



Friends of Wimbledon Park

FOWP Project Plan Detail (DRAFT 02)

This document outlines the FOWP Project Detail. It's being developed under 7 main headings listed below.

- Section 1 Wimbledon Park
- Section 27 Lake Observations
- Section 31 Trophic State Index
- Section 33 Proposals for improvement
- Section 53 Conclusion
- Section 54 Comment
- References



Friends of Wimbledon Park

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1) Wimbledon Park

- a. This is a 60ha park located on the borders between London Boroughs of Merton and Wandsworth.
 - b. As it has recognition from **English Heritage** it is a **special place**.
- 2) English Heritage
- a. This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by English Heritage for its special historic interest
 - b. It was listed Grade II* on 1st October 1987 as list entry number 1000852.
 - c. Wimbledon Park is in divided usage: a major part, c 29ha, is a private golf course, c 19ha is a public park, and c 3ha a private sports club, the remaining 9ha being the lake. The main entrance to the public park from Wimbledon Park Road leads c 3m along an asphalt path before dividing. The perimeter path to the north crosses the site between Horse Close Wood to the north and open grass, football pitches, and Wimbledon Park Stadium (an athletics ground) to the south. Horse Close Wood predates Lancelot Brown's improvements and is shown on a map of 1740, as well as John Corris' map of 1787, as a small rectangular piece of woodland to the north of the lake. The perimeter path continues east for c 300m where it turns sharply to the south-east and continues for 300m, running parallel to the railway line to the east. A C20 avenue of lime trees has been planted along this last stretch of the path. After 300m the path turns to the south-west and continues c 13m alongside the northern boundary of the C20 bowling greens before arriving at the side of the C18 lake. The lake was made as part of Brown's improvements for Earl Spencer c 1760. It was made by constructing a dam, the east bank of the lake, which held the water from two streams which originated at the edge of Wimbledon Common. The outflow runs underground for c 1.5km east to Dunsford Road where it follows the old boundary between the parishes of Wandsworth and Wimbledon, eventually flowing into the River Wandle at Earlsfield. To the south-east, in the grounds of the golf clubhouse, are the last remnants of Ashen Grove, an ancient wood that used to extend south over what is now Home Park Road. There are views south across the lake to the rising ground, the C19 St Mary's church, and the site of the C18 mansion.
 - d. The lake-side path divides at the lake, part continuing south-east, alongside the lake, passing the C20 buildings used variously as a Water Sports Centre, public conveniences, and a storage depot for the local authority. After c 15m the path turns east, away from the lake, the ground sloping down beside a small area of C20 landscaping to a large area set aside for a number of hard tennis courts and children's play facilities, before exiting from the site via a high-level stone balcony viewing point and the gate in Home Park Road. The second part of the lake-side path continues west along the lake until it reaches an iron fence which marks the boundary between the public park and the private golf course. Here it turns north-west along the rear of the stadium back into the park where after c 200m it meets up with the northern perimeter path.
 - e. The main entrance to the golf club is from Home Park Road; the principal views across the site from the adjoining private car park are of the lake. The occasional mature trees in this area are possibly survivors from the C18. The northern part of



Friends of Wimbledon Park

the golf course has numerous C20 plantings including evergreens, and bunkers dominate the scenery.

- f. Some 3ha of land to the west of the lake was, by 1899 (OS), made into a cricket ground with a pavilion and other subsidiary buildings. The entrance to this area is from the southern end of Church Road, opposite the All England Lawn Tennis Club.
 - g. As yet parks and gardens listed in English Heritage's Register do not have legal protection comparable to that which applies to listed buildings, but the council must consult interested expert parties on planning applications affecting them and their setting.
 - h. Planning Policy Guidance note 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' states that local planning authorities should protect registered parks and their settings.
- 3) **Ownership**
- a. The 29ha golf course is owned by the AELTC and leased to the WP Golf Club.
 - b. The 19ha (or 15ha by some authorities) public section and the 9ha lake (or 12ha by some authorities) are owned by the LB Merton. The lake is a registered reservoir.
 - c. The 3ha sports club is owned by the Wimbledon Club.
 - d. There is authority that the LB Merton own up to a 10m wide strip around the lake perimeter.
- 4) **Covenants**
- a. The conveyance made in 1915 under which the Council purchased Wimbledon Park contains a covenant prohibiting any trade or business whatsoever being carried out on any part of the Park.
 - b. The validity of this or any other existing covenants isn't known.
- 5) **Buildings within the park**
- a. In the 29ha section is found WP Golf Clubhouse
 - b. In the 19ha section is found
 - i. Water activities centre.
 - ii. Bowling pavilion
 - iii. Athletics grandstand.
 - iv. Tennis Pavilion with Café
 - v. The White Pavilion.
 - vi. Toilet block.
 - c. In the 3ha section is found :
 - i. Wimbledon Club Clubhouse.
 - ii. Storage building
 - iii. Seasonal tennis court dome.
 - d. General
 - i. Several containers are sited in various places.
- 6) **Nature Conservation**
- a. The area of WP outside of the municipal park is identified within the LB Merton unitary Development Plan as a 'Site of Importance for Nature Conservation' as is the part of the District Line railway embankment adjoining the park, outside of but adjacent to the Conservation Area boundary.
 - b. The London Ecology Unit has designated WP Lake, Woods and Golf Course as a site of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation, Grade 1.
 - c. Trees (particularly oak) are an important part of this park as is the lake for wetland birds.



Friends of Wimbledon Park

- d. The entire park and the railway embankment plus some gardens in Home park road form part of the network of 'Green Corridors'.
- 7) Views
- a. There are several historic views that give an impression of the Capability Brown landscape. Mature trees and planting contribute to the quality of views.
 - b. The park is at the bottom of a valley so affords views within, into and out of it. The land drops steeply from the south, and more gently from the north.
- 8) Woods & trees
- a. Horse Close wood consists mainly of oaks and ashes, there are areas of tall elm scrub to mark the position of trees lost to disease.
 - b. Ashen Grove wood is neglected and is ancient woodland. LBM have legal right to retain this wood and bring under their management.
 - c. Other small wooded areas.
 - d. Before carrying out any work to any tree in a conservation area it is necessary to serve a notice to the council six weeks before carrying out the intended works. This includes any kind of work whether it is just minor pruning through to complete removal. If it is proposed to remove the tree full reasons need to be given.
- 9) Streams
- a. Five streams feed the lake on the western side from Wimbledon Common. Merging (3 into 1 SW and 2 into 1 NW) together just two enter the lake through tunnels from Church Road.
 - b. One stream emerges from the eastern side of the lake and joins, via tunnels, the River Wandle at Earlsfield.
 - c. There is also a drain from Church Road through a tunnel into the lake. There is a pollution risk with this arrangement.
 - d. Drainage is therefore a matter for planning to ensure correct level of water table and the lake.
 - e. There is no doubt that it's the level of the lake that is the main factor influencing the water table in the areas west of the dam. Drainage is a secondary influence, with a transient effect from downslope movement of subsoil water. The level of the lake rises only slightly and transitorily in response to storm events, so by far the main influence on the water table is the level of the top board in the outflow weir.
- 10) Lake
- a. The lake has a high recreational, historical and landscape value, but is currently in a hypereutrophic state. If no action is taken a swamp will form.
 - b. Restoration of the lake is necessary with desilting and ecological renewal.
 - c. Silt depths of up to 2m were recorded in 1998.
 - d. Fish stocks include roach, perch, rudd and bream, and more specialist pursuits such as carp fishing.
 - e. A survey¹ found the lake full of eels and carp.
 - f. Attractive lily beds died out due to pollution some years ago.
- 11) Roads
- a. Wimbledon Park Road is a two lane bus route with facilities for coach and bus debarking and embarking.
 - b. Church Road continues from Wimbledon Park Road and whilst still on a bus route is less suitable for debarking and embarking.
 - c. Home Park Road is two lane but somewhat restricted. There are some debarking



Friends of Wimbledon Park

- and embarking facilities for coach and bus transport.
- d. Revelstoke Road is a cul-de-sac in a residential area and unsuitable route for heavy goods vehicles. There are no debarking or embarking facilities and coaches will have to manoeuvre to return to the main roads.
- 12) Catchment area
- a. The surrounding area is heavily residential and using the 10 minute walking test a conservative estimate is for about 20,000 residents regard Wimbledon Park as their local park.
 - b. It's likely that there is an equal split between Merton and Wandsworth residents.
 - c. This park is important for this community and the community has much that they could contribute to the park.
 - d. A 10 minute walk is roughly 1Km at a brisk pace. Both underground stations (Wimbledon Park & Southfields) are within this limit.
 - e. Some of this community will visit daily and others may not visit much or at all. Again a conservative estimate of 5 visits per resident per year gives a footfall of 100,000 visits per year or averaging about 300 per day
 - f. These numbers may have increased slightly over the years to extra residences being built.
 - g. The demographics have changed as the average age has dropped and some parts of this area are labelled 'nappy valley'. The average age, by observation, is likely to be much younger than, say, 20 years ago.
- 13) Hierarchy of open space
- a. A hierarchy of open space categories is recognised in strategic planning in London and the latest version is found in table 7.2 of the London Plan¹¹. Wimbledon Park clearly would be considered to be a Metropolitan or District Park in this hierarchy, for which travel distances would be between 1 and 3 kilometres. A site-centred evaluation would show it to be nearest park of such value to a wide area of nearby SW London. Of course Metropolitan and District Parks act as Local Parks also for those who live within some 400 metres.
- 14) Wards
- a. Four borough wards encompass or adjoin Wimbledon Park.
 - b. From LBM
 - i. Wimbledon Park Ward broadly covering the SE and S of the park
 - ii. Village Ward covering the Wimbledon Club and the golf course northwards to the boundary with Wandsworth.
 - c. From WBC
 - i. West Hill Ward which covers the park north of the boundary with Merton.
 - ii. Southfields Ward which covers the adjoining eastern area up to the railway line
- 15) Crime
- a. Police areas match the wards.
 - b. Crime appears to be low.
- 16) Vehicles
- a. Most of the households but not all will own one or more vehicles. Parking spaces then became difficult to find and most of the area is now covered by car parking zones (CPZ).
 - b. Most have a pay and display option. Wimbledon Park Grid has a £1:10 hourly charge and Home Park Road has £1:40 hourly charge between 11:00 to 15:00.
 - c. The area known as the Southfields Grid has a short one hour restriction (13:30 to 14:30 Mon-Fri) and no option to pay and display.



Friends of Wimbledon Park

- d. Weekends are normally free.
- 17) Getting there
- a. There are five entrances Wimbledon Park.
 - b. The Golf course
 - i. This is accessed from Home Park Road with a pedestrian and vehicle gate; there is another access gate further west. There are a number of access gates in Wimbledon Park Road and Church Road.
 - c. The Wimbledon Club
 - i. This is accessed from Church Road with vehicle gates.
 - d. Public Park
 - i. From Home Park Road there are a pedestrian gate to the public park and a generally unused vehicle access gates to the west.
 - ii. From Revelstoke Road there are pedestrian and vehicle gates.
 - iii. From Wimbledon Park Road there are pedestrian and vehicle gates.
 - e. There is an unofficial entrance by the bus stop in Wimbledon Park Road where entrees go over the wall and under the wire. The footpath has receded following works in this area but the litter remains.
- 18) Public transport
- a. Bus 156 stops near the junction of Merton Road and Revelstoke Road. About 500m.
 - b. Buses 493 and 39 stop near the Wimbledon Park Road entrance. An additional early morning once a day school journey bus 639 also stops here.
 - c. Southfields underground station is about 600m walk to the Wimbledon Park Road entrance.
 - d. Wimbledon Park underground station is about 500m walk to the Home Park Road entrance and a further 50m to the entrance to the golf club.
 - e. Bus 493 stops outside the entrance to the Wimbledon Club and bus 39 about 600m away.
- 19) Car parks
- a. The Golf course has space for about 81 cars and is concealed from view by a hedge. A concealed overspill car park, about 20 spaces, is used on a few days each year.
 - b. The Wimbledon Club uses the road around the cricket green (about 90 spaces) and any overspill parks in Church Road.
 - c. The public park has three car parks and a number of locations where vehicles are regularly parked
 - i. The Wimbledon Park Road car park separates pedestrians from vehicles on entry. It is laid in rough asphalt and in a state of disrepair. It has room for about 40 cars
 - ii. The Wimbledon Stadium car park is laid out for 2 disabled spaces.
 - iii. The Revelstoke Road car park is also laid in rough asphalt. This is formally laid out for 35 spaces.
 - iv. South of the Revelstoke Road car park is an unofficial overspill parking area. The use of the terms 'overspill', 'temporary' and 'seasonal' has meant that no permissions need to be granted so it has continued for a number of years. It currently has a hardcore base left over from TfL works which finished in March 2012. No planning permission has been granted for this change of use. Currently there is a planning application to install 11 normal places and 4 disabled spaces on tarmac and a further 33 normal spaces and 4 disabled spaces



Friends of Wimbledon Park

- on cellular porous paving. In all a total of 52 extra spaces.
 - v. The café usually has 1 or 2 cars parked to the north side.
 - vi. The Bowling Pavilion has up to about 6 vehicles parked to the east and occasionally several parked to the north.
 - vii. The stadium can easily take 12 or more cars.
 - viii. Stadium Lane is occasionally used as an overflow car park.
 - ix. Vehicles often park at the eastern end of the stream.
- 20) Signage
- a. There're some signs which indicate the status of this park including the Heritage Trail.
 - b. Signage in the public park includes a notice board by each entrance and another on the Bowling Pavilion. Signposts are limited and untidy random notices appear on gates and banners.
- 21) Wimbledon Fortnight
- a. Wimbledon Golf Club, The Wimbledon Club and London Borough Merton rent out car parking space during Wimbledon Fortnight.
 - b. Wimbledon Golf Club and The Wimbledon Club both use the opportunity to provide catering and functions as well.
 - c. London Borough Merton provides free camping facilities.
 - d. It's notable that both the Golf Club and Wimbledon Club have their car parking sites returned to a usable condition shortly after the event whereas the public park remains unusable for organised sports and is unsightly.
- 22) Fireworks
- a. A Guy Fawkes bonfire and firework displays take place once a year.
- 23) Activities
- a. Activities can be grouped into:
 - i. Organised or structured activities where a membership fee or participation fee is levied. Tennis, sailing and athletics are examples.
 - ii. Those activities where no direct charge is made. This would include playgrounds, picnics, walking and kick abouts.
 - b. More details are in the next two sections.
- 24) Structured activities
- a. Watersports.
 - i. Wimbledon Park Lake is the venue for the borough's Watersports Centre. The centre is licensed under the Outdoor Adventure & Licensing (Young Persons) Act and provides a range of educational and recreational watersports activities including canoeing, sailing and other paddle sports.
 - ii. The centre also provides qualifications in first aid, sailing and paddle sports, as well as a range of other theory courses related to watersports. The borough is planning to add a boldering wall and climbing tower to the range of facilities at the centre in order to allow a wider outdoor and adventure experience at the venue.
 - b. Athletics
 - i. Wimbledon Park is the venue for the borough's purpose built synthetic surface athletics track. The track is six lanes, with eight lanes in the sprint area and provides for the full range of athletics track and field events. It also has a clubhouse and tiered seating stadium for easy viewing. It is the home of Hercules Wimbledon Athletics Club. It's a fenced in area of about 2ha.



Friends of Wimbledon Park

- ii. There are current discussions between LB Merton and the Wimbledon Club to use the centre part for hockey. There are difficulties with combining this with field sports.
 - iii. The track needs about £50,000 spent on it to bring it up to competition standard.
 - c. Orienteering
 - i. Wimbledon Park is the venue for the borough's purpose built orienteering course. This was installed in partnership with British Orienteering and is a valued addition to the range of outdoor sporting activities on offer in this location
 - d. Tennis
 - i. The public park has 20 courts which are open to members of the public
 - ii. The Wimbledon Club has 15 courts which are for members only.
 - e. Bowls
 - i. Wimbledon Park Bowls Club collect the membership fee on behalf of the LB Merton
 - f. Mini golf course is open to the public.
 - g. Beach Volley Ball
 - i. Two courts with sand from the Olympics were installed in 2012.
 - h. Football
 - i. AFC Wimbledon carries out significant coaching for young children.
 - ii. Football pitches due to the state of the grass and possibly perceived better facilities elsewhere aren't currently available.
 - i. Golf
 - i. The golf course is run by a private members club with over 700 members. Visitors are welcome and Merton (but not Wandsworth) residents get a discount.
 - j. Fishing
 - i. Strictly limited to 150 members, the WP Angling Club is a private non-for-profit organisation, run by a committee of volunteers elected annually by the membership.
 - k. Hockey, tennis, squash and cricket
 - i. The Wimbledon Club is one of Surrey's premier multisport Club with separate sections for tennis, squash, cricket and men's and ladies' hockey... The Club is owned by its members
- 25) Unstructured activities
- a. Playground for up to 5years is found at the SE corner of the public park.
 - b. Playground for 6 to 11 year olds is found to the west of the tennis courts. This includes the Elisabeth paddling pool with fountains.
 - c. There're no specific facilities for 12 to 16 year olds.
 - d. The field is about 7ha (2ha are taken by the athletics stadium which generally remains closed to the public). This is used for typical park unstructured activities including ad hoc games and picnics with barbecues. Barbecues cause fire damage to the grass, tree stumps and logs.
 - e. This would also include walking, relaxing and playing.
 - f. The meadow flower beds in 2012 were significant new development as they caused an uplift in spirits as users passed by and indicated the value to the local community of the natural side of the park.

26) Finance



Friends of Wimbledon Park

- a. The following are estimates of the finances.
- b. The AELTC receive an income from the lessee (WP Golf Club).
- c. WP Golf Club receives an income from subscriptions, Wimbledon Fortnight and the WP Angling Club who lease the fishing rights from them.
- d. The Wimbledon Club receive an income from subscriptions and Wimbledon Fortnight.
- e. LB Merton may cover their costs from:
 - i. Wimbledon Fortnight
 - ii. Tennis
 - iii. Watersports
 - iv. Café lease
 - v. Fees from fitness trainers and coaching activities.
- f. LB Merton faces costs for the unstructured activities and maintenance. Those living in Merton contribute through their council tax payments.

27) Lake observationsⁱⁱⁱ

28) Water body

- a. Every water body will slowly silt up, but I'm not aware that we have seen a good professional opinion on just what are the main contributors to this process in our lake. I very much doubt that it is the nutrient status of the lake that's the main factor, as might be implied. The water weeds that grow in the lake prove it to be eutrophic, and so typical of London waterbodies. It is not hypertrophic. All fertile waters will see a greater contribution to silt from undecomposed vegetation than occurs in infertile waters. But we have very few infertile waters in the UK and they are in remote parts of the highlands. None of this really matters until the future of the lake after desilting is under consideration, but it could be misleading to focus on just one of the very many factors that may influence the rate of siltation here. Other influences will include transport down the tributary brooks, atmospheric deposition, the public feeding of waterfowl, the feeding and ground baiting of fish, and the disposal of vegetation into the lake from maintenance activities by the golf course. The best thing right now might be to not attribute the silt to any of the alternatives. Otherwise, one might list the possible contributors and say that the future management of the lake will seek advice and take these into account.

29) Water lilies

- a. The loss of water lilies and other large water plants dates back some time. Some think that this was caused by a pollution event (or two) but, whatever the cause, the failure of these species to return has nothing to do with the nutrient status of the lake. I believe that the water plants now are held back to a very few species by the effect of the carp fishery; carp are notorious for this. It will be difficult, but not impossible, to restore a good diversity of water plants in the face of an artificially high population of carp. So, whatever the causes in the past, I think that the strategy should mention the need for special measures to re-establish a good diversity of water plants.

30) Shallow areas of lake margin

- a. A simple focus on de-silting, may preclude the development of shelving shores in some parts of the lake margin. This would require some nuancing of the de-silting operation to enable the establishment of wider bands of swampy water's-edge vegetation and provide cover for breeding birds. So it would be good to lay



Friends of Wimbledon Park

down a marker at this stage for some shallow areas of lake margin.

31) Trophic state index^{iv}

32) Trophic state index

- a. The quantities of nitrogen, phosphorus, and other biologically useful nutrients are the primary determinants of a body of water's **trophic state index** (TSI). Nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus tend to be limiting resources in standing water bodies, so increased concentrations tend to result in increased plant growth, followed by corollary increases in subsequent trophic levels. Consequently, a body of water's trophic index may sometimes be used to make a rough estimate of its biological condition. Although the term "trophic index" is commonly applied to lakes, any surface water body may be indexed.
- b. Carlson's index is one of the more commonly used trophic indices. The *trophic state* is defined as the total weight of biomass in a given water body at the time of measurement. Because they are of public concern, the Carlson index uses the algal biomass as an objective classifier of a lake or other water body's trophic status.
- c. A lake is usually classified as being in one of three possible classes: *oligotrophic*, *mesotrophic* or *eutrophic*.
- d. Lakes with extreme trophic indices may also be considered *hyperoligotrophic* or *hypereutrophic*.

33) Proposals for improvements.

34) Green Flag parks.

- a. One objective is to obtain Green Flag status.
- b. The Green Flag Award scheme is the benchmark national standard for parks and green spaces in the UK. It was first launched in 1996 to recognise and reward the best green spaces.
- c. The scheme provides national standards for parks and green spaces across England and Wales. Parks are judged against eight key criteria:
 - i. A welcoming place;
 - ii. Healthy, safe and secure;
 - iii. Clean and well maintained;
 - iv. Sustainability;
 - v. Conservation and heritage;
 - vi. Community involvement;
 - vii. Marketing;
 - viii. Management.

35) Desilting the Lake

- a. To invite the three owners, one long term leaseholder and other park users to join FOWP in seeking funding for the following recommendation and subsequent actions.
- b. *"I recommend" that the most appropriate method for desilting the lake will be for the water to be drained down at the end of the summer season and allowed to dry out for a period of at least 3 months (Oct-Dec). It should then be cleaned out using excavators and dumpers in the New Year. The lake itself could be refilled in time for the summer season. The majority of the parkland could be reinstated in the spring, with the bund areas fenced off and allowed to dry out further during the summer. All landscaping and final reinstatement would then be completed in the autumn, one year after the commencement of*



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the work, with minimum loss of amenity usage and no loss of parking or other facilities during Wimbledon fortnight”.

36) To seek lake edge public access based on the following:

- a. *A ten metre reserve of land^{vi} is retained by Merton around the lake edge reduced to three metres at pinch points on the Wimbledon Club edge. This provides the long term option of allowing a public walkway around the lake. Public access is not compatible with the use of several holes on the golf course which cross the lake edge, but the option exists to negotiate restricted public access on certain days of the year or certain times of the day which might not conflict with golfers. The lake edge is already used by anglers without conflict with golfers, and similar low levels of use may be feasible. Care will; however, need to be taken not to threaten the value of the lake edge as a nature reserve”.*
- b. Some of the lakeside is neglected and this offers opportunities.

37) The Lake

- a. There's no point in de-silting without considering the options for future use.
- b. An authoritative view on what are the main sources of silt is needed, so that measures can be taken to slow the future rate of siltation (if possible). Various ideas are promoted, but it's not known which are both valid and important: excess input of food from public feeding of waterfowl; excess input of ground bait and other fish food by the anglers; input from geese feeding elsewhere defecating in the water; and the sediment load of the two main feeder brooks. To this can be added atmospheric deposition (analogous to house dust) and incomplete decay of vegetation (both "macrophyte" and planktonic). Following from this, there may be a need for design features to minimise future siltation.
- c. The lake supports underwater macrophytes (the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust report is erroneous in this regard); Rigid hornwort *Ceratophyllum demersum*; Horned pondweed *Zannichellia palustris*; and Small pondweed *Potamogeton berchtoldii* abound in the lake. These are typical of eutrophic, neutral or slightly alkaline waters. This water quality will continue in future as that's the nature of relatively shallow lakes in the SE, but expert advice will be needed on how to establish a better range of underwater plants after de-silting.
- d. The lake is visited regularly by Common Terns, for which the nearest breeding site is the Wetland Centre. At present they sit on the floating structures but are prevented from breeding by other waterfowl and water sports people. If a raft of the right design were provided, the lake could support a breeding pair of this attractive species. The Wetland Centre could advise on this.
- e. Almost all of the lake margin is bordered by vertical shuttering, so there are no shelving shores. This limits severely the range of water's edge vegetation and consequently waterfowl, insects, fish, birds, etc supported by the lake. Some of the silt should be employed to create some shelving edges to overcome this limitation.
- f. Before the pollution incidents the lake used to have extensive beds of water lilies and similar plants. There should be plans made to re-establish these. The two water lilies native to the SE would be a good start.
- g. The breeding success of desirable waterfowl (coots, native ducks, grebes, moorhen and mute swans) is severely limited by poor cover on the terrestrial margins of the lake and by the fish (both as predators on hatchlings and as competitors for food). Provision of better vegetation cover both on the terrestrial



Friends of Wimbledon Park

margins and as beds of dense emergent vegetation would ease this position somewhat.

- h. It's fashionable to create "kingfisher banks" for this bird to tunnel for nesting. The lake may not be quite large enough to support a breeding pair of kingfishers, but no harm would be done by providing such a bank. The RSPB or Wetland Trust could advise on this one.
 - i. There are perceived problems at the sports club from high ground water levels. It's incorrect to attribute this to the level of silt in the lake, except indirectly; ground water in the surrounds is driven by what flows downhill in the soil towards the lake from the surrounding land and by the level of water in the lake. This level is controlled by the outflow weir. Any indirect effect is a consequence of the outflow weir being set high to maximise depth for water sports. So, it's important to design the restored lake to an agreed normal water level.
 - j. The habitat creation could all be achieved without a significant impact on existing use by the fishing club and water sports people as neither activity presently extends right into the shallow extremities of the lake. Indeed it's very rare to see more than half of the fishing stands in use.
 - k. From a practical and safety perspective the formal zoning of the lake for designated uses would be appropriate. This would limit potential conflicts between the different users - anglers - sailing - canoeing - and the wildlife (e.g. bird nesting sites).
 - l. An underwater viewing area could be incorporated together with information on the fish, birds and other fauna and flora that rely on the habitat for their survival.
 - m. Fishing rights could be extended to allow for day licences, child classes and training
 - n. Water sports to include swimming, jumping in water facility and triathlon.
 - o. Bird watching; to include a sanctuary possibly an island and maybe a cliff face for sand martins; (the other side could be a climbing wall).
- 38) Southern extension of lake
- a. Extension of the lake^{vii} to its historic limit is possible without compromising the layout of the golf course.
- 39) Streams
- a. Thought could be given to removal of tunnels for streams flowing into the lake.
 - b. Eel populations are in decline so their preservation here should be helped.
- 40) Ashen Grove Wood
- a. To request the return of Ashen Grove Wood to Merton ownership based on the following observation:
 - b. *"Ashen Grove Wood^{viii} is not managed by the Borough as it is under Golf course management and in the ownership of the AELTC. The woodland has been neglected as it serves no functional purpose to the club. It requires the removal of an alien species, new understorey planting and mixed woodland development. Under the terms of the sale of the land to the AELTC Merton has the legal right to reclaim this area and bring it under their management without compensation"*.
 - c. To implement a restoration & maintenance plan for the wood.
- 41) Footpaths
- a. -----A boardwalk could run from the stadium to the Wimbledon Club (perhaps a permissive path from there to Church Road)
 - b. -----It would be nice to have an open walk through the tree avenue behind the



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stadium rather than having to walk round the conifer hedge!

- c. -----A vehicle free path into Horse Close woods from Wimbledon Park Road.
 - d. -----A footpath running west from Home Park Road to take advantage of the copse
 - e. -----Revelstoke Road needs radical works so that footpaths are safe and separated from vehicles. This is covered in a later section.
- 42) Car parking
- a. An entrance to this park should be memorable. This means the change from the cars and buildings to greenery and great views should be abrupt as one enters.
 - b. A sense of arrival, of entering a different world, raises the profile of the park and heightens expectations.
 - c. Vehicles should be concealed to help achieve this objective.
 - d. Wimbledon Park Road car park is partly shielded but this could be improved.
 - e. The car park in the stadium is shielded by the conifer fence but this needs more thought.
 - f. Revelstoke Road is highly visible and needs to be rethought and screened.
 - g. The other car parking places mentioned in section 15 need further consideration.
 - h. In line with the situation outside the park, fees for parking vehicles should be brought in. A proper assessment of vehicle needs can then be made.
- 43) Revelstoke Road restructuring
- a. It's proposed that a 20 mph speed limit be imposed on Revelstoke Road.
 - b. That speed humps are considered.
 - c. That a one way section from Melrose Avenue to Braemar Avenue be considered to break up traffic flow.
 - d. At the junction with Melrose Avenue and Elsenham Street:
 - i. A brightly coloured cushion table to be added to slow traffic.
 - ii. The western pavement corners to be extended and planters to be sited so providing a welcome to the park.
 - e. A gate to be fitted to the northern side to connect with the path inside.
 - f. The location of and need for the turnstile gate to be considered.
 - g. Pavements at gates to be extended to make it safer for pedestrians to cross the road, first and foremost but to also allow for planters.
 - h. The existing car park to be moved west so that a path can run northwards alongside the embankment to connect with the perimeter path.
 - i. A fruit hedge to be planted to screen the car park.
 - j. A one way vehicle route with echelon parking in the centre.
 - k. A charge should be made for parking.
 - l. A drop off facility needs to be considered.
 - m. The car park extension to be returned to grass.
- 44) Unsuitable buildings and their replacement
- a. -----To consider the following recommendation in relation to the Sailing Centre
 - b. -----*“Demolition^{ix} of the Sailing Centre is recommended with the provision of a multipurpose facility at an extended and replanned Bowls/Fitness Centre Pavilion. The case for demolishing the sailing centre is overwhelming. Not only does it obstruct historic views across the lake, but it is a particularly ugly and unfriendly building with inadequate scope for improvement to meet the needs of park managers and users. It seems very important that the park is provided with excellent and unified management and user facilities so that demand can be successfully promoted and catered for in the future; this is impossible with existing buildings. At the same time the impact of the facility*



Friends of Wimbledon Park

must be substantially reduced, have a more attractive lakeside appearance and promote social activity at the lakeside”.

- c. ----- To consider demolition and replacing the athletics stadium.
 - d. ----- To consider demolition and replacing of the storage building by the west lakeside.
 - e. ----- To consider ceasing of the use of the dome air building during winter for indoor tennis and providing for an appropriate replacement.
 - f.----- The proposed removal of 4 buildings provides an opportunity to consider combining their functions into one. The Hub in Regents Park could be a model for this.
 - g. ----- This could include a café overlooking the lake.
 - h. ----- The Bowls Pavilion needs refurbishment.
- 45) Retention and improvement of views and removal of eyesores
- a. Containers and other structures are clearly visible and should be removed.
 - b. Structures on the lakeside should be relocated so that the area can returned to nature and possible part of a walk with resting places.
- 46) Views
- a. Walks around the park should include viewpoints.
 - b. Peaceful places from which to enjoy views which could include a fountain or two.
 - c. A new viewing point^x is proposed at the south end of Home Park Road. This would be located on Golf course land behind the second green.
 - i. At positions 2 & 3 on the Heritage Walk in Home Park Road the pavement has been inset into the golf course and fenced off from the golf course to provide a viewpoint. Seating has been provided and the hedge has grown to obscure the view. The amount of litter in both viewpoints indicates either infrequent collection or intense use.
- 47) Trees
- a. The AELTC^{xi} are required to prepare a landscape conservation strategy for all the Golf Course land as one of the reserved matters required under the terms of the planning permission for the Court One development.
 - b. To assist in keeping and extending the tree database and labelling the important trees.
 - c. To plant more trees.
 - d. To help with problems such as insect infestation and disease.
 - e. To use good communication vehicles to involve local residents and park users in the tree planting, removal and maintenance.
- 48) Grass management
- a. The promotion of bio-diversity in the grassland requires a management plan with varied mowing regimes.^{xii}
- 49) Unstructured activities
- a. A local park is very important for the community as it is a place to get away from traffic and life’s bustle to exercise and refresh mentally.
 - b. It is fundamental to this project that these aspects are borne in mind as the project progresses.
 - c. Particular attention should be made to the needs of the 12 to 16 year olds.
 - d. Protocols for cyclists and dog owners should be considered.
- 50) Crime
- a. Monitoring crime, including crowd dispersal orders and wildlife crime across



Friends of Wimbledon Park

- the whole of the park and the adjoining area would be beneficial.
- b. Coordination between the four police areas so that a brief report could be given quarterly to FOWP would be ideal.
- 51) Financing the project
- a. This project is likely to need between £4 and £12 million to complete and this means that grants and fund raising will be needed.
 - b. LB Merton rely on Wimbledon Park to help fund their greenspaces section. Due to the cuts that are still to come; further cuts are likely.
 - i. The subscription model used by other groups is clearly more stable but not without problems.
 - c. Two parks have recently had grants of about £8m; Burgess Park in Southwark and Bishop's Park in Hammersmith and Fulham. If they can raise the money so can we but we have 3 owners which will make it more difficult.
- 52) Management
- a. There is a case for a management board^{xiii} for the park's administration with user representation. The option exists for this to have trust status, qualify for VAT rebates, benefit from direct grant aid and tax credits, and have greater control over its budgets.

53) Conclusion

- a. Wimbledon Park is a special place and needs extensive works to bring it up to heritage standard.
- b. This is a very ambitious plan. It will require careful planning and hard work. Currently only about 9ha of this 60ha park is available for unstructured activities.
- c. Upholding the Olympic legacy, restoring and conserving the natural habitats and ensuring the general enjoyment and appreciation of all the park has to offer will require a lot of joined up thinking seasoned with common sense.
- d. The benefits to the community from the project's successful completion are clear but the community's support is a prerequisite to the project getting off the ground.
- e. The preservation of the park's heritage value is integral to its status as a Metropolitan or District Park even more than as a Local facility.
- f. It will require the three owners, all the leaseholders, LB Wandsworth and park users to work together to achieve this goal.
- g. The lake is a declining asset and failure is not something we want to bequeath to our grandchildren.
- h. If Burgess Park and Bishop's Park can do it so can we!

54) Comment

- 55) Whilst every effort has been made to ensure accuracy in this document there may be errors. If these are highlighted they will be corrected.
- 56) The main source of information has been the Glasspoole Thomson report of 1998. Some of these have been referenced. Other sources of information are:
- a. Wimbledon North Conservation Area. LB Merton November 2006.
 - b. Wimbledon North Conservation Area Appraisal LB Wandsworth undated
 - c. Moss 2010-2011 Final report Merton Open Space Study.
 - d. London Plan 2011
 - e. Various websites.
 - f. Individuals.



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References

- ⁱ Fisheries Mngement Proposal. Andrew Ellis for Wimbledon Park Angling Club, May 2008
- ⁱⁱ (<http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/LP2011%20Chapter%207.pdf>).
- ⁱⁱⁱ Dr Dave Dawson
- ^{iv} Wikipedia
- ^v Wimbledon Park Restoration Proposals. Glasspoole Thomson March 1998. Chapter Six 7 of 11.
- ^{vi} Wimbledon Park Restoration Proposals. Glasspoole Thomson March 1998. Chapter Five 23 of 25.
- ^{vii} Wimbledon Park Restoration Proposals. Glasspoole Thomson March 1998. Chapter Five 23 of 25
- ^{viii} Wimbledon Park Restoration Proposals. Glasspoole Thomson March 1998. Chapter Four 10 of 15.
- ^{ix} Wimbledon Park Restoration Proposals. Glasspoole Thomson March 1998. Chapter Five 8 of 25.
- ^x Wimbledon Park Restoration Proposals. Glasspoole Thomson March 1998. Chapter Five 22 of 25.
- ^{xi} Wimbledon Park Restoration Proposals. Glasspoole Thomson March 1998. Chapter Five 21 of 25.
- ^{xii} Wimbledon Park Restoration Proposals. Glasspoole Thomson March 1998. Chapter Eight 6 of 6.
- ^{xiii} Wimbledon Park Restoration Proposals. Glasspoole Thomson March 1998. Chapter Eight 3 of 6.