



Friends of Wimbledon Park

A review of 2016 for members

February

We had our biggest ever turnout of volunteers (around 100 people over one weekend) to **plant native tree saplings** to repair and reinforce the top end of Horse Close Wood. The saplings are doing well despite the dry conditions over the summer and early autumn.

May

National Grid finished its works in Horse Close Wood and we put in place a plan to establish a glade with cornfield annuals and glade-loving species. This will take time, so the area is fenced off for now. A claim has been made to **National Grid for compensation** for damage to the wood.

August

Merton held a public consultation on its three options for a **masterplan for the park**. These caused controversy, especially the possible stadium move. FOWP asked for an extension to the consultation period, as it was held during the holiday period and with poor publicity, but to no avail. We raised many concerns about the proposals and are still awaiting Merton's response to the consultation.

Our **Capability Brown tercentenary** event was a big success, with a museum exhibition, and a well-attended walk and talk on the park and unveiling of commemorative plaques. Our resident ecologist Dr Dave Dawson also produced a booklet on the history of the park, which is priced at £3 – request your copy by emailing info@friendsofwimbledonpark.org.uk

Merton scheduled a second **Classics in the Park** event, despite the fact that last year's concert made a loss of around £80,000. This year's event had to be cancelled due to poor ticket sales, reportedly incurring **£25,000 in cancellation fees** – especially disappointing at this time of austerity when so many local services are being cut.

September

A party of volunteers spent two mornings **weeding the saplings** we planted in February, to free them from brambles and nettles.

October

We asked Merton to construct **two bays for waste material** in the car park by the Wimbledon Park Road entrance. This looks much tidier and will prevent the problem of big mounds of chippings and other materials being left there. It has also freed up space for us to go ahead with the **next phase of tree planting**. This is scheduled for 25 and 26 February 2017 – more details to follow nearer the time.

November

Our **litter picking group** has met throughout the year and has cleared scores of bags of rubbish from the park's hedges and woods. Our next session is at 10am on Sunday 11 December and you would be very welcome to join us. Meet at the tennis kiosk; all equipment provided.



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Two raised **planters for flowers** have been installed near the park entrances on Revelstoke Road and Wimbledon Park Road, to make it more attractive for visitors as they walk in. We have arranged for them to be planted and tended by pupils from St Cecilia's School as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award. We received a grant from the Wimbledon Foundation to cover the cost.

There was an incident of **pollution in the lake**, possibly from builders flushing cement into the drainage system. A number of large eels weighing up to 7lb were killed. Thames Water is carrying out an investigation. We hope to apply to the **Freshwater Habitats Trust** for some pollution monitoring kits so we can do a monthly water quality test.

December

We successfully applied for 900 free spring bulbs from Bulbs for London, in association with the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association and Taylors of Spalding. These include daffodils, snowdrops, allium, tulips and hyacinths, which should make a wonderful display. We'll be planting them on Saturday 10 December from 10am. If you'd like to join us, please contact Amelia on ameliaobe66@gmail.com – all volunteers very welcome.

Finally – a big **thank you** to all our members for your support and commitment to the park in 2016. We wish you a very happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year.