



MEETING PAPER

Subject: #LoveParks Week

Meeting: Events and Communications Sub-Committee

Date: 28th June 2023

Meeting Paper by Michael Winter (Communications Officer)

NON CONFIDENTIAL

For the 2023 #LoveParks campaign, I am looking at arranging a series of “pop-up” events within our parks to highlight the sort of things that could be done within our parks for free, promoting the facilities (such as play areas and sports facilities), the breadth of nature and wildlife that can be found locally and the importance of open spaces on mental health. I have been talking to several potential partners about what they could offer and if they would be interested in being a part of the campaign.

The plan is to have each day of the week (starting on Monday 31st July until Saturday 5th August) having a focus on a different park with free activities on offer. Initial ideas include:

- Ness Park – demonstration of free AR App, nature exploration (SWT)
- Normanston Park – sports activities partnering with local groups/coaches to offer free activities
- Fen Park – nature trails/mindfulness walks, craft/foraging activities, climate emergency and wellbeing sessions/talks (in partnership with MIND)
- Sparrows Nest – promotion of museums and the Andy the Clown Summer Activities (this would be the Thursday)
- Kensington Gardens – story trail on the theme of loving parks (in partnership with Get Suffolk Reading and the reading chair), also promotion of free bowls sessions from the bowls club (Wednesdays from 6:30pm)

The exact arrangements and dates for the parks is subject to the availability of the potential partners and their resources, and the dates of pre-existing activities. The current draft schedule is:

- Monday 31st July – TBA – could be a promotion of events to come/promotion of all parks – ask people to comment/vote for their favourite park – start promoting ways to “love parks”
- Tuesday 1st August – Normanston Park
- Wednesday 2nd August – Kensington Gardens (to fit in with Bowls Club event)
- Thursday 3rd August – Sparrows Nest (to fit in with Andy the Clown event)
- Friday 4th August – Fen Park (to fit in with the availability of MIND)
- Saturday 5th August – The Ness (during Pride)

I am hoping that the #LoveParks events will provide resources (such as the trails) for the summer holidays and beyond, with links to the trails on our website and leaflets within the parks (hopefully engaging with the onsite cafes etc.).

To coincide with this promotion, I am working on a summer campaign that gives ideas for families of free activities they could do in our parks over the summer (*Love Parks, Love Local, Love Summer*) – highlighting the range of play areas, facilities, and museums. This would also run with a “Help us look after YOUR open spaces” campaign around littering. Alongside online promotion, I hope that this will present a wide range of interest in our parks and open spaces and the responsibility we all have to look after and care for them.

It is worth noting that, with the arranged Pride Event taking place on Saturday 5th August in Sparrows Nest/The Ness, it is hoped that many of the #LoveParks activities can run without much officer involvement as the Pride Event is predicted to use a large amount of time and resources (promotion wise, the two events (although having some cross over) will be targeting different audiences).

In organising these events, two of the potential partners who are very interested in being a part of this event have some costs that would need covering. This includes the cost for resources, including staff costs.

EVENTS

“I Love My Park” StoryWalk:

This will include a generic StoryWalk which can be edited to fit each park in Lowestoft (if we decide to expand in the future). The story would encourage a love of parks, exploration and keeping our parks tidy. Get Suffolk Reading are already creating this story for parks and open spaces across Suffolk to use. Flyers could then be produced for the park, inline with the stories themes which include challenges for families to enjoy. These would be available online via the Get Suffolk Reading website and Lowestoft Town Council website but also in hard-copy form from the park cafes/tea rooms etc. With their support, the cafes could then offer a sticker or other prizes for the trail’s completion. Get Suffolk Reading would then have guided walks around Kensington Gardens on one of the days during #LoveParks week, led by one of their volunteers.

The cost for this would be:

- Writing and design of the StoryWalk - £750 (covered by Get Suffolk Reading but contributions from LTC would be welcomed)
- Design of Stickers (including LTC logo) - £50 (covered by Get Suffolk Reading)
- Printing of flyers - £37 per 1000 A5 doubled sided flyers (min of 1000 flyers)
- Printing of stickers - £123 for 2000 stickers

These trails could be a great way of engaging young people and families in our parks and how we can all care for them (a message that spreads further than #LoveParks week).

MIND – Climate Café, Forest Bathing

Norfolk and Waveney MIND were also interested in being a part of #LoveParks with a focus on mental health, enjoying the outdoors and climate anxiety. It was agreed that Fen Park, with its different terrain and trees, would be an interesting place for ‘Forest Bathing’ and other activities.

Their proposal includes:

- A manned stall with Information on our services, our projects

- Crops in Pots: people can pot flower and salad leaves seeds and take them away with instructions on how to look after them
- A Forest Bathing Walk – a guided introduction to the Japanese practice of fully immersing ourselves in nature. Participants are invited to notice what a forest smells, sounds, feels, looks and (optionally!) even tastes like. This practice can help to quieten the mind, awaken senses and become fully present with nature.
- Taster Climate Café – an opportunity for people to get together to talk and act on climate change in an open, inclusive space. The session lasts about 90 minutes and is facilitated by one of our sUStain Project leads <https://www.norfolkandwaveneymind.org.uk/sustain-project>
OR
- A foraging walk in the park

The cost of this is as follows:

Item	Unit	Cost per Unit (£)	No. of Units	Total
Facilitator - Climate Café	Hour	35	3	105
Facilitator - Forest Bathing	Hour	35	3	105
2 x Facilitator Travel Norwich - Lowestoft RTN	Mile	0.45	120	54
1 x Staff Member Travel Norwich to Lowestoft RTN	Mile	0.45	60	27
Material - seeds etc	Unit	100	1	100
Overall Total				391

****As noted above, there are other events this week ('Pride') that will be taking place that will be take up officer time so the idea is that these "pop-up" events will utilise and promote pre-existing facilities, activities and partnerships in a condensed week. If more events were to be organised across more locations, this would create more administration and cost to the events. Balance is also needed in promotion as promotion of 'Pride' will be ramping up during the week.****

PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

Keep Britain Tidy will be releasing their customisable material from 3rd July which we will then be able to use alongside our own promotions. Part of material pack is an option to buy vinyl banners to put up in parks. These would cost £150+VAT (x2 banners), £270+VAT (x4 banners) or £395+VAT (x6 banners). Whilst I believe that having banners up in parks would be a good thing to raise awareness of the events and about "loving parks", I don't think these banners would make good value for money, especially as they have the dates for this year's #LoveParks Week. I would rather design our own banners that can remain in place throughout the summer which include a QR code to a page on our website about the #LoveParks events and about our park facilities. We could then use these every year which would save on money and the environment. By doing this and buying local, each banner would come out at around £50-£60 each, depending on the number ordered (each banner is cheaper if bought in bulk).

Proposal

If Councillors are happy with the proposed outline, it is recommended that a budget of a maximum of £1500 is dedicated to this week of events and promotion with a delegation to officers. This would cover the external resources needed for the delivery of these events plus any additional promotional material (banners etc.)