05	£1,763.10
Aug	£2,324.25	£2,738.10	£0.00
Sep	£2,081.75	£1,879.70	£973.20
Oct	£2,479.80	£2,097.60	£2,170.35
Nov	£1,834.15	£1,655.85	£1,814.40
Dec	£1,736.60	£1,715.70	£1,820.50
Jan	£2,310.90	£2,980.70	£912.20
Feb	£1,980.00	£1,559.20	
Mar	£1,805.75	£2,199.05	
	£20,465.00	£27,431.65	£19,767.25

In the period between 1st April 2019 and 15th January 2020, 58 season tickets have been sold.

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OUTWOODS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
29TH JANUARY 2020

ITEM 10 ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT AT THE
OUTWOODS SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

Idverde continue to work in close partnership with Charnwood Borough Council on the strategic management of the Outwoods. Our Head Ranger, Ciaran Fern, continues to have regular meetings with CBC's Senior Green Spaces Officer, James Lee, in the Outwoods in order to resolve issues and help to prioritise any work deemed necessary.

Ranger Work

The Ranger Team continue to undertake their daily tasks of cleaning the toilets, litter picking the car park and patrolling and managing issues along the primary paths as well as weekly tasks of litter management and leading volunteer sessions.

In October, the bracken in the new plantation area was sprayed with the specialist product, Asulox. This pesticide targets bracken and will have no effect on other surrounding vegetation. Asulox does not kill the bracken immediately but, if the application has been successful, should prevent regrowth in the summer.

During October and November in particular, the Rangers ensured that the car park (particularly the paying machine and disabled parking area), toilets, natural play area and Events Barn were free of leaves by daily blowing and raking.

The Rangers yard was also tidied up mainly with the removal of old fencing and other waste materials that had collected due to recent works in the bungalow area.

Bark was laid in the Events Barn area to suppress weed growth. This will be an ongoing concern and we plan to chip some of the arisings from thinning work to sustain bark levels.

New paths out of the Events Barn area have now been established with a view to be formalised with Natural England permission which will ease future access from the bungalow into the woods. This will also help to keep visitors away from operations in the Rangers yard. These paths will also be kept topped up with bark to be directly sourced from natural waste from operations in the Outwoods.

The natural play area has been checked daily and acorns and leaves removed from hard standing areas to reduce trip hazards. Bark was also topped up to maintain standard RoSPA safety levels.

During a thorough inspection in November, a 'camp' was discovered near to Pocket Gate Cottage. This camp was littered with 7 disposable BBQ's and waste packaging which could be hazardous to wildlife. On closer inspection, a defined path was discovered leading towards the public bridleway close to the cottage grounds which people may have

used as a cut through. During the thinning operation, the unofficial access point in the hedge has been blocked with a dead hedge and felled timber.

The Rangers will monitor for further anti-social behaviour.



During torrential rain in November, the Outwoods paths suffered erosion through the huge amount of water flowing down the inclines. This path towards the charcoal burner was particularly affected. The Ranger team have spent many hours over a week long period to restore the paths and remove trenches and potholes that have appeared.

Ditch work has also been carried out to try to improve the flow of water through the irrigation network as well as removing collected vegetation under bridges and through culvert drains.

Outwoods Restoration Project

During the forestry work, the Rangers supported the project by maintaining visitor safety. The car park was closed after placing luminescent tape on the barriers and directional signs placed in relevant areas to divert the public away from potentially hazardous areas. The Rangers maintained a presence in the Outwoods and made themselves available to answer questions or try to appease visitor displeasure regarding the work. Most feedback from visitors was positive, especially once it was explained that the project was to restore the Outwoods to predominantly oak woodland which supports more wildlife and be in keeping with its glory as one of the few remaining areas of Charnwood Forest

Toilets

There are no reports of anti-social behaviour for the facilities during this reporting period. Daily cleaning and/or inspections have been ongoing.

Green Gym

The Ranger led Green Gym volunteering sessions continued within the Outwoods during this reporting period.

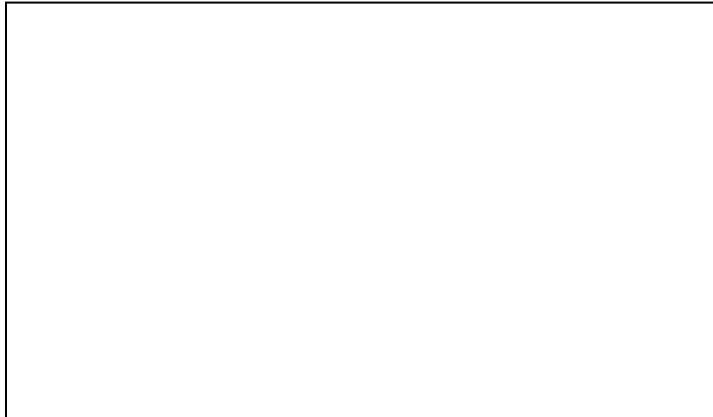
Our team of Green 'Gym-ers' have continued with rhododendron control in compartment 9 of the Outwoods throughout October. The bulk of the rhododendron has now been removed from the woodland with now mostly isolated examples remaining. This is a tremendous feat which couldn't be achieved without the support of our dedicated volunteers.

From November and currently continuing during this report writing in January, birch thinning in compartment 10 is under way. The waste is being stacked into cords and

dead hedge creation to limit access to the area.

Corporate Groups/School Activities

Staff from 3M attended a Team Building Day on October 10th. The team removed and burnt rhododendron and removed sycamore saplings.



Antisocial Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour during this reporting period has been low and mostly confined to overnight use of the car park and toilets. Most of the issues are the regular findings of fast food waste and marijuana smoking paraphernalia being found in the car park on arrival on site.

Wildlife Observations

In November, a regular visitor reported to the Rangers that they had spotted a Woodcock in the woods which they had not seen for many years. This was just prior to the operation to clear fell the area close to the car park which caused us some concern but this was an unconfirmed report which although we attempted to verify, were unable to. We are very pleased to report that since the restoration project, a Woodcock has (almost certainly) been spotted by the Rangers on the path close to the road, near the common cow-wheat.

The Woodcock is on the 'red' list and is of the highest conservation concern. We will use our partnership with the RSPB to verify the sighting and, if successful, form a plan of action to support the Woodcock's success within the Outwoods.