



Friends of Wimbledon Park

Wimbledon Fortnight 2024

By observation AELTC hired the Great Field, Wimbledon Park Road (WPR) & Revelstoke Road (RR) entrances and Revelstoke Road and Horse Close Wood car parks.

General comment

- 1) Drinking water provision was good using the standpipe in the stadium fed by the parks potable water mains.
- 2) Roping off Horse Close Wood and the Northern Railway Hedge extension worked well.
- 3) The positioning of the toilets by RR entrance avoided harm to the flowerbeds and worked well once opened.
 - a. One problem was the preference by some, including AELTC stewards, to use the better provided playground toilets and this will need attention next year.
- 4) HGVs delivered and collected equipment and blocked the perimeter path for pedestrians for periods of about half an hour.
- 5) The yellow paving stones to the perimeter path by WPR entrance received further cracking.
- 6) The grass area used for car parking and structures will need repair which will take time. However, the area in use was less than last year and allowed visitors to continue using the less used part of the Great Field.
- 7) Queue marking posts seemed okay but one report by a dog walker that her dog had got its leg into a divot from the Q pole sticks and ripped its dew claw off. The queue posts were not removed until the end of the following week and did impede park users.

Counter terrorism measures

- 1) These measures consisted of diamond blocks at RR entrance, concrete blocks from Horse Close Wood car park into the Great Field and ramps to WPR perimeter path.
- 2) This meant no car parking for blue badge owners or those with children or other accessibility needs at the WPR and RR (which entrance reopened on Saturday 20th July). For RR entrance at least, the car park could have been used despite the overdue removal of the toilets.
- 3) The ramp at the WPR perimeter path caused much distress to at least one wheelchair user. Some wheelchair users were unable to get over the ramp due to small wheels.
 - a. On site discussion revealed there wasn't local discretion to redesign by using, for example, the concrete blocks or the diamond blocks used at RR entrance.
- 4) As the reasons for these barriers weren't provided it led to a discussion with stewards and others as to the nature of the threat and what was the target.
 - a. The consensus was an 8-ton lorry (threat) driven at speed into the queue and campers (target).
 - b. What about other forms of terrorism such as a person with a gun or with explosives in their rucksack?
 - c. Monday 1st July this car was driven and allowed to drive across the public park from the Revelstoke Road entrance towards the woods and then across towards the Wimbledon Park Road entrance just after 2:05 pm. See the short video link below you will see that it's driven quite close to people sitting on the grass.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1s8xLmDxkAnp-JjLlFaJTHry9TPyBd4Z5/view?usp=drivesdk>

Car parking

The numbers were reduced but the Golf Club car park remained unused. This was queried and replied.



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‘Using the golf carpark as a guest carpark poses a few challenges for us with distance to travel across the golf course and the terrain, however, we always review car parking arrangements after each year’s Championships to see where we can make changes. This year has been a bit of a transition year for us in relation to car parking for all the different staff and guest groups we accommodate and we will continue to work on reducing car parking where we can. As you know, we used to accommodate up to 500 cars in car park 10, which has since been reduced in phases: first to 350 and this year to 200. We feel confident that we can reduce the number down by another 50 in car park 10 next year and will look to how we can use the golf course carpark more efficiently as part of that’.

It is highly unpopular with the local community, and it is difficult to understand the need to further inconvenience the local community by using the public park as a car park, when AELTC has vacant possession of open land nearby.

Again, the request for car parking during WF to cease is made.

Advertising Screen

The large video screen appeared for the first time this year (top right of the field, close to HCW). We understand this was licensed appropriately. Close attention was paid to what it displayed and while there was no overt advertising, there was certainly what we would call “brand enhancement” advertising by AELTC, for example the number of jobs they purport to create locally, their purported environmental impact, their charitable activities (eg through Wimbledon Foundation). This is arguably borderline in terms of licensing and should be closely observed for the future.

In opposition, a neighbouring property used their own boundary fence to display banners opposing the highly contentious planning matter currently being considered by the GLA. Idverde removed them without warning and were stopped from taking the (costly) property away but were intercepted by residents. This created significant bad feeling locally and was not sensitively handled.

Camping and queue

Camping started a few days early and these campers moved to area 5 which is not hired by AELTC. This became an LBM responsibility and the lack of signage on the Bye Laws and a no camping notice meant difficulty in moving these campers on. For next year:

- 1) Signage on Bye Laws to be at each entrance
- 2) No camping signs for use outside AELTC hired areas.
- 3) Some responsibility for camping outside hiring period by AELTC for these early arrivals for the championships would be reasonable

The footpath between the Athletic track Fence and line 1 was blocked a few times with chairs, tents and plastic covers. These blocked the path for pedestrians.

- 1) A roped line like that used for Horse Close Wood should avoid these transgressions in future.

Can AELTC and LBM provide a good reason why camping should continue in the public park?

Dr N R Steiner
Chair Friends of Wimbledon Park



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Event spaces

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/leisure-recreation-and-culture/outdoor-venues-event-hire/wimbledon-park-event-hire>

Event space 1 Athletics stadium (7973m² or 0.8ha)

Event space 2 Courts 11-20 (5477m² or 0.55ha)

Event space 3 Old Bowling Green area (1713m² or 0.17ha)

Event space 4 Great Field (72085m² or 7.2ha)

Event space 5 Lakeside (2457m² or 0.25ha)



In relation to this our approach should be:

- Community consultation should be an accepted process.
- No damage to biodiversity (including soil biodiversity)
- Grass and other spoliation to be returned to good condition on completion of event.
- Vistas should not be obscured.
- Wimbledon Park café shouldn't be disadvantaged.
- We should agree the number of events each year. Currently 8 but more are suddenly appearing without consultation.
- Cost benefit analysis should be standard assessment of event value.