



Friends of Wimbledon Park

Notes of Quarterly Meeting of Friends of Wimbledon Park (FOWP) Forum

Tuesday 18th April 2023 at 1930 (7.30 pm)

@

Wimbledon Park Hall, 170 Arthur Road, SW19 8AQ

Preamble: Minutes are kept to the minimum but sufficient to enable good management of FOWP. If attendee wants a particular wording, then this can be inserted at their request.

23/02 Agenda

a. Present:

- i. Executive Committee (EC): Nick Steiner; Martin Sumpton; Paul Bishop; Iain Simpson.
- ii. Forum members: Cllr Jil Hall.
- iii. Guests: Rod Lewington.
- iv. Corporate guests:

b. Apologies:

- i. Charles Runcie. Damaris Albarran, Rob Kennedy, Johnny Perkins, Ulrika Holberg, Cllr MacArthur. Cllr Tony Reiss.

c. Quorum

- i. Only 4 EC members in attendance so meeting is not quorate. Meeting will proceed with notes as a record.

d. Notes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17th January 2023.

- i. True record-agreed
- ii. Matters arising
 - a. Blue plaque for Raymond Briggs. Report back by Cllr MacArthur in page 3.
 - b. Cllr MacArthur update on idverde performance under Independent Merton Green Spaces.

e. Selected items from Chair's report.

- 1) Delivering Wimbledon Park from Historic England's 'At Risk Register'.
 - a. Covered public lakeside walk, sport, Community, Wellbeing, and related issues.
- 2) City Nature Challenge. Bulletin has been circulated.
- 3) Use of glyphosates. See page 7.
- 4) Lighting in public park. To be raised with LBM.
- 5) Signage and logo group review. - Agreed to disband.

f. Chair's Report

- i. Endorsed.

g. AOB

- i. Nil

h. Next Meetings

Anticipated dates, times & location of FOWP Forum Meetings



April 2023



Friends of Wimbledon Park

Type	Date	Time	Location
FOWP Forum	Tuesday 18/04/2023	19:30 (7.30pm)	@ Wimbledon Park Hall
FOWP Forum	Tuesday 18/07/2023	19:30 (7.30pm)	@ Wimbledon Park Hall
FOWP Forum	Tuesday 17/10/2023	19:30 (7.30pm)	@ Wimbledon Park Hall
FOWP Forum	Tuesday 16/01/2024	19:30 (7.30pm)	@ Wimbledon Park Hall
FOWP AGM	Thursday 21/03/2024	20:00 (8 pm)	@ St Barnabas Church
FOWP Forum	Tuesday 16/04/2024	20:00 (8 pm)	@ Wimbledon Park Hall
FOWP Forum	Tuesday 16/07/2024	19:30 (7.30pm)	@ Wimbledon Park Hall
FOWP Forum	Tuesday 15/10/2024	19:30 (7.30pm)	@ Wimbledon Park Hall

FOWP Forum 3rd Tuesday in relevant month and FOWP AGM 3rd Thursday in March

*Wimbledon Park Hall, 170 Arthur Road, SW19 8AQ
St Barnabas Church in Lavenham Road*



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Chair's Report

(Highlighting indicates changes from last circulation)

a. Membership FOWP

- i. Rob Kennedy reports current membership numbers as of
- ii. FOWP members:
 - a. Corporate: 7 (no change)
 - b. Family: 44 (no change)
 - c. Individual: 63 (+4)
 - d. - **Total: 114 (+4)**

b. FOWP AGM

- i. Next AGM Thursday 21st March 2024.

c. Forum members

- i.

d. Constitution

- i.

e. Covid-19 and Wellbeing

- i. No update

f. Finances

- i. Damaris Albarran is treasurer. Rob Kennedy, Nick Steiner, and Martin Sumpton are signatures to our account.
- ii. In hand £21
- iii. Restricted £1195 (set aside for RR improvement costs).
- iv. Reserves £2407

g. FOWP website

- i. Report from Rob Kennedy.
- ii. Website ([friendsofwimbledonpark.org](https://www.friendsofwimbledonpark.org)). Analytics for March 2023: 491 distinct users, (vs. April 2022: 305 distinct users)
- iii. Please submit any comments / suggestions via the [contact form](#):
- iv. Dave Dawson's blogs are found <https://davegdawsonwp.blogspot.com/> and can be reached via our website: <https://www.friendsofwimbledonpark.org/news> .

h. Facebook / Twitter

- i. Damaris Albarran reports.
 - a. FB 2,227 followers: posting of snowscapes particularly successful with several followers responding with their own photos.
 - b. Twitter 794 followers
 - c. Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/fowp22/?r=nametag>: 70 followersUpdates written for both Grid News and the Wimbledon Park Residents' Association newsletter. Further work needed on getting Twitter working.

a. FOWP & notice boards.

- i. Rob Kennedy has keys for updating. No recent updates.

b. FOWP Bulletin

- i. March Bulletin on Delivering Wimbledon Park from the 'At Risk Register' circulated.

c. Signage

- i. **Logo Group now disbanded.**
- ii. Notices for the vintage oak by the Old Bowling Pavilion and more to be discussed with Andrew Kauffman.

d. Blue Plaques

- i. Ulrika Hogberg (AELTC) drew our attention to the damaged blue plaque at Wimbledon Park Road. Offered to pay for a replacement if unable to repair. This is appreciated.
- ii. A volunteer has taken this for repair. Whilst receiving greater damage than the Revelstoke Road blue plaque it can be repaired, and this is in hand.
- iii. The damage to both blue plaques was caused by individuals using them to assist in climbing over the gates.
- iv. **Waiting for an update on repair.**

e. **Blue plaque for Raymond Briggs:**

- i. **Cllr MacArthur reports:**



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- a. The question arose as to the possibility of putting up a blue plaque for Raymond Briggs – I received the following response from the Council, which although quite detailed would indicate that it might be possible if people were interested in pursuing it further.
 - b. *On the matter of erecting a plaque at the site of the illustrators former home this is not something that the Council can proceed with without getting permission to do so from the current owner of that property. I would suggest using the Land Registry portal to download the freehold title deeds for that property in order to ascertain the name of the individual or individuals who own the building and then writing to them about the matter. If they are happy for the Council paying to erect a plaque somewhere near the street entrance in to their property then the Council will be able to proceed. If they are not in agreement then the idea is a non-starter.*
 - c. *If the Council is the owner of the park then it will be in a lawful position to erect a plaque within the park. But if they are not the owner of the park then they will need to seek permission to do so from the land owner. Otherwise erecting a plaque without prior permission to do so would not be lawful.*
 - d. *The greenspaces team were unable to help however I received this input from the urban design and conservation team.*
 - e. *There are a number of organisations that put up Blue Plaques. Historic England is a highly respected one but they are very selective where they put them. Possibly the Writers' Guild or a similar organisation may. Many local authorities put up their own Blue Plaques. In the past Merton has put up their own plaques but I haven't been able to find any records of the process. There are certainly more Blue Plaques in Merton than have been put up by Historic England.*
 - f. *Martin Sumpton to investigate options.*
- a. Meetings to declare.**
- i. Monday 27th February Teams meeting with Sport England.
 - ii. Friday 10th March met Natalie Parsons from Dementia Friendly Communities Coordinator – Merton asking for our help.
 - iii. Thursday 30th March met Gardens Trust.
- b. Planning Matters**
- i. Merton Heritage Strategy 2021-25: Development Plan
 - a. This development plan has been compiled using information supplied by Merton heritage providers including council departments, historic sites, visitor attractions and community groups. It is intended to be an evolving plan.
 - b. Made submissions to this plan and it is being reviewed in the October update.
 - ii. Revelstoke Road entrance improvements.
 - a. LBW 2021/0432 approved on 11th May 2021 subject to conditions.
 - b. LBM 21/P2657 granted 25th October 2021 subject to conditions.
 - c. Having difficult discussions with TfL leading to delays and costs. An invoice of £469.80 without receiving the estimate for wing wall fencing relocation.
 - d. This has led to invoking the complaints procedure.
 - e. Grant application made to
 1. South Western Railways for phase 1. Unfortunately, this application failed.
 2. LBM Civic Pride Fund for phase 2.
 3. National Grid offered £5000 to extend the Northern Railway Hedge at rear of car park. Waiting for permission from LBM to proceed.
 - f. *Considering obtaining estimates to help move this project forward.*
 - iii. Dam Safety planning application LBM 21/P1930 granted 14th October 2021 subject to conditions.
 - a. The dam promenade is now open, and Wimbledon Park Brook has been daylighted. Landscaping still needed.
 - b. Revelstoke Road bund is to be landscaped.
 - c. The dam promenade between the watersports and area is the second spillway in a flood. Spillway design is based on a free passage of water with no obstructions which could disturb the flow or catch debris. Andy Hughes (Dam Inspector) says; 'Therefore I have said no benches are allowed in this area, but I have allowed the trees to remain. Benches can be put in any area outside the spillway'.
 - iv. LBM local plan
 - a. Examination Of Merton's Local Plan now completed and Inspector's Report was expected in spring. *However informed that:*



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conservation and improvement of the park's natural environment and ecology. This sympathetic and constructive approach will be adopted for other Brownian Landscapes in the British Isles.

- ii. It is a corporate member of the FOWP Forum.
- iii. A Vision for Capability Brown's Wimbledon Park has been circulated.
- f. Lake issues:**
 - i. Eels
 - a. https://www.zsl.org/conservation/regions/uk-europe/eel-conservation?dm_i=3O4M,15IGM,51XLLT,42ZM5,1
 - b. Plan to investigate reasons why eels are not increasing in our lake still to start.
 - ii. Report from Tony Borkowski (EC member and angler)
 - a. the variety of fish in the Lake to 8 species, namely;
 - 1. roach, rudd, bream, tench, perch, common carp, eels and pike, and I have either caught or personally witnessed, this season, 7 of these varieties, the fish missing from this list being pike, but these are certainly present, especially near the public side of the Lake. A final native species which could be introduced could be the crucian carp, and then we would have a set of species completely representative of that found in traditional Georgian estate lakes around the UK of which WP Lake is a prime example.
 - b. Blue-green algae - this has appeared at low levels during the late summer. No fish have been harmed, i.e. there have been no fish kills resulting from blue-green algae but it is right to highlight the risk to dogs and other animals.
 - c. Pollution - I have not received any general members communication from the fishing club so one has to assume that whatever the incident was it was not serious. The fishing club would have picked up any pollution risks at an early stage and would have certainly called the Environment Agency to report such an incident. The EA are normally very responsive to any calls from the anglers at WP Lake and would not hesitate to come out to investigate. So no direct evidence as to how the incident was handled, but no obvious bad news emerging either.
 - d. Eels - Moderate sized eels have started to be caught from the Lake during the month of September. Only 2 in fact but both were caught within a period of 2 weeks (I actually witnessed one such catch). Both eels were unhooked and safely returned to the Lake. Potentially more eels may arrive in the Lake and I will report to FOWP on any such arrivals if I hear of this. The size of the eels caught was about 2lb and 1lb in weight which suggests to my mind that they are new arrivals from the Wandle, but other ideas support the notion that only much smaller eels move up into the Lake. I need to research this a bit more but there has been a general recovery in eels in the Thames and Wandle as far as I understand. Prior to these 2 eels being caught there was a complete absence of eels other than a few which were picked up by electro-fishing some 3 or 4 years earlier.
 - e. Stocking certificate - This is still, inexplicably, with the Water sports manager and not as it was 10 years ago with the angling club. No re-stocking of any description has been completed by Merton even though various surveys, including those completed by AELTC, suggest that re-stocking would prove beneficial, not just for the sake of the anglers, but also for the sake of the fish-feeding birds that reside on the Lake, e.g. herons, grebes, and kingfishers. At the moment the fish population seems to be stable and to have improved from last year but we await to see what destruction the annual winter influx of cormorants will bring.
- g. Special places for nature in Wimbledon Park**
 - i. Horse Close Wood Management Plan
 - a. Update being drafted by Dave Dawson for consultation.
- h. Stalls**
 - i. None planned for now.
- i. Wandle Valley Forum (<http://www.wandlevalleyforum.org.uk/>)**
 - i. Wandle Fortnight is a celebration of the Wandle Valley run by the community for the community. It runs across three weekends in September.
 - ii. The Wandle Fortnight is from Saturday 9th to Sunday 24th September 2023.
 - iii. Wandle Valley Forum provides support with small Wandle Grants for between £50 and £200. Grants are also available for use outside the period of Wandle Fortnight for projects that will benefit the Wandle Valley and can be celebrated during Wandle Fortnight.



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- j. **Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust (WVRPT)** (<https://wandlevalleypark.co.uk/about-us/wandle-valley-regional-park-trust/>)
 - i. No report as it is still in abeyance since 2019.
- k. **Independent Merton Green Spaces Forum (IMGSF)**
 - i. Rob Kennedy is FOWP representative on this committee.
 - ii. Meeting on Tuesday 10th January.
 - iii. Cllr MacArthur: update on what the Council is doing with regard to monitoring Ideverde's performance. The issue was raised at the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny panel in January where the IMGSF report (which expressed concerns with Ideverde's performance) was discussed. A recommendation was made that there should be a return to the quarterly reposting of Ideverde's performance. This will be put forward to Cabinet. There is also going to be a further Ideverde item added to the June 2023 sustainable communities agenda.
- l. **Other organisations we could join.**
 - i. London Friends of Greenspaces Network (LFGN) (<http://www.lfgn.org.uk/>) proposed by Charles Runcie. He recommended the site be visited even if we do not join.
 - ii. London National Park City Network (LNPC) <https://www.nationalparkcity.london/> proposed by Charles Runcie. He recommended the site be visited even if we do not join.
 - iii. The London Gardens Trust (<https://londongardenstrust.org/>) proposed by Chris Baker. As he was not in attendance this item left on table for next meeting.
- m. **Public Park Management issues**
 - i. Pines & Needles now located in Horse Close Wood car park. Damage caused by them in 2021 remains.
 - ii. Green Flag Award
 - a. Intention to discuss with Andrew Kauffman sometime.
 - iii. Community Payback Team (CPT)
 - a. The CPT have received more equipment so a wider range of tasks can be accepted.
 - iv. Connecting ice cream vans to electrical source
 - a. This would avoid fumes from the van.
 - v. Toilets play area.
 - a. Playground toilets are renovated but blockage risk remains as drainage not improved.
 - b. Considering demolishing toilets and relocating to enlarged café in line with LBM Masterplan.
 - vi. Toilets watersports.
 - a. Blockages occurring due to narrow drains.
 - vii. Recycling in WP.
 - a. Mario Silva (idverde): 'All the bins in the borough are used as general waste. Dog waste is dumped in all the bins around all the parks, and we take it to the tip where it is incinerated. We have no means to recycle even the twin bins (recycle and landfill) are used to dispose of dog waste'.
 - viii. Play areas including water play.
 - a. No action on this yet.
 - ix. Lighting
 - a. To raise the question of lighting in the public park.
 - b. Dave Dawson advises: 'we have quite enough lights as it is. Apart from the stadium and stadium lane (when in use) and tennis courts, there are also fancy streetlamps along the lakeside promenade and to and from the Revelstoke Road Car Park. Many of the streetlights are left on all night regardless of whether the park is in use. We believe that this has already limited the usage of the lake by Daubenton's bat. The Great Field and Horse Close Wood are free of lighting and it would be good, not only to keep them this way, but also to curtail lights on the lakeside to occasions when the stadium or watersports centre are actually in use'.
 - x. Water fountains
 - a. to be investigated and requested.
 - xi. Cafe
 - a. Leaseholder signed up on Friday 14th April. Mario's last full day is Monday 17th April and out by Saturday 22nd April. The applicants that won the bid are Cook and Partners www.cooksandpartners.co.uk.
 - xii. Glyphosate
 - a. Idverde: We are intending to plant Sarah Bouquet seed mix on the bund. Please see below the leaflet for the product.



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1. <https://www.rigbytaylor.com/wp-content/uploads/Euroflor-2022-Sarah-Bouquet-min.pdf>
 2. To get the best result for the display we need to use a glyphosate base product to minimize the competition in the soil.
- b. FOWP: As you know there are concerns about using glyphosate base products. This was resolved with Simon on the basis that the necessary hoeing and weeding could be undertaken by the Wimbledon Park Volunteers (WPV). This group is evolving well but we need to get a 'jobs to do list' from Tom on the parts of the park we don't take the lead on.
- c. Dave Dawson: It's great to have detail of the seed mix proposed.
1. This is much more like the mix employed on the longstanding plots around the periphery of the park. It's colourful in summer and reasonably attractive to pollinators but is one of the mixes commonly called "Wildflower meadow", This is a misnomer as the species are mainly cultivars at best and exotics at worst and it is not a meadow mix but composed of tall annuals. Be quite clear, it is not what's needed either to help redress the huge losses of natural meadows in lowland UK, nor to reflect the history of the park. That said, such mixes, when successful, add to the delight felt by park users.
 2. I return, however, to ask what is the long-term plan for these bunds? The problems with establishing a seed mix this year will not go away, necessitating use of glyphosate each year. Also, my suggestion that annual cultivation will gradually erode the height of the bunds is a serious consideration.
 3. We need an agreement on the long-term vegetation of these bunds.
- d. Idverde: May I suggest that we proceed with the spraying and the Sarah Bouquet mix that we have already purchased for the bund and agree the long term plan, with LBM, for the bund in the next few months. If the decision is to plant whips on it, to hide the car park, that could be completed in the autumn anyways.
- e. Dave Dawson: Yes, I agree.
- f. FOWP will follow Dave's advice. A note on glyphosates is on our website and comments are welcome.
- n. Wimbledon Park Volunteers**
- i. Tree planting:
 - a. Tree planting November 25th and 26th. The Central Railway Hedge has been created and another 10 hornbeams planted.
 - b. Dave Dawson advises that we shouldn't apply for free trees as the species mix is wrong. Future plantings will require a volunteer to obtain funding and purchase agreed tree species.
 - ii. Wimbledon Park Volunteer newsletter being circulated listing tasks to be done on a regular basis.
 - a. After a short break over winter weekly tasks have resumed with beds dug around the hornbeam standards and pruning of cornus and planting of cuttings underway.
 - b. Improved dialogue between WPV, idverde and CPT is required.
- o. Commercial activities**
- i. Fitness training permits
 - ii. <https://www.merton.gov.uk/leisure-recreation-and-culture/parks-and-open-spaces/parks-and-recreation-grounds/training-permits>
- p. Community Activities**
- i. Long grass between the tennis courts and tube line. This meadow can grow tall to encourage wildflowers and insects. To maintain this diversity, it is mown just twice a year.
 - ii. Walk & Talk. 1030 every Saturday join outside café. Free for everyone and everyone is welcome-all ages, pets, and buggies.
 - iii. City Nature Challenge Friday 27th April to Monday 1st May.
 - a. Which city on Earth has the most wildlife and the most nature loving citizens? Naturalists, residents and organisations from three city regions in the UK are looking to show the world how amazing our cities are, for people and nature, by joining an epic contest: to discover and record as much wildlife as possible over 4 days.
 - b. The contest stems from the United States, where friendly rivalry between BioBlitz veterans at Los Angeles Natural History Museum and California Academy of Science in San Francisco prompted an ambitious leap in scale. Going head to head in 2016,



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the two partnered up to branch out nationally in 2017 with Dallas, Texas topping the table of 16 city regions across the USA.

- c. Unlike a traditional single site BioBlitz, City Nature Challenge encourages participants to record wildlife wherever they are within a predefined city region, connecting with fellow participants online or getting together in the field to explore together. This kind of self-directed activity, without direct facilitation by an expert, has been made possible by developments in mobile recording technology and the communications that guide recording practice, especially for beginners.
 - d. To take part you'll need the INaturalist app - <https://www.inaturalist.org/>
 - e. Go Parks London a training ink: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwVfRjpher0>
 - f. **Wimbledon Park: City Nature Challenge walk. Saturday 29th April 1030-1200:** starting from the big Walk and Talk banner near the cafe next to the tennis courts in the park.
 - g. **Sunset survey Monday 1st May 1930 (7.30 pm) to 20:45 (8.45 pm):** meet on dam promenade by water sports building.
- q. Community Outreach Group
- i. Duke of Edinburgh Award with Citizen Science. A pilot scheme completed in 2021 and being reviewed.
 - ii. No progress.
- r. **Commercial Events**
- Report by Rob Kennedy
- i. Contact Francis McParland (LBM) and Andrew Kauffman (LBM)/
 - ii. Events diary from Merton events team as of 13 March 2023 below:

"Here are the current list of confirmed events taking place at Wimbledon Park for 2023:

EVENT NAME	BRIEF	EVENT LIVE DATE - 2023
Bottoms funfair	returning funfair - easter holidays	1 - 16 April
Zippos Circus	Circus shows - new to W.P.	4-9 May
Brand events	Pub In Park - returning	12-14 May
Luna Cinema	returning event	22-24 Jun
Bottoms funfair	returning funfair - summer holidays	7 Aug - 4 Sep
Taste of Caribbean	New event	12-Aug

LBM firework displays and pines and needles to go ahead as usual.

AELTC car park and queue I believe to go ahead as usual – Francis can confirm."

Website- <https://www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/events>

- iii. Noted that "Pub in the Park" will need to start setting up before "Zippo's Circus" have moved off site, so both have agreed to use the same temporary vehicle trackway which PitP will lay down before Zippos Circus set up.
- iv. We (Merton and FOWP) still need to discuss the number and type of events taking place in the park. The loss of available green space (non-fee paying), damage to nature, noise from music etc are all becoming increasing concerns as the number of large commercial events grows. Pub in the Park, Gin Festival, Zippo's Circus are very significant new additions.