

What Point Pleasant Park Users Had to Say . . .

Point Pleasant Park
Advisory Committee
Revised: February 13, 2013

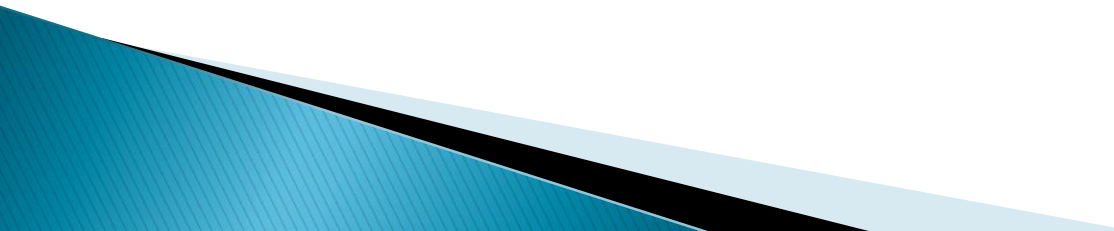
The Need for a New User Survey

- ▶ The last survey of PPP users was undertaken in 1999.
- ▶ Since that time,
 - The population of HRM has increased by over 15%
 - The volume of visitors to the Park is increasing
 - The type of uses continues to expand – arts & theatre, bikes, dogs, runners, sports training are increasing
- ▶ The PPPAC wanted to have a current understanding of how users feel about their Park.

About the Survey

- ▶ An on-line survey was conducted during August & September 2012
 - The Survey was promoted on the HRM and PPP websites, in the media, and through signage in the Park.
 - The Survey took approximately 12 minutes to complete
- ▶ Over 1585 survey responses were received

People really enjoy their Park!

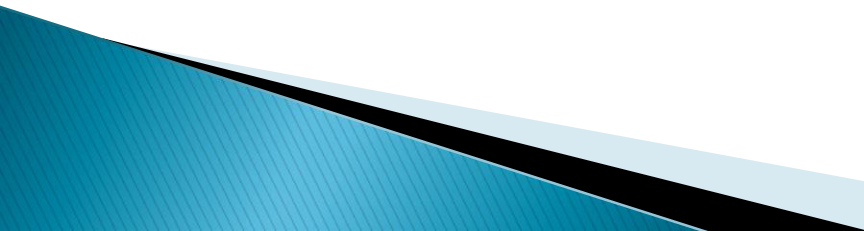
- ▶ 94% said that they enjoyed their most recent visit to the Park
 - ▶ Many, many comments were made about how much the Park means to the respondents.
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PPP is largely used for walking.

▶ The major activities*

- Walking 82%
- Dog Walking 50% (increase from 20–35% in 1999)
- Outdoor Environment 36%
- Running/Jogging 32% (increase from 15–35% in 1999)
- Sightseeing 29%
- Family Outing 23%
- Theatre 21%
- Biking 19% (increase from 1–4% in 1999)
- Beach 10%
- Arts Event 9%

*Respondents could select all that apply



Most respondents are regular users of PPP throughout the year.

- ▶ During the past year,
 - Users who visited weekly 31%
 - Users who visited 11 to 50 times 35%
- ▶ Among users who said they visit at a typical time of day, the timing was spread throughout the day, particularly between 9 am to dusk
- ▶ The busiest seasons are Spring, Summer and Fall, but 60% of respondents also indicated that they visit during the Winter

Users don't have many complaints. . . but those who do have a complaint are not satisfied

- ▶ The majority of users don't have serious complaints
 - 80% have not had a problem in the park that caused them to file a complaint or reconsider visiting the Park
 - 8% have experienced a problem
 - Typically about interactions with a dog, or a bike
- ▶ Of the 8% of users who experienced a significant problem, 80% of them did not feel satisfied with how the problem was resolved
 - Often advised that no follow up action can be taken

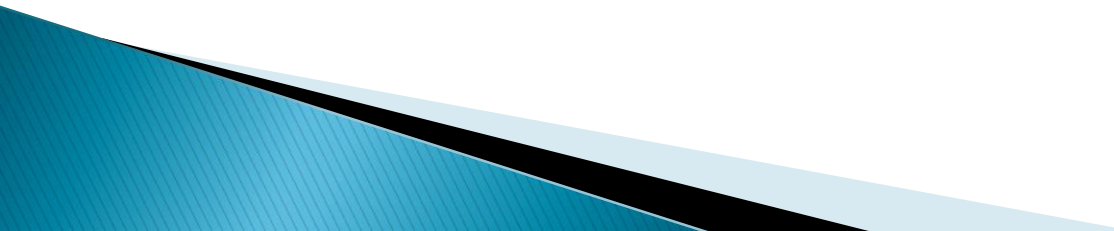
Most visitors travel to the Park by car.

- ▶ 72% said they usually travel by car
 - 18% come by foot
 - 6% come by bike
 - 2% come by bus
- ▶ Of the 72% who travel by car
 - 87% feel the parking facilities are excellent or good
- ▶ Of the 6% who came by bike
 - 55% feel there are sufficient bike racks

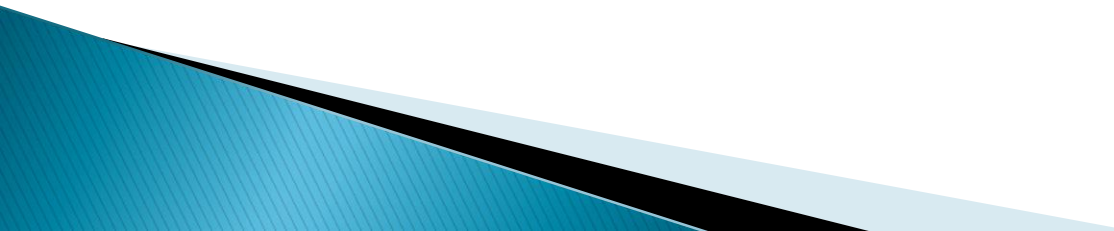
Respondents think the park is well maintained

- ▶ 89% think the condition of roads, sidewalks & lighting within the Park is Excellent or Good.
 - 1% feel condition is poor
- ▶ 51% think the Park maintenance in the Winter is only Fair or Poor, and suggested improvements
- ▶ Most common suggestions for improvement
 - More washrooms
 - Better winter maintenance
 - Tree management
 - Better signage
 - Improve condition of the forts

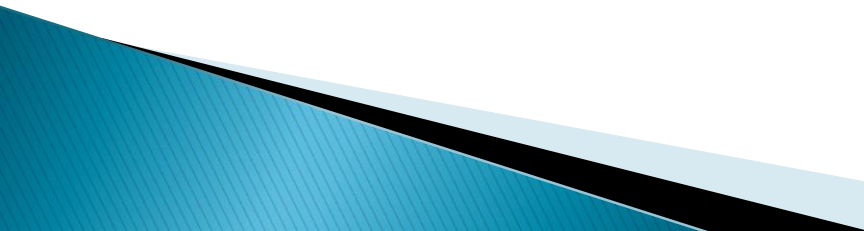
There is high awareness of arts programs.

- ▶ 93% are aware of arts programs such as Artist in Residence and Shakespeare by the Sea
 - ▶ 53% have attended an arts event in the Park
 - ▶ 66% plan to attend an arts event in the future.
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Many people run or jog in the Park.

- ▶ 41% of respondents run or jog in the Park.
 - ▶ 91% of those respondents feel the paths and amenities meet their needs
 - ▶ There are several comments from runners who indicate concerns with interactions with dogs in the park
 - ▶ The most common concern relates to joggers running several abreast and taking over the trail
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Awareness of Park Bylaws

- ▶ 90% of respondents feel they are aware of park rules respecting animals and responsible pet ownership
 - ▶ 75% of respondents feel they are aware of park rules respecting use of bicycles
 - ▶ 89% of respondents say they have read park rules signage
 - ▶ Several suggestions were made to improve signage and undertake projects to improve awareness
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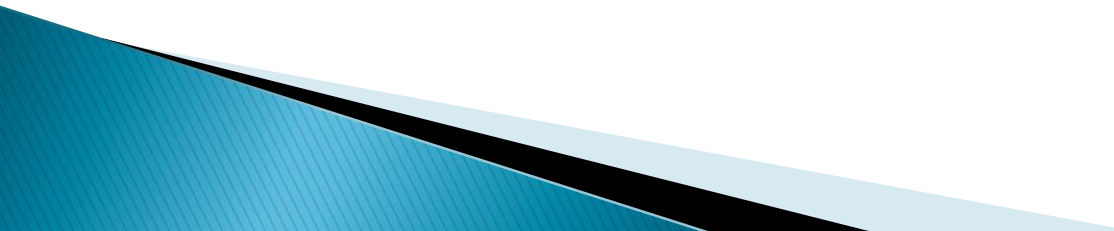
Many people walk dogs in the Park.

- ▶ 53% of respondents walk a dog in the Park
- ▶ Strong feelings were expressed both for and against dogs in the park
 - Some want dogs only on leash
 - Some want off-leash areas expanded
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Off-Leash Areas

- ▶ 76% the respondents think the current rules respecting off-leash areas are appropriate.
 - However, several comments were made about the need for more enforcement of rules
- ▶ 62% of respondents think the current rules prohibiting all dogs (on-leash or off-leash) after 10 am are appropriate
- ▶ Of those respondents who think the rules are not appropriate
 - Some suggested the off-leash areas be reduced.
 - Some suggested that people should be allowed to walk dogs after 10 am along Shore Road.

Off-leash Areas (continued)

- ▶ 51% of respondents think dogs should be on leash in all areas where there are picnic tables
 - ▶ 44% of respondents think dogs should be on leash in heritage and culture sites such as Prince Wales Tower
 - ▶ 45% think dogs should be on leash in vicinity of all beach areas after 10 am every day
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Bicycles

- ▶ 60% of respondents think the current rules limiting bikes to weekdays & restricting bikes to main/gravel roads are appropriate
- ▶ 34% of respondents think bikes should be permitted in the park every day
 - 40% of these respondents think there should be restrictions associated with this access
- ▶ 35% of respondents think bikes travel too fast in the Park

Safety

- ▶ 97% of respondents said that they always or usually feel safe in the Park
- ▶ Suggestions were made to improve lighting and security after dusk

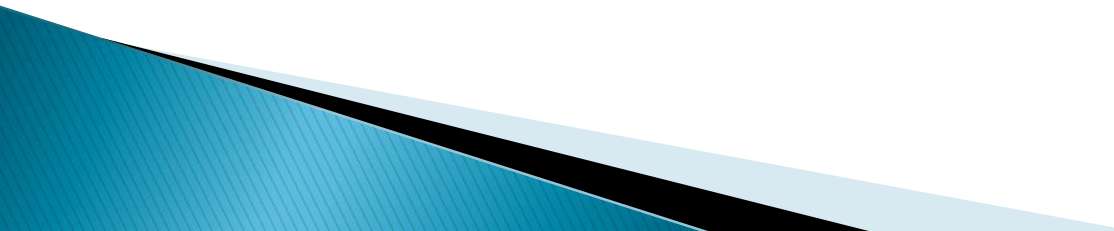
Communications about the Park

- ▶ The best way to receive information about the Park is through signs at the Park and the PPP website
 - A blog and Press Releases were also mentioned
 - Many respondents indicated that multiple approaches should be used
- ▶ The type of information they want
 - 77% Park Events
 - 70% Major Projects in the Park
 - 59% Park policy/rules
 - 56% Information for dog owners

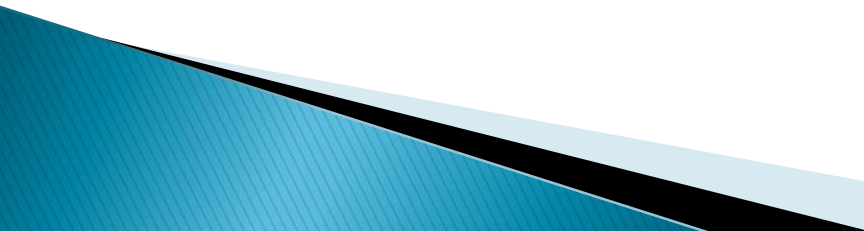
What's most important to ensure a positive experience at PPP?

- ▶ Natural Beauty 47%
- ▶ General Park maintenance 28%
- ▶ Safety 21%

What do respondents like best?

- ▶ Nature, the views, the trees, well maintained
 - ▶ The walking trails
 - ▶ The way the Park is used for multiple activities, and generally they all co-exist very well
 - ▶ Dog walking
 - ▶ Many respondents said they like the Park the just way it is!
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What do respondents think could be improved about the Park?

- ▶ Enforce the rules (more park patrol – on foot or bike)
 - ▶ All park users should be considerate of the needs of others
 - ▶ Better maintenance of washrooms (and more)
 - ▶ Water fountains – for people and dogs
 - ▶ No motorized vehicles (or Segways)
 - ▶ Tree management
 - ▶ Winter maintenance
 - ▶ Better Signage – not clear
 - ▶ More Services & Events – playground; cafe; exercise equipment
 - ▶ Don't have so many rules – more bike and dog access
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About the Respondents

- ▶ 62% female 38% male
- ▶ Represent a broad age profile
 - 19–25 8%
 - 26–34 23%
 - 35–44 20%
 - 45–54 22%
 - 55–64 17%
 - 65 + 9%
- ▶ 97% of the respondents are from HRM
 - 2% from Nova Scotia, outside HRM
 - 0.6% from other Canadian provinces
 - 58% from the Halifax Peninsula
 - 39% from HRM, off the Peninsula

Recommendations

- ▶ Enforcement of existing rules must be improved.
 - Many of the complaints are about dog owners and bikers not complying with the rules
 - What is the budget for bylaw enforcement now compared to 10 or 15 years ago?
- ▶ Signage should be reviewed for consistency and to improve awareness.

Recommendations (continued)

- ▶ Park staff should review suggestions for improvements such as
 - Timing of gate closing
 - Cleanliness of washrooms
 - Requests for Water Fountains
 - Speed of maintenance & patrol cars in park
 - Remind sports team to respect park users when training in the park
- ▶ The PPPAC and HRM should use the detailed comments for input in planning park activities and potential changes

Surveys need to be done regularly to inform and guide park planning.

- ▶ There is no current data on park user numbers.
- ▶ It is recommended that a “clicker” count be taken of park users in 2013
 - Quarterly, at representative times, to allow comparison with results in 1999
- ▶ It is recommended that a survey of users’ views about the Park be undertaken on a regular basis
 - A similar survey is suggested every 3 years.

Special Thanks to HRM Staff!

- ▶ HRM staff were very helpful in the design and delivery of the survey.
 - ▶ Particular thanks go to Brian Phelan and Stephen Rice for their input, and their assistance in getting the survey on-line and advertised.
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