

Hosting Major Events in
The Royal Parks

May 2015



Introduction

Our eight Royal Parks are among the most visited attractions in the UK, with over 77 million visitors each year, and can mean different things to different people at different times. A leisurely stroll through the Isabella Plantation in Richmond Park; enjoying London's largest collection of roses in Queen Mary Gardens in The Regent's Park; or being among the 750,000 children exploring the Princess of Wales' Memorial Playground in Kensington Gardens each year. Other visitors come for the range of events that we host: from state occasions to guided walks; from sporting events to local community days; and from fun runs to celebratory concerts. We seek to balance the enjoyment and inclusion that events can bring to the communities and visitors we serve locally, nationally and internationally, with the provision of spaces for quiet enjoyment and relaxation and to protect and conserve our parks for future generations.

As custodians of these unique spaces, The Royal Parks purpose is: "To manage the Royal Parks effectively and efficiently, balancing the responsibility to conserve and enhance the unique environments with creative policies to encourage access and to increase opportunities for enjoyment, education, entertainment and healthy recreation."

We have four corporate objectives:

1. To conserve and enhance sustainably, for the enjoyment of this and future generations, our world class natural and built historic environment and our biodiversity;
2. To engage with our visitors, stakeholders and partner organisations, and understand their views;

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3. To manage the parks efficiently and secure investment in the parks' assets and services through an appropriate combination of government funding, commercial income and philanthropy; and
4. To be a centre of professional excellence where people want to work.

The eight Royal Parks have a long and historic tradition of hosting events. We host around 30 major events and hundreds of small events every year, excluding ceremonials, as well as licensing other activities, such as fitness training, horse riding and a range of organised sport activities. The unique settings of our parks are a major attraction to event organisers and there is huge and increasing demand to host events in our parks.

We have listened to and respect the views of stakeholders, and the impact events can have on them. Hosting cultural, social and sporting activities in the open space can

provide public enjoyment, social inclusion and health benefits, as well as contributing to the wider London economy. But we recognise that events can interrupt the daily life of our parks that visitors enjoy, particularly where areas of the parks are enclosed for events, or roads or paths are out of use.

We are publishing clear guidelines and criteria for events that we host and are setting upper limits on the numbers of major events, based on our current funding model, making us more accountable to the communities we serve.

We estimate that we receive around 5,000 enquiries for events every year. We want to better manage the expectations of those seeking to host events in our parks, as well as establishing from the outset a greater understanding of the constraints within which event organisers must work, including the importance we place on minimising the impact of events on the park fabric and ecology, park users, local residents, park operations and ceremonial activities.

Background

As an executive agency of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), The Royal Parks receives an annual Grant-In-Aid from Government. In 2008/9, when we previously reviewed our approach to Major Events, we received £19.36m from Government; for 2014/15 our Grant-in-Aid income was £13.3m. During that same period, our overall self-generated income has risen from £14.57m to £23.3m (unaudited).

Our self-generated income derives from a number of sources. Around a third is from events. But the remaining two thirds comes from a range of other income streams, including catering, grants, lottery funding, licences, rental income, filming and photography. The Royal Parks Foundation also raises funds for a wide variety of projects, including through charitable donations.

We have worked hard in recent years to get better value for money

from our events, including tendering for our largest events and working with event organisers to improve the customer experience of events we host, thereby increasing spend, and maximising our income from a wider range of event income streams. We have recently revised our Event Rate Card and will keep this under review during 2015 and in future years to ensure that it represents best value for money for the different spaces in which events can be held.

Events provide a vital source of income to The Royal Parks, allowing us to continue to maintain the parks to high standards against the backdrop of declining Government funding. We also host events to provide cultural, social and sporting activities in the open space, to mark ceremonial, unique and one-off events of a national or historic importance and to promote a wider appreciation of the parks to a diverse range of visitors. The hosting of events therefore directly supports the delivery of our

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corporate objectives. Events also benefit the wider London economy, in particular the hospitality, tourism and retail sectors, which benefit from spending from those attending events.

The Royal Parks has been hosting events for longer than most people realise. Events in recent years include Nelson Mandela's 90th birthday, the Tour de France, the Golden and Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Her Majesty the Queen, Live8, Pavarotti in the Park and the hosting of 11 sporting competitions across six of our parks as part of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. One of the largest ever events, The Great Exhibition, was held in Hyde Park in 1851, attracting around six million

visitors. Speaker's Corner is also a traditional spot for open-air public speaking, debate and discussion, as well as protest and assembly.

Regular events include the start and finish of the London Marathon, Hyde Park Winter Wonderland, Taste of London, Frieze Art Fair, the Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon, Chestnut Sunday and the last night of BBC Proms in Hyde Park. More recent events include Ride London, in which 80,000 cyclists participated in 2014. And we are also host to hundreds of small events in our parks every year, many of which are enjoyed by our local communities, from sponsored walks and runs to picnics and school sports days.

Scope

This document covers what we refer to as "major events," but recognises and considers the cumulative impact of all events and activities in our parks. For example, our parks host a number of runs and walks each year, but many are not classed as a major event.

The Royal Parks hosts a range of ceremonial events every year. These include the Changing of the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guard Parade Ground and Changing the Guard at Buckingham Palace. Horse Guards is the setting for The Queen's Birthday Parade to mark Her Majesty the

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Queen's official birthday each June, together with the ceremony of Beating Retreat. The Mall and Horse Guards form the processional route for such occasions as the State Opening of Parliament and State Visits. Royal Gun Salutes take place in Hyde Park and The Green Park to mark special royal occasions.

The Mall and Horse Guards Parade Ground have become increasingly popular venues for other events in recent years. It is important that we continue to respect the historical and military importance of these ceremonial events. We have therefore included minimising the impact on ceremonial activities as a guiding principle for all events (please see park specific criteria for St James's Park for more information).

We have set upper limits on the number of major events we will host each year, based on our current funding model. "Major events" can be commercial, charitable or publicly funded. They cover the whole spectrum from sporting events to concerts. We have sought to more clearly define "major events" and recognise that

in doing so, we may include more events than previously. This does not mean that we have increased the number of major events, simply that we want to be able to better establish from the start the likely impact on our parks, visitors, local residents, park operations and resources.

The Royal Parks classes major events as those that meet two or more of the following criteria:

- Over 4,999 ticketed capacity;
- Greater than 4,999 event participants;
- Free-to-access events where crowds are expected to be in excess of 4,999;
- 7,500 sqm or greater of event infrastructure;
- On site more than 3 days, including build and de-rig;
- Requires multi-agency planning;
- Requires road closures impacting beyond the park boundary*;
- Involves more than one park; and
- Requires statutory consent (for example, Town Planning or falling under the

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requirements of the Licensing Act 2003).

We recognise the impact road and path closures have on park users

and always aim to limit these closures to the minimum time necessary for the event and for public safety.

*Some events require road closures that don't impact beyond the park boundary

Our approach to events

The Royal Parks' stewardship of the estate goes back over 150 years and The Royal Parks continues to apply the highest standards of park management when hosting events. Most events that we host are not delivered by us, but by a variety of event organisers. We have a small, but highly experienced and competent team that understands the needs of our parks and those delivering events. We ensure that event organisers respect the environment and heritage that they are working in, and the constraints that these bring, and put in place measures to protect the park fabric and ecology. We work with event organisers to deliver a successful event and to ensure that they appropriately engage with stakeholders, and maximise safe

access for park users. We ensure our parks are fully restored after events have taken place, funded by event organisers.

We have reviewed our approach to events, and will:

- Set upper limits on the number of major events;
- Consider event applications in the context of individual park seasonality;
- Minimise concurrent events across parks, impacting on park amenity and our resources;
- Consider the cumulative impact of all events and activities in each park and across all parks;
- Consider the park protection

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and reinstatement requirements across all park events;

- Seek to balance the national importance of the parks with the communities we serve;
- Seek to host a diverse range and balanced programme of events across our parks;
- Tender for events where this provides the best outcome for our corporate objectives;
- Have a fair and transparent application process for all enquiries;
- Seek full cost recovery and income from events in accordance with our Rate Card; and
- Presume against approving private commercial events with no social, cultural, artistic, physical or recreational merit.

Whilst we plan to limit the number of major events that we host, our longstanding tradition of accommodating ceremonial, unique and one-off events of a national or historic importance, that reflect the history and traditions of the estate and the nation, will continue. Past such events include Live8 and

Nelson Mandela's 90th birthday, both in Hyde Park, and celebrations to mark Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, in both Hyde and St James's Parks.

We are reviewing our application process for all events as the current system places an unsustainable burden on our resources and does not allow us to respond promptly to event applicants. We want to ensure that we have one application process for all events, and that it is transparent and well-communicated to address the increasing number of unlicensed activities in our parks. Freeing up resource will also enable us to be more proactive in generating new partnerships for events and to encourage fresh ideas to support a balanced programme of events.

The Royal Parks has a duty to be proactive about improving access, as we are required to do under the Equality Act 2010. We also recognise that there are over eleven million people with a limiting long term illness, impairment or disability in Great Britain. By making our events more attractive to them, we will not only be addressing our

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duties under the 2010 Act, but will also be improving our customer satisfaction levels and increasing our income.

The Royal Parks works closely with our summer concert partners, AEG Live, to develop and improve access for guests with disabilities. Since the Barclaycard presents British Summer Time Hyde Park event began in 2013, where we achieved Silver Standard (the highest

standard of accessibility possible for an event in its inaugural year), we have continued to build on the customer experience; from the very first point of communication, to the experience at the event itself, such as use of the dedicated facilities and customer service. This is followed up post-event to ensure that the service is continually adapted and improved to meet the changing needs of deaf and disabled visitors.

Guiding principles for all events

We have a number of guiding principles for all events that we host in our parks. These principles should be read in conjunction with the criteria developed for each park.

Given the huge number of requests we receive for events every year, we will prioritise events that:

- Are consistent with The Royal Parks corporate objectives and published park specific criteria below;
- Help us to balance our budget and continue to maintain the parks to high standards;
- Are safe, well-planned and well-run, minimising the reliance on our limited resources;
- Are delivered by event organisers with proven financial backing and/or funds;
- Are ceremonial or of a unique or national or historic importance;
- Are environmentally sustainable, respecting and complementing the park environment;
- Minimise impact on the park

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fabric and ecology, and guarantee full and timely reinstatement;

- Minimise impact on parks users, local residents, park operations and ceremonial activities;
- Prioritise accessible public participation and take place in open spaces.

These guidelines are designed to steer decision-making about

whether to accept an application for a particular type of event. For example, we recognise that hosting a series of concerts every summer in Hyde Park will impact on the park and on park users, local residents and park operations. However, our choice of event organiser will be guided by the degree to which their plans and track record respect the environment and constraints they are working in, and minimise this impact.

Park specific criteria

Each Royal Park has its own distinct features and natural constraints. For example the demands of Richmond Park as a National Nature Reserve are very different from those of The Regent's Park Hub, the largest outdoor sports area in London. Managing the parks therefore requires balance, and respect of the local environment. In developing the park specific criteria, we have considered the numbers of major events that we have hosted in the past.

These park specific criteria should be read in conjunction with the major events criteria, the guiding principles for all events and The Royal Parks approach to hosting events. Whilst we have endeavoured to accurately reflect the current events that we host, clearly some events, and event names, may change.

It is illegal to advertise in our parks (including branding, sponsorship and promotions of products and

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services) without the express permission of The Royal Parks. We seek to limit advertising to within the event site and work closely with event organisers over any proposal for any branding on or adjacent to ceremonial routes. To protect the park environment, we do not normally allow merchandise giveaways and flyers.

Bushy Park

Bushy Park has some significant practical constraints for major events, not least the deer herds and the sensitive natural park environment. Public transport links are limited in capacity. We will continue to host Chestnut Sunday. We are not currently considering applications for other major events in Bushy Park.

Greenwich Park

We will consider up to three major events per annum for Greenwich Park, in accordance with our criteria and approach to major events. We already host the London Marathon and a major sporting event. We would look to host one other event, on either Bandstand Field or Queens Field.

Hyde Park

Hyde Park has a long tradition as “the people’s park” and also as the venue for ceremonial and other events. We will seek to avoid scheduling major events during the busy summer holidays, unless it is a unique or one-off event of a national or historical importance which could not be held at another time. We will seek to strike a balance between the many uses and demands upon the park by permitting the following annual major events:

- Hyde Park Summer Music Festival;
- Hyde Park Winter Wonderland;
- Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon; and
- BBC Proms in the Park and Radio 2 Live concerts.

In addition, we will host the Triathlon in 2015. Plans to tender for one major sporting event from 2015 are on hold due to ongoing discussions over the potential impact of the proposed East-West Cycle Superhighway through Hyde Park. The Parade Ground is nearing capacity for major events, and

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needs to be available for the public to use, as well as to recover between events. There are limited other areas of the park where major events could be held. Therefore, whilst we will consider applications for up to two further major events annually, we would not consider any major events with a site occupation, including build and de-rig, of more than five days. All applications need to avoid clashing with existing events, including in Kensington Gardens, and avoid full road closures other than on Sundays.

Hyde Park has a long tradition of accommodating demonstrations and protests which we continue to respect, as long as the terms and conditions in our longstanding demonstrations and assemblies policy are met:

https://www.royalparks.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/41808/demonstrations_and_assemblies.pdf

Kensington Gardens

All major events in Kensington Gardens will need to take into account the scheduling of major events in Hyde Park. We will consider up to four major events in

Kensington Gardens per annum. Events will generally be held on the Albert Memorial Lawns, although Buck Hill has been successfully used before for a theatre marquee and we would consider repeating a similar type of event within these limits. Elsewhere in Kensington Gardens we will usually regard major events as inappropriate for the design and traditions of the Gardens, unless it is a unique or one-off event of a national and/or historical importance. Brompton Cemetery will only accommodate small events which are sympathetic to the setting.

The Regent's Park and Primrose Hill

We will host Frieze Art Fair and Taste of London to 2016. We will consider up to two other major events from 2014, taking into account park seasonality and the reinstatement requirements of the Frieze and Taste events. The Hub, London's largest outdoor sports area, also hosts a large number of walks and runs across The Regent's Park throughout the year. Our Premises Licence from the London Borough of Camden prohibits the holding of major events on Primrose Hill.

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St James's Park, The Green Park and Victoria Tower Gardens

Set in a unique central London location, St James's Park has extremely high footfall. Some visitors enjoy the park as part of their daily walk to or lunch break from work; others come to relax in its peaceful green space. It is also known for the many historic buildings that border the park, together with its exceptional horticulture and bedding. The Mall and Horse Guards Parade Ground are part of St James's Park. If event organisers are considering an event in these spaces, they must approach The Royal Parks in the first instance. We will preserve the tradition and splendour of St James's Park, incorporating both The Mall and Horse Guards Parade Ground, as a venue for state ceremonial events, and for this reason, we will not usually accept other events for May and June. We will seek to minimise the impact of events on ceremonial activity, including Guard Change. Therefore, The Mall is not normally an appropriate venue for major events other than state ceremonials and military parades, excepting that:

- We will continue to host the London Marathon;
- We will host the Mayor of London's world-class annual cycling event (Ride London); and
- We will host the existing 10k running event in 2015 and 2016; we will be reviewing our approach for 2017 by early 2016.

As stated previously, it is illegal to advertise in our parks (including branding, sponsorship and promotions of products and services) without the express permission of The Royal Parks. We seek to limit advertising to within the event site and work closely with event organisers over any proposal for any branding on or adjacent to ceremonial routes, including The Mall and Constitution Hill. Similarly, and as host of the daily Guard Change and other ceremonials, we aim to preserve the traditions of Horse Guards Parade Ground. The Parade Ground is not normally an appropriate venue for most event proposals, and any events taking place would need to take into account military business and the function and security of adjacent buildings.

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The green spaces within St James's Park and The Green Park are generally not suitable for hosting major events. It is difficult to accommodate the layout of major events in these areas. The parks also have exceptionally high footfall and a large number of organisations that operate in and around the park, so major events cause significant disruption.

Increasing numbers of visitors come to St James's Park for the New Years Eve Fireworks hosted by the Mayor of London. Due to the large crowds and measures put in place to protect the park, this is now classed as a major event. In keeping with its sensitive location and site constraints, Victoria Tower Gardens is only suitable as a space for small events.

Richmond Park

Richmond Park is not generally well

suited to holding major events because it is a National Nature Reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and most areas of the park are some distance from public transport links. Any event, as well as respecting the natural park environment, also needs to consider the herds of wild deer which roam freely. We will consider hosting up to three major events per annum, including:

- The Mayor of London's world-class annual cycling event (Ride London); and
- The London Duathlon, up to 2015.

We will seek to tender for a Duathlon, or other event, from 2016. We will consider hosting one other major event per annum, in the context of our criteria and approach to major events.

Hosting sustainable events in our parks

The Royal Parks requires event organisers to manage their events in accordance with the principles of ISO 20121 and ISO 14001

(Environmental Management Systems) and to meet all applicable legislation. We expect events to minimise their consumption of

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energy and water and the production of emissions, and to use clean fuels. Any environmentally hazardous materials must be appropriately controlled and any environmental incidents are managed in accordance with best practice and legislative requirements.

The Royal Parks expects event organisers to manage and control all waste in accordance with the waste hierarchy (Eliminate, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover, Dispose). We expect no event waste produced to

go to landfill, unless in exceptional circumstances. Suitable waste management records must be kept, including waste transfer and consignment notes. Event organisers must ensure all discharges are appropriately managed, with necessary consents. Events should use materials and products from sustainable sources as much as possible. Event organisers should also promote the sustainable behaviour of attendees, for example using public transport and recycling waste.

Protecting and reinstating our parks

The Royal Parks requires event organisers to work to the best practices of Environmental Management and to minimise the impact of events upon the environment of the Parks. Event organisers are required to propose measures to ensure that park flora, fauna and habitats and the wider park fabric are protected, including use of ground, tree and park furniture protection. The Royal Parks surveys event sites before and

after events to determine any impact. We require event organisers to fully fund the reinstatement of our parks after events, and we take a bond from them in advance of events, to cover anticipated costs. For large events requiring Town Planning consent, event organisers are required to carry out environmental surveys and to demonstrate the actions they are taking to minimise and mitigate impact, and to restore the parks.

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One of our guiding principles is minimising impact on the park fabric and ecology, and guaranteeing full and timely reinstatement. When we receive applications for events, we will carefully consider what impact we expect the event to have, and plan

how and when the park will be reinstated. Whilst our parks teams are experts in protecting and reinstating our parks, we cannot always guarantee timelines for reinstatement as this is very weather dependent, and subject to the seasonality of the parks.

Working with and engaging our stakeholders

We work with our stakeholders to ensure they are appropriately engaged in events that we are hosting. For example, for large events such as our summer concerts, The Royal Parks and event organisers work with key stakeholders such as Westminster City Council, Transport for London, and the Metropolitan Police Service, to ensure joined up planning, delivery and monitoring of events.

We ensure park users, local residents and local businesses are aware of events and likely impacts, in advance of them taking place. We are always seeking to improve engagement, for example through better use of social and digital media platforms.

In 2013 we created a residents group and, together with our event organisers, we have continued to meet regularly to address any concerns they have, such as litter, sound and egress.

During the summer concerts we run, together with the event organiser and Westminster City Council, a dedicated sound line, to log sound complaints. Since 2013, calls and complaints have continued to reduce.

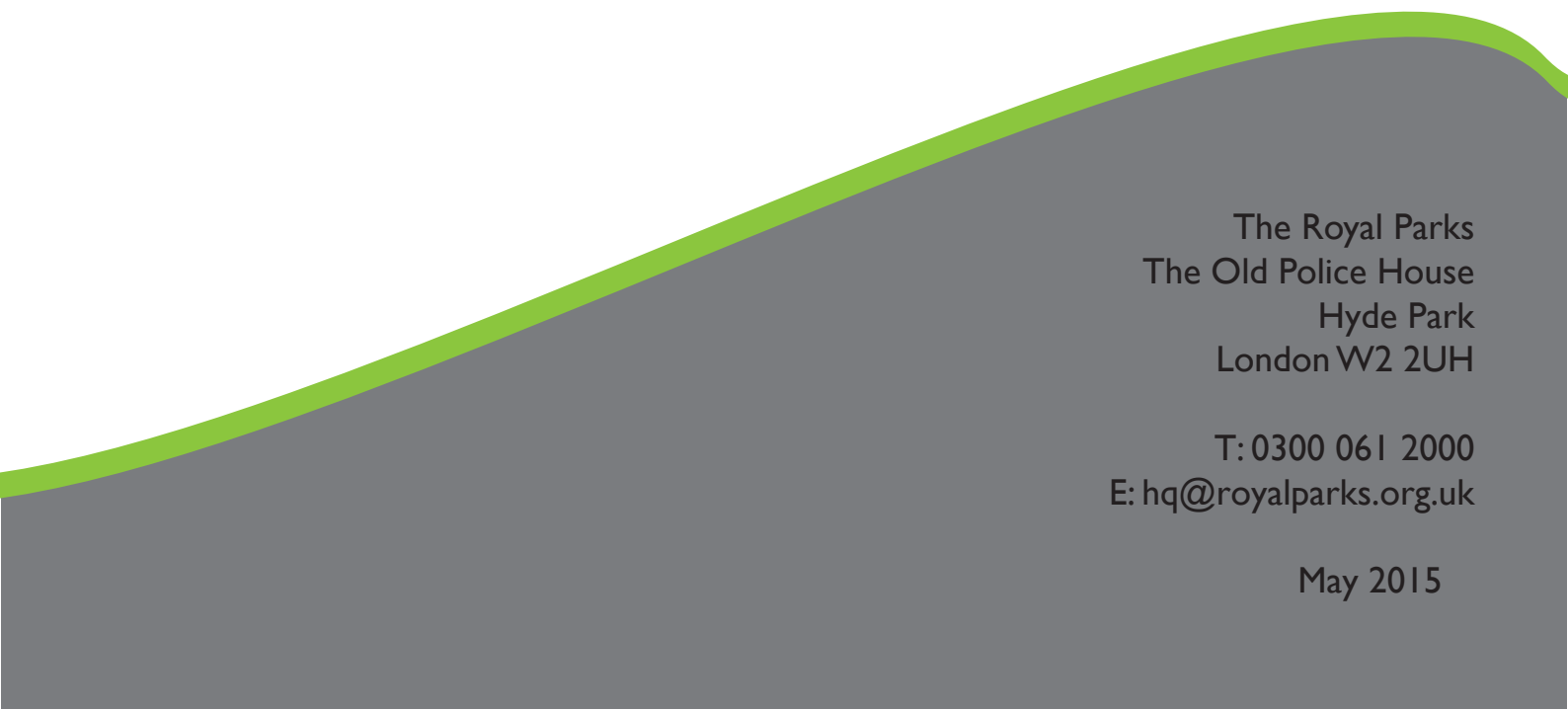
There are many channels through which we regularly engage with our stakeholders to get feedback, and we have taken into consideration a range of views and will continue to do so. This includes bi-annual

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stakeholder meetings, meetings with the Chairs of the Friends Groups for each of our parks and other ongoing local stakeholder engagement. We have set up a dedicated 'event feedback' email address to ensure that concerns or queries regarding events are responded to efficiently; the feedback gathered also assists us in future planning and improvement.

Meet the Park Team events were held in every park in 2014, targeting park users who do not regularly engage with us, in an open and informal way, and visitor research was conducted across all parks, published in early 2015. We published an Interim

Stakeholder Engagement Strategy in December 2013, setting out our vision for and key principles of stakeholder engagement, and seeking feedback from stakeholders. We have considered stakeholder feedback and updated progress against the key actions in our final Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, published in March 2014. This Strategy provides a framework to enable us to plan, deliver and monitor the effectiveness of our engagement, including for events, and to be more coordinated, targeted and effective in the way we engage our stakeholders. We continue to welcome feedback on our stakeholder engagement at any time at hq@royalparks.org.uk.



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