

SENIOR RANGERS REPORT March 2013 to October 2013

STAFFING

- Country Park Summer Assistant employed from May to September to help with school visits and summer events program.
- Seasonal Café Assistant employed from June to November to cover the café busiest period and holidays.
- Nick Atkins, full time Café Assistant, left at the end of September and the position is currently being advertised and interviews will take place on the 21st October.

VOLUNTEERS

April – August inclusive: 683 volunteers providing 4098 hours of work.

COUNTRYSIDE CENTRE

Working figures regarding number of groups/people from beginning April to end September 2012 was as follows:

	Groups	Number of People (includes school children)	Number of schools
01/04/07 - 30/09/07	181 £20,311	4334	30 £4095
01/04/08 - 30/09/08	197 £20,346	5679	39 £5377
01/04/09 - 30/09/09	188 £17,859	4690	17 £2844
01/04/10- 30/09/10	187 £16,260	5107	30 £4012
01/04/11 – 30/09/2011	159 £20,258	5273	23 £4985
01/04/12 – 30/09/2012	120 £17,513	4747	16 £3326
01/04/13- 30/09/2013	133 £12,400	4442	24 £5049

These included such groups as: our regular, repeat bookings from Early Years, NHS, Fostering and Adoption, Wildlife Trust and Environment Agency as well as several private parties.

CAFÉ

Takings in the Café are always weather dependent. Spring was cold and wet and takings were down on the previous year, but the summer has been warm and long and takings are up on the previous year as shown in the financial page report.

EVENTS and ACTIVITIES

- 24 school visits – 1513 pupils and staff
- Summer events program with 27 events which attracted 1410 people to take part
- Sports Festival in the Park (17 different sports) encouraged 500 people to have a go.
- Mud, Sweat and Gears and St Ives Cycle Club held a mountain bike race which attracted 350 riders, including some of the best riders in England, plus 100's of spectators.
- Annual Honey Show hosted by HBKA attracted 200 people to learn about bees and to buy honey
- During July and August 58 other groups held smaller events here that 2195 people attended

WIDER DISTRICT

During the period from March to September Hinchingbrooke Rangers and Volunteers have helped out on 10 other countryside sites. They have helped with such jobs as erecting barbed wire fences at Wilhorn Meadow, clearing fallen willows from the Ouse Valley Way and ragwort pulling at St Neots Common.

PARK MANAGEMENT

- Path repairs around the lake, necessary after the winter floods– raised and piped two areas.
- Installed a 40ft container for adapted bicycles project
- Built aggregates bays
- Improvements to lake edge grass path – including some re-routing

FRIENDS of HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

- Provided 5 new tables for the café
- Purchased an adapted bicycle (2 seat quad) to add to the Adapted Bicycle Project.

FINANCIAL POSITION

The outturn for last year, and the original controllable budget and forecast for the current year are:

	OUTTURN	BUDGET	FORECAST
	2012/13	2013/14	2013/14
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Hinchingbrooke Country Park			
Staff	134	135	139
Running Costs	38	41	41
Income	(31)	(31)	(29)
Total Country Park and Management	141	145	151
Countryside Centre			
Staff	70	75	62
Running Costs	5	5	5
Income	(41)	(48)	(33)
Total Countryside Centre	34	32	34
Cafe			
Staff	54	60	56
Running Costs	33	36	36
Income	(84)	(115)	(105)
Total Cafe	3	(19)	(13)
Total Hinchingbrooke Country Park	178	158	172

HDC budgets are prepared and monitored on a controllable cost basis. They do not include support costs (for example HR, Payroll, ICT, Finance etc) or capital charges. Last year these amounted to £50,000.

Country Park and Management

Country park and management staff costs includes £6,000 for a Summer Assistant which is offset by staff savings elsewhere including the reduced staff hours at the Countryside Centre.

Country park and management income for 2012/13 included £16,600 funding from the County Council for volunteer placements, £5,000 for work on Colne Graveyard, £3,900 commuted sums for maintenance and £2,500 for sales of souvenirs. Income for 2013/14 is forecast to be in line with the previous years results with exception of the work on Colne Graveyard where a price reduction is under discussion.

Cafe

Last years exceptionally poor weather led to a small deficit for the Cafe of £3,000. The forecast for the current year of a £10,000 surplus reflects more typical trading conditions. Whilst the forecast surplus of £10,000 is less than the budgeted surplus of £19,000 it still represents a financial contribution to the overall expenditure of the Country Park.

Careful management of the staff budget with reduced use of temporary and casual staff has enabled a forecast saving of £4,000 to partially offset the forecast income shortfall.

Countryside Centre

The original objectives of the Countryside Centre were educational. However, approximately half of the Centre's expenditure is through income generation.

The reduced staff hours at the Countryside Centre have been used to partially offset the reduction in income and part fund the Summer Assistant.