



CONSERVATORS' PUBLIC MEETING
to be held on
Monday 11 December 2023 at 4.30pm
in the Information Centre, Manor Cottage,
London SW19 5NR

AGENDA

PART A(1) PUBLIC

- 12.23.1 Confirmation of Attendance and Apologies for Absence**
- 12.23.2 Declarations of Personal or Prejudicial Interests in Respect of Items to be Considered in this Part of the Meeting**
- 12.23.3 WPCC Board Meetings**
- i. Resolutions of the Board Meeting of 9 October 2023 Page 1
 - ii. Minutes of the Part A(1) Board Meeting of 9 October 2023 Page 3
- 12.23.4 Matters Arising** Page 10
- 12.23.5 Committee Matters**
No matters to report
- 12.23.6 Chief Executive's Report** Page 11
- 12.23.7 Fundraising Update** Page 15
- 12.23.8 Conservation Update** Page 16
- 12.23.9 Friends of Wimbledon and Putney Commons Report** Verbal
- 12.23.10 2024 Calendar of Meetings** Page 22
- 12.23.11 WPCC Forum/Group Meetings**
- To note the minutes of the Wildlife and Conservation Forum held on 24 October 2023 Page 24
- 12.23.12 Public Questions on Matters Considered in Part A(1) of this Meeting**
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CONSERVATORS' CONFIDENTIAL MEETING
to be held on
Monday 11 December 2023 at 4.30pm
in the Information Centre, Manor Cottage
London SW19 5NR

AGENDA

PART A(2) CONFIDENTIAL

In accordance with the Resolution from the Board meeting held on 12 July 2021, this part of the meeting is considered confidential and therefore closed to members of the public.

12.23.13 Declarations of Interest

12.23.14 WPCB Board Meetings

- i. Resolutions of the Board meeting held on 17 July 2023
- ii. Minutes of the Part (A2) Board Meeting of 17 July 2023
- iii. Minutes of the Part (A2) Board Meeting of 9 October 2023
- iv. Minutes of the Part (A2) Special Board Meeting of 20 November 2023
- v. Resolutions/Recommendations of the Special Board meeting held on 4 December 2023

12.23.15 Matters Arising

12.23.16 Chief Executive's Report – Confidential

12.23.17 Land Management Plan

12.23.18 Constitutional Matters

- a) Levy Update – Consultation Report
- b) Levy 2024/25

12.23.19 Licences and Leases

12.23.20 Financial

- a) Management Reports and Accounts:
 - i. September 2023
 - ii. October 2023
- b) Cash Drawdown
- c) Pension

12.23.21 VAT Update

12.23.22 2024 Conservators Election

12.23.23 Fundraising Update

12.23.24 Top Ten Risks

12.23.25 Committee and Forums Draft Minutes/Notes

To receive minutes of the:

- i. FIC meeting held on 13 November 2023

ii. Stakeholder - 20 September 2023

12.23.26 Items for Inclusion in a Media Release by the Board

12.23.27 Items for Future Consideration



Wimbledon and Putney Commons
Resolutions agreed at the Board Meeting held on
Monday 9 October 2023 at 4.30pm

Part A1 Public

Item 10.23.5

Resolution:

The Board approved the appointment of Peter Shortt as Chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee and Oliver Bennett as Chairman of the Wildlife and Conservation Forum.

Present

Conservators: Mrs Diane Neil Mills, Chairman

Mrs Sue Bucknall
Mr Oliver Bennett
Mr David Hince
Mr Peter Hirsch
Mr Michael Johnston
Mr Peter Shortt
Mr Nigel Ware

Officers: Mr Peter Haldane, Conservation and Engagement Officer (For Part A1)
Mrs Angela Evans-Hill, EA to Chief Executive and Communications Officer
Mrs Maggie May, Fundraising Manager
Mr Philip Warner, Management Accountant

Apologies: Ms Paula Graystone, Deputy Clerk and Ranger

Intentionally blank

**Draft Public Minutes of the Conservators' Meeting held on
Monday 9 October 2023 at 4.30pm at the Information Centre, Manor Cottage,
London SW19 5NR**

Conservators: Mrs Diane Neil Mills, Chairman (DNM)
Mr Oliver Bennett (OB)
Mrs Sue Bucknall (SB)
Mr David Hince (DH)
Mr Peter Hirsch (PH)
Mr Michael Johnston (MJ)
Mr Peter Shortt (PS)
Mr Nigel Ware (NW)

Officers: Peter Haldane, Conservation and Engagement Officer (C&EO) (For Part A(1))
Maggie May, Fundraising Manager (FM)
Angela Evans-Hill, EA to Chief Executive/Communications Officer (EA to CE/CO)
Philip Warner, Management Accountant

Members of the public: One member of the public attended.

10.23.1 Confirmation of Attendance and Apologies for Absence

Apologies: Paula Graystone, Deputy Clerk & Ranger (DCR)

The Chairman welcomed the new Chief Executive, Colin Cooper, who joined the charity on 1 September 2023, to his first Board meeting.

The Chairman reiterated the Board's appreciation to the staff for all they had done over the last few months whilst the charity was without a Chief Executive.

The Chairman reiterated her, and the Board's, appreciation to the staff for everything they did to help the emergency services during the tragic events at the Study School on 6 July 2023. The event underlined the importance of the team ethos amongst the staff and how they supported one another. Thoughts remain with everyone affected by the incident.

10.23.2 Declarations of Personal or Prejudicial Interests in Respect of Items to be Considered in this Part of the Meeting

None

10.23.3 WPC Board Meetings

The Board approved the:

- i. Resolutions of the Board Meeting of 10 July 2023
- ii. Minutes of the Part A(1) Board Meeting of 10 July 2023

10.23.4 Matters Arising

Media Release on the 2022 Annual Monitoring Report – The EA to the CEO apologised that this media release had not yet been issued. It would be circulated as soon as possible.

Action: EA to CE/CO

The Crooked Billet – It was noted that the only matter outstanding was the matter of a note on each chair advising that the chairs, and the pub's toilets, were available for anyone to use. The DCR was following up on this.

Action: DCR

10.23.5 Committee Matters

The Board received the Chairman's report.

Appointment of Chairmen:

The Committees and Forums that had met since the last Board meeting on 10 July 2023 agreed the appointment of Chairmen as follows:

- i. Audit and Risk Committee – Peter Shortt
- ii. Wildlife and Conservation Forum – Oliver Bennett

The Board approved these appointments.

Resolution:

The Board approved the appointment of Peter Shortt as Chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee and Oliver Bennett as Chairman of the Wildlife and Conservation Forum.

10.23.6 Chief Executive's Report

The Board received and noted the Chief Executive's Report.

The following items were highlighted:

Keepers - A new horse, Bold Conduct, had arrived at the stables in September 2023. An ex-racehorse, he has been gifted to the Commons by a trainer based in Dorset. The Keepers are going to trial him over the next six weeks to see how he takes to the role. In answer to a question, the CE commented that he was settling in well and now going out on patrol on his own.

The FM commented that as a public engagement exercise, during the Open Day members of the public were asked to pick a stable name for him. Two names had tied – Jerry and Caesar – and the Keepers favoured the former.

The Maintenance team had carried out a number of tasks now that the bird nesting season had ended.

Events - Several successful events had been held, including the Commons' Open Day, and Roehampton Community Weeks which had involved the Friends

of WPCC. Forthcoming events included a Children's Pumpkin Hunt on 28 October and Carols at the Windmill on 9 December 2023.

With regard to the Open Day, OB asked if the net costs were available. It was advised that they would be available at the December meeting. However, it was noted that it was not generally a large fundraising event but an event for the community. The Chairman thanked the staff for all their work in organising a superb event, which had been enormously welcomed by the community.

Action DCR

With regard to the Roehampton Community Weeks, the Chairman was delighted that the Commons' staff and the Friends had been able to support the event. Head Ranger, Putney Lower Common, Bill Rowland, had led a walk on Putney Heath and Friend, Nick Manning, who along with Gilly King, historian at the Roehampton University, led a walk talking about the history of some of the buildings in Roehampton.

The Board recorded their appreciation to Bill Rowland for leading the walk and to all the staff for delivering a very successful Open Day.

Golf - It was confirmed that the individual golf clubs were responsible for ensuring the players on the course were properly signed in if they were not members. The Keepers also patrolled the course and did, from time to time, ask to see green fee tickets.

First Aid – The Chairman noted the audit of all the charity's first aid kits. Looking back on the incident at the Study School, having full first aid kits and the knowledge on how to properly use them and confidence to do so had been critical. The Board recognised the importance of the staff being in a position to help and it was a tribute to them that they did so without hesitation.

10.23.7 Fundraising Update

The Board received and noted the Fundraising Manager's Report.

The FM reported that the work to repair several major paths was now underway and expressed her appreciation to visitors who had made donations to the appeal, raising over £12,000. The Friends of WPCC had also contributed. The total cost would amount to some £88,000. OB thanked the FM for her work in ensuring the correct stone was used for the path. He reported that there had been one complaint on Nextdoor but all the responses had been very supportive. OB commented that, as was done for this work, it was very important to have very clear communications as to what work was being undertaken and why.

The Book Sale in the garage had proven to be very popular – this had started at the Open Day and carried on as there were a lot of books left. It had currently raised over £400.

The stables held their annual sponsored ride in September 2023 to raise funds for various charities, with 12 participants choosing to fundraise for WPCC to improve equestrian facilities on the Commons. £7,762 has been raised via JustGiving for the event. The Board recorded their appreciation to the stables for their generosity and the FM for her effort in leading the fundraising programme.

SB thanked the FM for all her hard work for bringing many projects to fruition.

10.23.8 Conservation Update

The Board received and noted the Conservation and Engagement Officer's Report.

The following points were highlighted:

Grassland Management – Contractors had cut and baled vegetation from nine areas this year, including the Wimbledon Common fairground site for the first time. The Maintenance Team had cut and collected vegetation from seven sites.

Another important area of grassland on the Commons was around the edge of the Wimbledon Common Golf Course which are part of the Commons' SSSI. The Maintenance Team had also begun work along the edge of Caesar's Camp fairway to cut back woodland and scrub encroachment which had resulted in damage to the integrity of the acid grassland.

Two areas of ground had been dug out to create temporary pools, both situated on the wet heath near Ladies Mile/Inner Park Ride. Such ponds are important for wildlife over the winter.

Heathland volunteers had been very active over the previous few months with scrub bashing and a recent group had pulled out over 11 bags of rubbish from one area of the Beverley Brook.

Further ringbarking of Turkey Oak had been carried out to help create dead wood habitats and reduce the numbers of this invasive species.

The wildflowers planted in the new wildlife garden had done really well and the pond was attracting numerous species of insect including various bees, butterflies, dragonflies, damselflies and beetles.

London in Bloom – Both Wimbledon Common and Putney Lower Common had done really well in the competition this year with both being awarded a Gold Award and, additionally, Wimbledon Common was presented with the trophy for London Common/Open Space of the year 2023. The judge's comments were very positive, recognising the management of the woodland and heathland, the work with local residents and groups, and the importance of the Mounted Keepers from a security perspective. The opening up of the woodland rides had also impressed the judge. With regard to Putney Lower Common, the judge noted the restored bridge, orchard and the woodland glade work.

DH asked if the judges comments had changed over the years. PH explained that there was a different judge every year and their background varied so their questions and comments would depend on their field of knowledge.

OB commented that he had spent some time with PH and the volunteers and that they were very clearly engaged with, and enjoyed, the work. He encouraged Conservators to take part. He asked if a volunteer strategy could be developed as the Peatland Discovery Grant Scheme identified restoration work that would require an expansion in the volunteer work. The Chairman mentioned that this

had been part of the Masterplan and had been delayed, partly because of lack of resources and thoughts on how to develop the volunteers were still evolving.

The Chairman noted the judge's comments about the key being the balance between recreation and conservation, and maintaining this balance was critical, creating the bond with the local community, including volunteers in all aspects of the Commons' work. She also thanked the C&EO for successfully leading the work and all the staff for carrying out the works in support of the award.

SB noted that volunteering was fundamental but give the finite staff resources, expanding the number of volunteers should not be rushed into without giving thought to how it would be managed.

The Chairman was pleased to see the judge had noted the work in respect of acid grassland around the edge of the golf course, and thank OB for raising this matter.

10.23.9 Land Management Plan

The Conservation and Engagement Officer (C&EO) gave a verbal update to the Board.

The first draft Land Management Plan had now been completed and would be sent to the Wildlife and Conservation Forum for a final check. It would then be sent to Natural England for their information, not a formal submission. A half day workshop would be arranged for Conservators, hopefully to tie in with a special Board Meeting that might need to be held in early/mid-November. This would be followed by two walks on the Commons with Natural England.

OB advised that he and the C&EO had discussed whether there was a need for three walks as originally discussed. The Conservators considered two walks would be sufficient but asked that the C&EO discuss it with Natural England closer to the time, perhaps following the half-day workshop.

10.23.10 Friends of Wimbledon and Putney Commons Report

SB gave a verbal update to the Board.

Following a busy couple of years, 2023 had focused on smaller events, such as walks and talks, on the Commons.

Friends Alan Blower and Nick Manning provided a walk on the Grand Houses of Rushmere. Two walks were advertised, combined with an afternoon tea at the Wimbledon Common Golf Club, and these sold out very quickly so a further two walks were offered. Mr Manning, author of the book, The Commoners, donated £5 from the sale of each book to the Commons, and this had so far resulted in £3,000 of donations.

SB, DH and Bill Rowland had attended a thank-you event connected to the Roehampton Community Weeks and had had some useful discussions on how to engage with the Roehampton community.

Alan Blower had also invited Friends on a tour of the West End theatres.

The C&EO would be leading a woodland walk at 10am on Thursday 19 October 2023. He had also offered to lead a walk on Putney Lower Common later in the year.

The Friends had been involved in supporting the local Walk and Talk Movement. The walks took place on a Saturday morning and generally attracted at least 30 people. Conservators had led several walks on the Commons but walks also took in other local places and events of interest. NW queried the appropriateness of the Friends involvement in this third party movement in the context of the charity's objectives.

The Fundraising Manager had now developed a system to ensure Friends were thanked annually when their membership renewed. She had sent out a summary of the activities that Friends had been involved in and how their contributions had been utilised. SB thanked the FM for all her hard work on this, and the whole Friends Committee for their efforts. There would be one more meeting this year to conclude the Art on the Commons competition for this year and to finalise plans for events over the winter.

The Chairman thanked SB for all her work in organising the different events. With regard to the Walk and Talk, the Board had previously talked about leading walks on the Commons and this provided a mechanism for them to do this and those attending welcomed the opportunity to meet and chat with the Conservators.

10.23.11 WPCC Forum/Group Meetings

The Board received the notes of the Wildlife and Conservation Forum held on 11 July 2023.

In response to a question about the biomass initiative, OB commented that he had identified that income could be generated from the sale of woodland arisings, such as the birch scrub that is cleared from the heathland. The Chairman noted the applicability of section 37 of the 1871 Act to the sale of products from the land (suggesting that authorisation from the authorities was required) and that this needed to be investigated.

Action: CE

10.23.12 Public Questions on Matters Considered in Part A(1) of this Meeting

The member of the public present commented:

He commended the Walk and Talk events and the Conservators' participation in them. The walks were informative for people who aren't involved with WPCC or perhaps don't know the Commons well. The walks are very well received and he thanked the Conservators for their roll in that.

With regard to the Crooked Billett, he wished to thank the Board, staff and the DCR in particular for her work in resolving the issues around the licensing of the deckchairs. It had been a quiet year with no issues to speak of. He would be grateful if the public could be advised if there were any major changes proposed to the licence for the following year.

He commended the Board and the staff for the London in Bloom Gold award. He further commented that there was a lot of support locally for the Conservators consultation.

The meeting finished at 5.30pm.

(Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators Meeting	11 December 2023	12.23.4
Subject: Matters Arising from the Public Board meeting of 9 October 2023	Private	
Report of: Chairman of Wimbledon and Putney Commons	For Information	
Matters Arising		

1. Media Release on the 2022 Annual Monitoring Report – The EA to the CEO apologised that this media release had not yet been issued. It would be circulated as soon as possible. **Action: EA to CE/CO**

The media release has been circulated.

2. The Crooked Billet – It was noted that the only matter outstanding was the matter of a note on each chair advising that the chairs, and the pub’s toilets, were available for anyone to use. The DCR was following up on this. **Action: DCR**

The deckchairs are now away for the winter so this will be picked up again when they are put out next year.

3. With regard to the Open Day, OB asked if the net costs were available. It was advised that they would be available at the December meeting. However, it was noted that it was not generally a large fundraising event but an event for the community. The Chairman thanked the staff for all their work in organising a superb event, which had been enormously welcomed by the community. **Action: DCR**

This information will follow.

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Board of Conservators	11 December 2023	12.23.6
Subject: Chief Executive Report	Public Yes	
Report of: Chief Executive of Wimbledon and Putney Commons	For Decision and Information	
<h1>SUMMARY</h1>		
Recommendations:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board received and notes the report 		

Keepers Update

The Keepers have had a busy few months on and off the Commons.

They have helped with the set up and take down for various events including the Levy consultation meetings and the Pumpkin Hunt. They provided a mounted presence at the Wimbledon, Roehampton and REMPF war memorials for Remembrance Day and undertaken regular foot patrols at Putney Lower Common.

Despite being short-staffed due to one member of the team being on long-term sick leave, the goodwill of the Keepers working extra shifts has meant that they have managed to keep a strong presence on the Common every day, trying not to drop below their minimum strength.

The usual type of incidents have been dealt with, the top three being:

- Cyclists - mainly off tracks and a couple with excess speed.
- Dogs - groups meeting up causing more than four dogs being together.
- Golf - not wearing correct attire.

Horses - we heard from Hillside Animal Sanctuary and they have advised that Hector is settling into retirement well, and they ran a short feature on him in their latest newsletter. The new horse Bolt Conduct has settled in well and so far no problems at all.

We are in our winter routine at the moment but will return to summer routine late February early March 2024.

Maintenance Update

The maintenance team's planned heathland/acid grassland restorations works were started at the beginning of the month with tree felling, woodland thinning and scrub clearance work being completed along the golf course fairway Caesar's Camp, amongst sections of heathland along Ladies Mile, a continuation of works in extending the Tibbets Corner Meadow heathland site, and the ongoing work to the large areas of heathland and woodland pasture amongst the

grasslands between Memorial Ride, Green Ride and Centre Path. Felled timber from these projects was then used to create habitat piles or stockpiled for use on other future projects.

On top of this is the continued support and after care of the work carried out by volunteer scrub bashers which includes the stump sawing, chipping and removal of the saplings and the felling of larger trees, on a number of other heathland sites across the Commons.

Other tasks include the annual cutting and management of various native hedges (formal and informal alike) and the planting of new ones, as seen for example in the wildlife garden outside the Rangers Office. The team also continued their commitment to tree safety management, with operations being carried out at Caesar's Well, PLC, REMPf Memorial, the nature trail, along residential boundaries, and public highways on Putney Heath and many more sites, including the preparation tree lifting/thinning work along the new path restoration routes.

Other large infrastructure projects that were managed by and helped along via the maintenance team included the path restoration work to five highly use paths across the Commons, the installation of a new fire detection alarm system at the Ranger Office/Stable complex, and the ongoing fire door refurbishment and fire compartmentalisation works at the Rangers Office, Windmill Museum and REMPf sites.

On top of the regular weekly maintenance work tasks, the team has also attended training courses on pond and wetland area management, as well as updated training of tractor mounted woodchipper operations. They have carried out preparation works to Commons war memorials in advance of Remembrance Day, litter and bins tasks, post rainfall drainage management tasks, pothole repair, car park regrading works at the REMPf, and mobility scooter access path repairs and alterations.

The department was recently assessed via an external health and safety audit, which was deemed very successful by the visiting inspectors, and we currently have two separate young people working with the team as part of their work experience placements for their A-Level assignments and trade training elements, from Ibstock Place School and Plumpton Agricultural College respectively.

Richardson Evans Memorial Playing Fields Update

The staff welcomed new member to the team in mid-September.

Repairs have been made to pot holes in the tarmac drive in the car park; to the roof area above the Old Thorntonians passageway where the box guttering was found to be leaking. Yet another leaking roof problem, resulting in water ingress around the fireplace in the club house, again this was caused by damaged guttering which was easily fixed with a new bracket, a few screws and some guttering sealant.

Events:

- Weekend football and rugby matches
- Schools football for both Kings College and Thomas schools through out the week days. Marymount International school for mid-week matches
- Local Putney schools held their annual run on the common
- Thomas's schools had five cross country events over five days at the start of November
- RunThrough held another very successful event here at the playing fields with over 500 runners taking part

- Storms Babet and Ciaren caused several of the weekend fixtures to be cancelled due to the grounds being saturated; the 2 soak aways that are by the first team rugby pitch were pumped out on numerous occasions over this period of time.
- The recent cold spell brings the problem of frozen pitches, but fortunately with extra slitting with the Rota-knife we were able to complete all the booked in fixtures.
- TH&H hosted their annual Varsity run on the 2 December 2023
- London Cornish managed a home win on a bitterly cold day after a run of a few defeats.

Independent Green Space Managers Network

Following an invitation from Parks for London, who chair and provide the secretariat function, I have started to participate in this informal network of pan-London non-local authority green space owners and managers. The network aims to share experiences, innovation, and good practice with no formalities to participating. Other attendees include representatives from Historic Royal Palaces, Gunnersbury Park, Chiswick House and Gardens. The recent meeting covered using spatial data/intelligence to enable better decision making and the following meeting agenda will include enforcement of byelaws.

Wandsworth Sustainability Partnership

I was invited to participate in this informal network of local organisations, people, as well as, officers and members from the Council. About 30 people attended the online event held via Teams. There was a talk about the findings of a study done by the Grantham Institute 'How do UK citizens perceive the co-benefits of climate action?'. This was followed by some breakout sessions to discuss sustainability matters people were working on, I mentioned my interest in looking at renewables technologies across the sites and operations but the issues with failing boilers requiring a like-for-like replacement immediately. I will follow up on this with conversations with the Council officers, whom I know well. The next meeting in February 2024 will be face-to-face in Battersea on 'Nature, Biodiversity and Conservation', which promises to be very interesting.

The Grantham Institute report can be found at <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/grantham/publications/briefing-papers/how-do-uk-citizens-perceive-the-co-benefits-of-climate-action.php>

EVENTS/Visits

Levy Consultation Public Meetings

Staff attended and supported three in-person and one online consultation events, with several attending when they were off duty. I would like to put on record my thanks to them for their commitment in attending these out-of-hours but important events.

Base Youth Centre Visit (25th Oct)

We hosted a visit from Base Youth Club, based in Roehampton. They were given a tour of our stable yard, shown how to groom horses and the role of the Keepers. They were also introduced to the various other wildlife kept in the yard and this seemed to have opened them up in more active conversation with staff. Following this, they helped the C&EO clear encroachment of trees on to the heathland at Putney Heath and very enthusiastically and helpfully cleared a large section. A visit to the Windmill Museum then followed, where the teens learned about the history of windmill and the use of wind and water in pre-industrial

times. The visit was very successful, the youth group leader stated the Centre has never had a visit to the Commons before and when asked, none of the teens had visited the Commons/Putney Heath before.

The leader of the youth group later followed up with an email:

“Our group had an amazing time with you and the staff on Wimbledon Common during October Half-Term that is their words. You all kept our young people interests, enthusiasm on-going they had a great afternoon and in the warmer weather I plan to bring another group. Also in the warmer weather you may hear from my colleagues that run other youth groups in the borough as I spoke about our visit at a borough wide meeting. Lastly my colleague Kate who I might add was not looking forward to our visit also had an amazing time she took a lot of frustrations out chopping down those trees.”

The above visit and that of Wild Collect (student group from University of Roehampton) on the 1st October are helping us refine our model of hosting visits. Angela has recently established contact with ARK Putney Academy (off Putney Heath), which was an action following our meeting the Putney Society, and we are hoping they will come for a similar visit.

Halloween Pumpkin Hunt – The Pumpkin Hunt held on 28 October 2023 was a huge success and very popular with visitors. Around 250 children took part.

Lighting Up the Nation Coronation Celebration – The Chairman kindly hosted this well attended reception on Thursday 9 November 2023 to formally thank volunteers and helpers of the King’s Coronation Event held earlier in the year at the Windmill. I would like to put on record my thanks to the Chairman for hosting the event and to the Friends’ Chairman for her support for the event.

Christmas Reception – I really enjoyed meeting more of our stakeholders at this event and I and others have received very positive feedback from attendees. The same venue has been booked for next year’s Christmas Reception (6 December 2024).

Carols at the Windmill – At the time of writing, the very popular annual event will be taking place on Saturday 9 December 2023 at the Windmill, jointly organised by WPC and the Windmill Museum Trustees.

Committee(s):	Date(s): 11 December 2023	Item no. 12.23.7
Board of Conservators		
Subject: Fundraising Update	Public	
Report of: Fundraising Manager	For Information	
Summary		
This report provides a summary of fundraising activity in October and November 2023		

Significant donations

In October, WPCC was presented with a cheque for £750 from the Wimbledon Windmilers, a regular sports group.

Robert Holmes & Co have continued their support of the Commons and pledged to make a donation of £2,180 to help plant the hedgerow in the Wildlife Garden and support woodland management activities as part of their tree funding programme.

In November, staff were stunned when a regular 'Healthy Walk' attendee gave Peter Haldane, leader of the walks, a donation of £1,000. The donation was a gift to say thank you for 'opening their eyes to the Common'. The thank you card said, 'It has been great getting to know the Commons in all the seasons and to learn about the maintenance that is done to keep it looking natural!'

Reception for Benefactors

WPCC is fortunate to be supported by over 500 Friends of Wimbledon and Putney Commons. To show our appreciation of our Benefactors and thank them for their generosity, a Festive Drinks Reception is organised for 12th December, and we look forward to having the opportunity to thank our generous supporters.

Contactless payment devices

Two more contactless payment devices have been purchased to help the staff and volunteers accept donations at events.

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Board of Conservators	11 December 2023	12.23.8
Subject: Conservation Update	Public	
Report of: Conservation and Engagement Officer	For Decision/Information	
<h1>SUMMARY</h1>		
The Board are asked to receive and note the latest conservation update for December 2023.		

Heathland Management

Over the past two months, much of the conservation work that has been carried out on the Commons has focused on heathland management. By far the largest task that has been undertaken by the Commons' team has involved the clearance of invasive trees to the immediate south of Tibbet's Underpass.

This work has been carried out in two phases and has included involvement from both volunteers and Commons' staff. With the initial phase of work beginning during autumn 2021, by early 2022, an area of approximately ½ hectare of heathland was recovered from invasive tree cover. Noting the successful recovery of heathland vegetation on the site during the remainder of 2022 and 2023, during September 2023, volunteers returned to the site to continue cutting back invasive scrub in the adjoining area.

By the end of November 2023, volunteers and the WPCC Maintenance Team had cut back scrub from an additional area of approximately 1 hectare. Logs have been piled in various locations around the surrounding woodland to help increase the amount of deadwood habitats that are available in this area of the Commons. To ensure that cut tree stumps do not produce any new growth, it is important that as many as possible are removed through the use of a stump grinder during 2024.



The Commons' Maintenance Team carrying out heathland restoration near Tibbet's Meadow during November 2023.

In addition to the heathland work that has been carried out near Tibbet's Meadow, another area of heathland where invasive trees have recently been cut back is located close to the junction of Ladies Mile and Inner Park Ride. While the work in this area only covered a relatively small area of heathland, there is a good coverage of heather remaining on this site which should benefit from increased levels of light and the reduction of invasive vegetation.



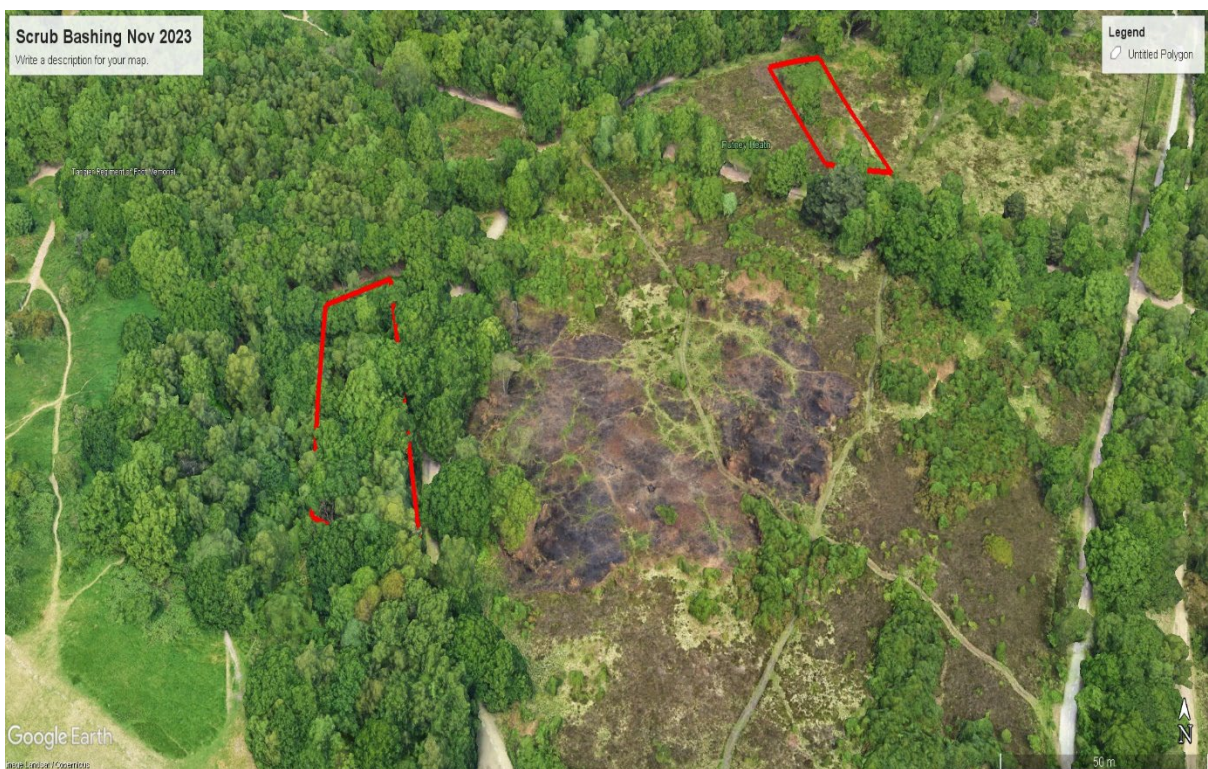
Heathland close to the junction of Ladies Mile and Inner Park Ride. (November 2023)

To help with the removal of smaller though equally invasive scrub, over the past two months, there have been seven volunteer groups on the Commons. These groups have cut back invasive scrub in the following areas:

- South of Hookhamslade Pond
- Heathland between Roehampton Ride and the Putney Heath mounds.
- The wet Heath



Scrub bashing, Wimbledon Common, autumn 2023 (above)



Scrub bashing, Putney Heath, autumn 2023 (above)

Wimbledon Common Golf Course

As mentioned in the conservation report for the October 2023 Conservators Board Meeting, during the beginning of October 2023, the WPCCC Maintenance Team began work along the edge of Caesar's Camp fairway. The coppicing of mainly silver birch trees and gorse will help with the recovery of acid grassland in this area. This work was completed during November 2023 and the site will be monitored over the next year. If necessary additional low level thinning work will be carried out.



WCGC No 10 Caesar's Well (LSGC 17)

Woodland Management

While the main area of woodland work is set to begin towards the end of 2023, one small section of work has recently been carried out by the Commons' mid-week volunteer group close to Beverley Brook. This activity has involved cutting back saplings and bramble and pulling bracken to help restore a small woodland glade.



Public Engagement

Health walks - 4 events over the past two months.

Friends of Wimbledon and Putney Commons – Wimbledon Common walk held on 19 October 2023.

Friends of Wimbledon and Putney Commons – Putney Lower Common Walk held on 16 November 2023.

Roehampton Base Youth Centre visit to the Commons (including a short period of scrub bashing) held on 25 October 2023.

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators	11 December 2023	12.23.10
Subject: Meeting Dates 2024		Non-Public
Report of: EA to the Chief Executive		For Decision
Summary		
Recommendation		
The Board considers and approves the draft Calendar of meetings and events for 2024.		

Calendar of Meetings/Events 2024

Attached is the draft of the meetings and events calendar for 2024 which has been prepared for the Board's consideration and approval.

Please note that there have been some amendments to the calendar since it was originally circulated. These are as follows:

- Friends meeting has been moved from February to 18 January 2024
- The Stakeholder Forum in April has been moved to 13 March 2024
- The General Open Meeting in November has been moved to 6 November 2024 (the first rather than last Wednesday)

Once approved, I will send out electronic meeting invitations.

MEETINGS and EVENTS 2024

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Monday	1 BH			1 BH			1					
Tuesday	2			2			2 10.00am FIC			1		
Wednesday	3			3 new Elected Conservators take office	1		3			2		
Thursday	4	1		4	2		4	1		3		
Friday	5	2	1	5	3		5	2		4	1	
Saturday	6	3	2	6	4	1	6	3		5	2	
Sunday	7	4	3	7	5	2	7	4	1	6	3	1
Monday	8	5	4	8 4.30pm Board Meeting	6 BH	3 4.30pm Board Meeting	8 4.30pm Board Meeting	5	2	7	4	2
Tuesday	9 5pm Wildlife & C'vation	6	5	9	7 10.00am FIC	4	9	6	3	8	5 10.00am FIC	3
Wednesday	10	7	6 Election date	10	8	5	10	7	4	9	6 GOM	4
Thursday	11	8	7	11	9	6	11	8	5	10	7	5
Friday	12	9	8	12	10	7	12	9	6	11	8	6 Christmas Reception
Saturday	13	10	9	13	11	8	13	10	7	12	9	7 Carols at the Windmill TBC
Sunday	14	11	10	14	12	9	14	11	8 Open Day	13	10	8
Monday	15	12 4.30pm Board Meeting	11	15 4:30pm Part B Board Meeting	13	10 4:30pm Part B Board Meeting	15 4:30pm Part B Board Meeting	12	9	14 4.30pm Board Meeting	11	9 4.30pm Board Meeting
Tuesday	16	13 Winter Talk TBC	12 5pm Wildlife & C'vation	16	14 5pm Wildlife & C'vation	11 2.30 pm Constitution Committee	16 5pm Wildlife & C'vation	13	10 10.00am FIC 5pm Wildlife & C'vation	15	12 5pm Wildlife & C'vation	10
Wednesday	17	14	13 8.30am Stakeholder	17	15	12	17	14	11	16	13	11 8.30am Stakeholder
Thursday	18 3.30pm Friends Committee	15	14	18	16	13	18	15	12	17	14	12
Friday	19	16	15	19	17	14	19	16	13	18	15	13
Saturday	20	17	16	20	18	15	20	17	14	19	16	14
Sunday	21	18	17	21	19 Bird Walk TBC	16	21	18	15 Bird Walk TBC	20	17	15
Monday	22	19 4:30pm Part B Board Meeting	18	22	20	17	22	19	16	21 4:30pm Part B Board Meeting	18	16 4:30pm Part B Board Meeting
Tuesday	23 10.00am FIC	20	19 3pm ARC	23	21 TBC 10am Joint ARC/FIC and 12 noon ARC	18	23	20	17 2.30 pm Constitution Committee	22 3pm ARC	19 2.30 pm Constitution Committee	17
Wednesday	24	21	20	24	22	19 8.30am Stakeholder	24 7.00pm Conservators Walk TBC	21	18 8.30am Stakeholder	23	20	18
Thursday	25	22	21 10.00am FIC	25 3.30pm Friends Committee	23	20	25	22	19	24	21	19
Friday	26	23	22	26	24	21 BioBlitz TBC	26	23	20	25	22	20
Saturday	27	24	23	27	25	22	27	24	21	26 Halloween Pumpkin Hunt TBC	23	21
Sunday	28	25	24	28	26	23	28	25	22	27 Bird Walk TBC	24	22
Monday	29	26	25	29	27 BH	24	29	26	23 BH	28	25	23
Tuesday	30	27 2.30 pm Constitution Committee	26	30	28	25	30 3pm ARC	27	24	29	26	24
Wednesday	31	28	27		29	26	31 AOM	28	25	30	27	25 BH
Thursday		29	28		30	27		29	26	31 3.30pm Friends Committee	28	26 BH
Friday			29 BH Easter Egg Hunt TBC		31	28		30	27		29	27
Saturday			30			29		31	28		30	28
Sunday			31			30			29			29
Monday									30			30
Tuesday												31

Wildlife and Conservation Forum meeting dated 24 October 2023

Meeting Minutes

Attendees

Oliver Bennett - conservator (OB)
Sue Bucknall – conservator (SB)
Colin Cooper – staff (CC)
Andy Davies – volunteer (AD)
Angela Evans-Hill – staff (AEH)
Les Evans-Hill - volunteer (LEH)
Peter Haldane – staff (PH)
Andrew Harding – volunteer (AH)
Michael Johnston (MJ)
Simon Riley - volunteer (SR)
Nick Tew - volunteer (NT)

1. Apologies were received from Ros Taylor and Adrian Podmore.
2. Introductions were made to CC the new CEO for the Commons.
3. The minutes of the Forum meeting of 11 July 2023 were agreed.
4. Conservation and general update from PH.
 - a) 9 areas cut and collected by contractors
 - b) 7 areas cut and collected by Commons' staff
 - c) Putney Heath – temporary pools created/enhanced. Molinia turfs used to block ditches to encourage water retention.
 - d) 20 volunteer sessions in period since last Forum meeting
 - e) Some ring barking of Turkey Oak

SR asked why the cut and collecting had taken place so early in the year (very early August) given that this is sub-optimal at best. PH said that it was difficult to get contractors to carry out the work and that this was the only time the contractor was available.

5. Recorder and Monitoring Updates
 - a) LEH - Moths pupating underground appear to have done badly in 2023. 500 species so far for the year although overall abundance has been very poor.

- b) LEH – 3 lamp and sheet evenings have been held with the public invited via the Nature Notes WPCCC Facebook page. Consideration was being given as to whether Eventbrite could be used.
 - c) AH mentioned that there are now 5 years of bird transect data which now needs collating to get a feel for trends.
 - d) AD reported that Small Heath butterfly numbers continued to be very low although there had been an encouraging increase in Marbled Whites.
6. Update on land management plan (LMP). The latest draft of the LMP was circulated to Forum members on 23 October 2023. **ACTION POINT – ALL** Comments were requested within the next two weeks. Forum members felt that at over 500 pages this was possibly a challenging deadline.
 7. Feasibility study concerning the restoration of Farm Bog. Forum members were generally very positive. OB made it clear that such a project would require grant funding as well as a Project Officer. It is clear from the report that the overriding restoration requirement is the removal of encroaching trees as the trees not only transpire significant volumes of water, thus drying the bog out but also cast shade hindering the development of typical bog flora. It was felt that tree removal at scale might require some delicate PR management. **ACTION POINT – OB.** OB to discuss further with CC and conservators.
 8. Farm Bog – SR raised the concern that London Wildlife Trust (LWT) are encouraging visits to Farm bog in their summer magazine. **ACTION POINT – AH -IN PROGRESS.** AH agreed to draft a letter for CC to send to LWT stating that this was not appropriate. It was noted that similar concerns have been expressed to LWT in the past.
 9. Golf Course – SR expressed concern that the golf course was being cut excessively and in contravention of the agreement between the Golf Course and the Conservators. Peter agreed to look into this further. The Forum noted that the management of the golf course and its environs would, in any case, be dealt with under the LMP.
 10. Winter Talk – AEH has been in contact with Mark Spencer, forensic botanist and honorary botanical curator at the Linnean Society. The Forum agreed that forensic botany was a topic that might encourage a wide audience. **ACTION POINT – AEH** - Details and dates to be agreed however likely to be in first few weeks of February.
 11. Dates and leaders for future events. SR agreed to liaise with AEH about including dates and leaders on future documents circulated. **ACTION POINT SR - DONE**

12. It was agreed that in light of deferral of this meeting that the next meeting scheduled for 14 November 2023 would be cancelled. SR agreed to circulate an email to all Forum members confirming this **ACTION POINT – SR - DONE**
13. Dates of meeting in 2024 – a provisional list of dates will be circulated to Forum members in the next few days by SR – **ACTION POINT – SR - DONE**

AOB

- a) Annual Monitoring Report for 2024. **ACTION POINT – OB** to circulate email with request for information and dates in due course.
- b) It was noted that Maggie May was unable to attend meetings because of other commitments. SR felt it would be useful for the Forum to have a short summary of fundraising initiatives in progress. **ACTION POINT – PH** - PH agreed to include such a summary in his conservation and general update when he presented at future meetings.
- c) SR mentioned that it might be worth checking that all Forum members had access to the Volunteers' portal of the WPCC website. SR to liaise with AEH and Forum members by email. **ACTION POINT – SR - DONE**