



# Friends of Wimbledon Park

News update for members, November 2014

## **The sign of a well-run park**

Signage is very important in giving visitors vital information about Wimbledon Park and also conveying the message that the park is well cared for and regulated.

FOWP is looking at options for improving the signs, which are generally in poor condition with their information often obscured by out-of-date posters and flyers. Currently, main signs are located at the Home Park Road and Wimbledon Park Road entrances, with fingerposts and smaller noticeboards dotted around the site. There also used to be a main sign at the Revelstoke Road entrance, which we would like to reinstate.

For the three main signs, we propose a design that incorporates a permanent central panel and two side panels for temporary notices. The central panel would contain a short history of the park, vital information such as opening hours and contact details, a summary of the bye-laws, and a map. Similar versions can be seen in Cannizaro Park and South Park Gardens.

We are now costing the proposal so that a business case can be made and funding sourced.

## **Clamping down on litter and dog mess**

People who drop litter or don't clear up after their dog in Wimbledon Park could be facing a fine. A clampdown by Merton Council means specialist environmental crime enforcers from Kingdom Environmental Protection Services will be going into parks around the borough over the next few months. Anyone caught dropping litter or not clearing up after their dog will be liable to pay a fixed penalty notice of £75.

This is the latest initiative in the council's anti-litter campaign following the publication of its anti-litter code, and the installation of special gum and cigarette butt bins and high-tech smart bins in parks. Residents can now also report litter and fly-tipping through the free 'Love Clean Streets' smartphone app.

## **Capability Brown tercentenary**

A FOWP representative attended a meeting of Merton Council on 10 September to ask whether the council plans to participate in the nationwide programme of celebrations to mark the 300th anniversary of the birth of landscape designer Lancelot 'Capability' Brown in 2016.

Cllr Andrew Judge said the council had no specific plans itself to mark the anniversary. "A celebration of the Capability Brown impact in Wimbledon Park is properly a matter for the community," he said. "If community groups come forward with proposals to celebrate Capability Brown elements, some of which, only a small fraction I'm afraid, are actually retained in the current park, then I'm sure the Council would want to support that."

He added: "The council is planning to undertake a master planning exercise for the public park area of Wimbledon Park, whose timetable is likely to run into 2016. This will undoubtedly consider and reflect insofar as possible the historical elements introduced by Capability Brown into the wider landscape."



# Friends of Wimbledon Park

## **Local pupils have their say**

We are keen to get more young people engaged in the protection and enjoyment of Wimbledon Park. With this aim in mind, over the spring and summer we organised a survey of pupils at St Cecilia's School. More than 330 pupils responded to the poll, which was conducted on Survey Monkey. Key findings were as follows:

- Students resided mainly in Wandsworth (76%) and Merton (13%), with the remainder in other boroughs.
- 59% regarded Wimbledon Park as their local park. Next was Wimbledon Common (14%); King George's Park (10%); Richmond Park (7%); Putney Heath (5%); Durnsford Road Recreation Ground (1%); and Coronation Gardens (1%).
- 47% visited Wimbledon Park at least once a week, 25% at least once a month, 15% a few times a year, and 5% rarely. Only 1% never visited.
- Sport (208) was the most favoured activity, followed by general wellbeing (85), play (86), and study (8).
- The vast majority, 254, said they enjoyed themselves in Wimbledon Park, 25 didn't and 58 didn't know.
- 104 had learned something during their visit, 169 didn't and 69 didn't know whether they had learnt anything.
- Volunteering was supported by 67 students – enough to carry out projects, perhaps in conjunction with FOWP.
- The introduction of a 'trim trail' fitness route was supported by 171 and opposed by 71.
- 180 had noticed the landscapes in Wimbledon Park and 196 thought they should be preserved.

This feedback is extremely useful in helping us shape our proposals for activities and improvements to park facilities.

## **Bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund**

Representatives from FOWP met with Merton Council Leader Stephen Alambritis and Greenspaces Manager Doug Napier on 6 August to discuss applying to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for funds to support major improvements to the park, including the restoration of the lake. Merton's response was that it was not in a position to submit an HLF bid at the present time. However, the council is about to agree a timetable for developing a strategic master plan for the park, the results of which may make supporting a future application to the HLF more likely.

## **Spring bulbs to light up the park**

Merton Council has planted 1,000 daffodil bulbs on either side of the Revelstoke Road entrance and alongside the path between the tennis courts. They should make a fine show come the spring.