

Security Concerns - Hampstead Heath Lido

In recent years the Hampstead Heath Lido has succumbed to illegal access over the north wall of the premises during daytime and after the hours of darkness. These occurrences increase in the summer months.

Whilst open, when the facility reaches its capacity, the queue at the main entrance is closed and no further entry is permitted to the Lido facility.

During the summer season at the Lido, May – Sept, the City Corporation staff have witnessed members of the public climbing up and over the rear wall of the premises into the facility.

In order to reduce this issue, sympathetic hedge planting has been carried out at the rear north wall. Whilst this hedge is establishing, this has limited effect with those intent on gaining access over the wall with people pushing through the hedge and climbing the wall.

Staff have found evidence of trespassers entering the facility after the premises are closed. Benches have been found at the bottom of the pool and have been retrieved by staff when they have started their duties the following morning. A review of CCTV cameras has shown entry was gained into the premises by the rear north wall.

On a number of occasions trespassers have been seen swimming in the facility after the premises were closed when there are no staff or lifeguards present. There is an increased risk to the intruder or others that are with them should they get in to difficulties or suffer injury.

On 3 occasions in the summer of 2019, trespassers entered the Lido demise and burglarised the café, causing damage and stealing property, these incidents were reported to the MET Police.

On occasion, persons have reached over the rear north wall and passed objects to people inside the facility, objects found by City Corporation staff have included a large knife wrapped in a towel and drug paraphernalia.

Additional staff / stewards have been deployed during hot summer days to respond to persons illegally entering the premises by climbing the rear wall. Previously staff have been assaulted, both physically and verbally when dealing with persons attempting to enter the premises illegally.

With an increase in visitor numbers on warmer summer days, Hampstead Heath sees 1,000s of visitors coming to enjoy the open space, some are responsible, and their behaviours are appropriate. Sadly a minority behave inappropriately and their behaviour places undue pressure on City Corporation staff and on occasion the Police in responding to instances of anti-social behaviour.

The installation of a temporary security fence would counter the ongoing issues that City Corporation staff and the Metropolitan Police contend with during the warmer months.

Predominantly in the summer months, young adults have gathered after the hours of darkness at the rear of the café. The noise disturbance caused by these groups has caused residents from the Lissenden Mansions to complain to the City Corporation, requesting action be taken to reduce the impact of the anti-social behaviour. The complaints received and the behaviours of the young adults has prompted the City Corporation to submit a planning application for the installation of the Mosquito device, operating after darkness, on a movement sensor and on a timer.

City of London Corporation

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