



# Friends of Wimbledon Park

## Minutes of Quarterly Meeting of Friends of Wimbledon Park (FOWP) Forum

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 1930 (7.30 pm) – rescheduled from 17<sup>th</sup> October, due to a double booking  
@  
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.

### 23/03 Agenda

#### a. Present:

- i. Executive Committee (EC):
- ii. Forum members:
- iii. Guests:
- iv. Corporate guests:

#### b. Apologies:

- i. .

#### c. Quorum

- i. 5 or more EC members for the meeting to be quorate. If not meeting will continue with notes rather than minutes.

#### d. Notes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

- i. True record
- ii. Matters arising.

#### e. Selected items from Chair's report.

- 1) AELTC WPP
  - i. LBM Planning Committee meeting set for Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> October 1915.
- 2) Delivering Wimbledon Park from Historic England's 'At Risk Register'.
  - i. Update.
- 3) The Merton Heritage Strategy 2021-2025 October23 update.
  - i. Update.

#### f. Chair's Report (changes highlighted)

- i.

#### g. AOB

- i.

#### h. Next Meetings

Anticipated dates, times & location of FOWP Forum Meetings

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# Friends of Wimbledon Park

Type	Date	Time	Location
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	19:30 (7.30pm)	@ 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	Tuesday 21/01/2025	19:30 (7.30pm)	@ Wimbledon Park Hall

FOWP Forum 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in relevant month and FOWP AGM 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday in March

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



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## Chair's Report

### Note:

- **Highlighting indicates changes from last circulation.**
- **Action is with person named in bold if no name then action is with Chair.**

### 1) Membership FOWP

- i. **Rob Kennedy** reports current membership numbers as of
- ii. FOWP members:
  - iii. Corporate: 6 (-1)
  - iv. Family: 44 (no change)
  - v. Individual: 62 (-1)
- ii. **Total: 114 (+4)**

### 2) FOWP AGM

- i. Next AGM Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

### 3) Forum members

- i. No report

### 4) EC job vacancies (details on website)

- i. Participate with Independent Merton Green Spaces Forum (IMGSF)
- ii. Commercial events monitoring in the public park.
- iii. Team leader for Wimbledon Park Volunteers (WPV).

### 5) Constitution

- i. No report

### 6) Covid-19 and Wellbeing

- i. No update

### 7) Finances

- i. **Damaris Albarran** is treasurer. Rob Kennedy, Nick Steiner, and Martin Sumpton have applied to be signatures to our account, pending action from Barclays Bank.
- ii. In hand £21
- iii. Restricted £1195 (set aside for RR improvement costs).
- iv. Reserves £2407

### 8) FOWP website

- i. **Report from Rob Kennedy.**
- ii. Website ([friendsofwimbledonpark.org](http://friendsofwimbledonpark.org)). Analytics for September 2023: 389 distinct users, (vs. September 2022: 448 distinct users)
- iii. Please submit any comments / suggestions via the [contact form](#):
- iv. **Dave Dawson's** blogs are found <https://davegdawsonwp.blogspot.com/> and are posted on FOWP social media.

### 9) Facebook / Twitter

- i. **Damaris Albarran reports.**
- ii. FB 2,227 followers: posting of snowscapes particularly successful with several followers responding with their own photos.
- iii. Twitter 908 followers (+55)
- iv. Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/fowp22/?r=nametag>: 100 followers (+30)
- v. Updates written for both Grid News and the Wimbledon Park Residents' Association newsletter. Further work needed on getting Twitter working.

### 10) FOWP & notice boards.

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

### 11) FOWP Bulletin

- i. FOWP Bulletin 2023-04 City Nature Challenge 03
- ii. FOWP Bulletin 2023-05 RR entrance improvements update 03.

### 12) Signage

- i. No progress on improving signage.

### 13) 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.



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- iii. The damage to both blue plaques was caused by individuals using them to assist in climbing over the gates.
- iv. Repair still in progress. Two sign halves strongly rejoined with a metal plate, pins, and epoxy resin. Some lettering lost and not repairable, but luckily the text still makes sense.
- v. Remaining work to do: paint the back blue to match the sign colour, tidy up the front border.

## 14) Meetings to declare.

- i. Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023 met Cllr Caroline Cooper-Marbiah to discuss sport in Merton.
- ii. Friday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2023 Teams meeting with Andrew Kauffman (LBM Greenspace Manager) and introduced to Cook & Partners.
- iii. Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2023 manned FOWP stall at Merton Heritage Discovery Day.
- iv. Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2023 met Leonie Cooper AM to discuss Delivering Wimbledon Park from the 'At Risk Register'.
- v. Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023 met Andrew Kauffman (LBM Greenspace Manager) for our inaugural quarterly meeting.
- vi. Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023 attended Wandle Valley Forum AGM.
- vii. Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 manned FOWP stall at Southfields Harvest.

## 15) Planning Matters

- i. Merton Heritage Strategy 2021-25: Development Plan
  - i. 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.
    - ii. October 2023 update underway.
  - ii. Revelstoke Road entrance improvements.
    - i. LBW 2021/0432 approved on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021 subject to conditions.
    - ii. LBM 21/P2657 granted 25<sup>th</sup> October 2021 subject to conditions.
      - 1. Agreement with TfL and moving to licence stage.
      - 2. National Grid offered £5000 to extend the Northern Railway Hedge at rear of car park. LBM have offered match funding so this phase can proceed once funds are received.
- iii. Dam Safety planning application LBM 21/P1930 granted 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021 subject to conditions.
  - i. The dam promenade is now open, and Wimbledon Park Brook has been daylighted. Landscaping still needed.
  - ii. Revelstoke Road bund is to be landscaped.
  - iii. 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
  - i. Examination Of Merton's Local Plan now completed and Inspector's Report was expected in spring. However:
  - ii. **02 May 2023** - On 6 April 2023 the council received an initial post hearings letter from the Inspectors. This can be viewed in the [examination library](#) as INSP22. On 20 April 2023 the Council sent the Inspectors a letter seeking clarification on matters in the post-hearing letter INSP22. This can be viewed in the [examination library](#) as LBM26. On 28 April 2023 the Inspectors issued clarifications in response to the Council's letter (LBM26). This can be viewed in the [examination library](#) s INSP23.
- v. AELTC Wimbledon Park Project.
  - i. LBM 21/P2900 a further 80 documents submitted.
  - ii. LBW 2021/3609 further 80 documents submitted.
  - iii. Car park 10 in the public park numbers have been reduced from 660 to 350 in the application and to cease by 2026. Feedback from Community indicates that this should cease in 2023.
  - iv. Request made to LBM & AELTC to cease using car park 10 in 2023. No response from LBM or AELTC.
  - v. Submission made that the 1993 covenants are material considerations for these planning applications, to be given substantial weight by all decision-makers.
- vi. Delivering Wimbledon Park from Historic England's 'At Risk Register'.





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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.
- 20) Lake issues:**
- i. Eels
    - i. [https://www.zsl.org/conservation/regions/uk-europe/eel-conservation?dm\\_i=3O4M,15IGM,51XLLT,42ZM5,1](https://www.zsl.org/conservation/regions/uk-europe/eel-conservation?dm_i=3O4M,15IGM,51XLLT,42ZM5,1)
    - ii. The Thames European Eel Project Report November 2022.
    - iii. <https://cms.zsl.org/sites/default/files/2023-02/The%20Thames%20European%20Eel%20Project%20Report%202022%20.pdf>
    - iv. Catch per Unit Effort (CPUE)
    - v. In 2022 Merton Abbey Mills had the largest decline in CPUE, closely followed by Molesey Weir.
  - ii. **Report from Tony Borkowski** (EC member and angler)
    - i. London Borough of Merton, AELTC, and the Wimbledon Park Angling Club (WPAC) have recently signed a tri-partite agreement allowing angling to continue on the Lake until March 2025. One of the conditions of the agreement is for WPAC to conduct regular monthly water quality tests as far as it concerns the health and well-being of the wildlife of the Lake. To this end WPAC will sample the Lake water, on a monthly basis, for the following parameters, nitrate levels, phosphate levels, and electrical conductivity. At the request of the EA, WPAC will also sample the levels of dissolved ammonia and dissolved oxygen. This data will be shared with all relevant parties. Note the WPAC will not be sampling the Lake water for levels of E.Coli or coliforms, which might be necessary to mitigate the health risks for sporting uses of the Lake such as swimming and water-sports activities.
    - ii. So far this year no fish kills have been reported but obviously the EA and Thames Water would be alerted by WPAC if any such incidents should arise.
- 21) Special places for nature in Wimbledon Park**
- i. Horse Close Wood Management Plan
    - i. Update being drafted by Dave Dawson for consultation.
- 22) Stalls**
- i. None planned for now.
- 23) 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 9<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> 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.
- 24) Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust (WVRPT)**
- i. (<https://wandlevalleypark.co.uk/about-us/wandle-valley-regional-park-trust/> )
  - ii. No report as it is still in abeyance since 2019.
- 25) Independent Merton Green Spaces Forum (IMGSF)**
- i. **Rob Kennedy** has resigned as FOWP representative on this committee. We thank him for undertaking this role. A volunteer to replace Rob would be welcome.
  - ii. Meeting was on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June at Wimbledon Park Hall. Key Performance Indicators (KPI) were mentioned by Cllr Natasha Irons.
  - 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 Ide verde'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.
- 26) 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.



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- 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.

## 27) Public Park Management issues

- i. Cycle parking and access
  - i. An increase is required. Cllr Tony Reiss
  - ii. Not locking the pedestrian and cycle gates. Cllr Tony Reiss.
- ii. Pines & Needles now located in Horse Close Wood car park. Damage caused by them in 2021 remains.
- iii. Green Flag Award
  - i. Intention to discuss with Andrew Kauffman sometime.
- iv. Community Payback Team (CPT)
  - i. The CPT have received more equipment so a wider range of tasks can be accepted.
- v. Connecting ice cream vans to electrical source
  - i. This would avoid fumes from the van.
- vi. Toilets play area.
  - i. Playground toilets are renovated but blockage risk remains as drainage not improved.
  - ii. Considering demolishing toilets and relocating to enlarged café in line with LBM Masterplan.
- vii. Toilets watersports.
  - i. Blockages occurring due to narrow drains.
- viii. Recycling in WP.
  - i. 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'.
- ix. Play areas including water play.
  - i. No action on this yet.
- x. Lighting
  - i. To raise the question of lighting in the public park.
  - ii. 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'.
- xi. Water fountains
  - i. to be investigated and requested.
- xii. Cafe
  - i. Café closed Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April. The applicants that won the bid are Cook and Partners [www.cooksandpartners.co.uk](http://www.cooksandpartners.co.uk).
  - ii. The latest update from Cook's is that we are still waiting for London Borough of Merton to carry out the remaining work outside the café area, once this has been done and the lease has been signed, then we are in a position to move forward with the building works.
  - iii. From <https://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org/latest-news.htm> 'We understand that the Cooks & Partners' lease for operation of the Holland Park Café has been extended for the summer. We have no further news about which company will hold the lease after that. Nor do we have any news about the very necessary improvements to the interior, which will enable faster service at the till and service area. We have been told that potential leaseholders have understandably proposed interior decoration, and hope the Council will ensure the chosen style is in keeping with the historic site'.
- xiii. Glyphosate
  - i. 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.
- ii. 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.
- iii. 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.
- iv. 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.
- v. Dave Dawson: Yes, I agree.
- vi. FOWP will follow Dave's advice. A note on glyphosates is on our website and comments are welcome.

## 28) Wimbledon Park Volunteers

- i. Wimbledon Park Volunteer newsletter being circulated listing tasks to be done on a regular basis. **This can be viewed on our website.**
  - i. **Small numbers but progressing well.**
- ii. Tree planting:
  - i. 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.

## 29) 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>

## 30) Community Activities

- i. Long grass between the tennis courts and tube line. This meadow can grow tall to encourage wildflowers and insects. The appropriate management of long grass is meadow management. It doesn't just involve mowing twice a year, but also raking off the arisings.
- 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 27<sup>th</sup> April to Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May.
  - i. 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.
  - ii. 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, the two partnered up to branch out nationally in 2017 with Dallas, Texas topping the table of 16 city regions across the USA.





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- iii. 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.
- iv. To take part you'll need the INaturalist app - <https://www.inaturalist.org/>
- v. Go Parks London a training ink: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwVfRjpher0>
- vi. **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.
- vii. **Sunset survey Monday 1st May 1930 (7.30 pm) to 20:45 (8.45 pm):** meet on dam promenade by water sports building.
- viii. **Results -** <https://www.citynaturechallenge.org/current-results>
- ix. London – Observations – 7897; Species – 1342; People – 500.

## 31) Community Outreach Group

- i. Duke of Edinburgh Award with Citizen Science. A pilot scheme completed in 2021 and being reviewed.
- ii. No progress.

## 32) Commercial Events

**Report by Rob Kennedy (Rob has resigned from overseeing events and we thank him for his constructive work. A replacement is needed).**

- i. Contact Andrew Kauffman (LBM) (Francis McParland has now left Merton Council, although he will be managing the 4 November 2023 Fireworks event)
- 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 (Cancelled)
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
Luna Cinema	Additional returning event	22-24 Sep

LBM firework displays (4 November) and pines and needles to go ahead as usual.

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

- iii. 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.