



Friends of Wimbledon Park

News update for members, August 2014

Park may go on English Heritage's At Risk Register

As part of FOWP's proposed application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), we recently met with Zosia Mellor, a landscape architect at English Heritage. After hearing our concerns about pressures on the park, including the state of the lake, she said she believed Wimbledon Park would be eligible for listing on English Heritage's At Risk Register, a status highlighting historically important sites that are under threat. Applying to the HLF will be a lengthy and complex process, requiring backing from the park's multiple owners. However we are keen to proceed, and have circulated details of what such an application will entail to Stephen Alambritis, leader of Merton Council, Ravi Govindia, leader of Wandsworth Council and Helen Parker of AELTC.

Finding out about our park's finances

Merton Council has responded to our Freedom of Information request for details of the finances of the park. These make interesting reading. You can see the details by clicking on <http://www.friendsofwimbledonpark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Wimbledon-Park-its-Assets-and-Finances-04.pdf>. Having these data will enable us to plan more realistically and effectively, assisting our application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. We are, however, lacking a figure for the amount paid by the AELTC to Merton for the use of the park during Wimbledon Fortnight, which we have been told is "commercially confidential".

Local archaeological sites

If we proceed with our application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), we need to consider the impact of our proposals on archeological sites within the park. To find out more about the issue, we met with Pamela Greenwood, the new Curator of Archaeology at the Museum of Wimbledon. She explained that there have been a few finds locally including the 'Wimbledon Park Hoard', comprising pots and coins, unearthed in Albert Drive, and other items found at the All England Club. Some parts of the park lie within an Archaeological Priority Area as set out in Merton's Unitary Development Plan, relating to Wimbledon Park House and the early Wimbledon Village. This means that FOWP will be required to undertake archaeological monitoring and recording during the course of any works. Pamela Greenwood helped Wandsworth Council in its recent successful bid to HLF for Tooting Common and is willing to do the same for us if we need her expertise. Information about the Tooting Common bid can be found at:

http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/news/article/12403/tooting_common_restoration_plans_get_3_25k_funding_boost.

Delays to planning process for stadium development

The planning process for the development of the athletics stadium by the Wimbledon Club is proceeding slowly. A pre-application meeting was held on 3 July at a cost of £1,700 but this was unproductive and the application is likely to be delayed until September.

Capability Brown celebrations

Merton Council has not yet announced whether it plans to participate in celebrations to mark the 300th anniversary of the birth of landscape designer Lancelot 'Capability' Brown in 2016. The date will be marked with a nationwide festival celebrating Brown's life and influence and



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we believe it is important that Wimbledon Park takes part. We therefore plan to ask a question about this at the next Merton Council meeting on 10 September.

Wimbledon Fortnight goes with a swing

Wimbledon Fortnight went extremely smoothly this year, with just one or two hiccups at the top end of Revelstoke Road. These were quickly resolved by effective cooperation between Merton and Wandsworth Councils. Park Officer, Dave Byles, and his team did an excellent job in keeping the park clean and tidy during the event. A tree trunk was removed from the Wimbledon Park Road car park to allow installation of a portacabin, creating a gap that later allowed people to drive onto the grass, but Merton Council is planning to reinstate it.

Railings open up views

Black iron railings around the golf course, erected by AELTC in place of the former concrete fence, are finding favour with local people, who are enjoying the views into the parkland from Church Road.

New planters installed

York flagstones, stolen recently from outside the toilet area, are being replaced and two new planters installed.