



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Sam Thompson Bridge Opening
Date:	13 February 2014
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director Parks and Leisure

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>Connswater Community Greenway / East Belfast Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 1 sections are due for completion in May 2014. Phase 1 includes the developments in Victoria Park and Orangefield Park.</p> <p>As part of the works at Victoria Park, a new pedestrian and cycle bridge was installed on 12th October 2013. The bridge was subsequently named Sam Thompson Bridge as agreed by committee in October 2013 after a public vote.</p> <p>The bridge will be opened on Friday 4th April 2014, when it is anticipated 90% of the works in Victoria Park will be complete. The bridge is symbolic of Belfast's progress in the delivery of one of UK's 3 Big Lottery Funded 'Living Landmarks'.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<p>A fun community celebration event is proposed to attract 2014+ people to visit Sam Thompson Bridge and '<i>Get over it</i>' on the official opening day between 12.00 – 16.00pm.</p> <p>Residents, schools, employees and user groups will be encouraged to cycle, walk or get public transport to '<i>Get over it</i>'.</p> <p>A photographer will be present to take pictures of groups and individuals getting over the Sam Thompson Bridge. As this is a project co-funded by a number of partners and is part of the Council's Investment Programme it is intended that photographs will be taken of Sam Thompson's family member(s), Ministers, the Lord Mayor and Chair of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, Party Group Leaders, local elected representatives, partners and user groups,. A schedule for the photography will be agreed with those who are planning to attend during allocated time slots and will be circulated in advance of the event.</p> <p>The event will encourage walking and cycling and highlight the link between exercise, green space, greenways and health.</p>

3.	Resource Implications
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	<p><u>Financial</u> Event is accommodated with the CCG budget.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> No implications</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> The Connswater Community Greenway will create a 9km linear park through East Belfast, following the course of the Connswater, Knock and Loop Rivers, connecting the open and green spaces and remediating the Connswater River itself. The Greenway will reconnect the communities of East Belfast and restore the rivers as community assets. It will create vibrant, attractive, safe and accessible parkland for leisure, recreation and community events and activities</p>
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4.	Equality and good relations implications
	There are no equality implications.

5.	Recommendations
	Committee is asked to note the date for the opening of the Sam Thompson Bridge.

6.	Decision Tracking
	Director of Parks and Leisure

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	CCG – Connswater Community Greenway UK – United Kingdom

8.	Documents Attached
	None