

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators, JUNE 2014

Minutes of the Conservators' Meeting held on Monday 9 June 2014 at 5pm in the Information Centre, Wimbledon Common, London SW19 5NR.

Conservators Present: Mr D Devons (Chairman)
Sir Ian Andrews
Mrs J Evanson
Mr D Frampton
Mr J Horrocks
Mr A Simon (Vice-Chairman)
Dr R Taylor
Professor R Touquet

Officers Present: Mr S Lee (Chief Executive)
Ms P Graystone (Deputy Clerk & Ranger)
Ms A Evans (PA to the Chief Executive)

1 member of the public

06.14.1 Apologies

Sir Ian Andrews - for lateness

06.14.2 Declarations of Interest

Mr Devons and Mr Simon confirmed they were both trustees of the Wimbledon Windmill Museum Trust. Mr Simon was also an executive member of the Wimbledon Society and sat on the PCC of Putney Parish. Mr Horrocks confirmed he was an executive member of the Putney Society.

06.14.3 Minutes of Meeting held on 12 May 2014

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 May were approved without amendment.

06.14.4 Matters Arising

- i. **Travellers** – The Chief Executive reported that he and the Senior Keeper had met with Inspector Biggs of Wandsworth Events Police and Support Service and this had proved to be a valuable opportunity to discuss the protocol and arrangements Wandsworth Council had developed to manage traveller encampments. A discussion had taken place about the Conservators utilising the skills and knowledge of the Wandsworth Events Police to help the Commons' Keepers manage any future traveller incursions.
- ii. A further Travellers Summit was being arranged by Wandsworth Council, which officers from the Commons would be attending.
- iii. **REMPF War Memorial** – maintenance work had commenced to improve the appearance of the War Memorial, including removal of moss and weed growth, together with edging-up of grassed areas. Costs for replacement of the broken paving slabs were currently being obtained.
- iv. **Footpath Repairs** – works to prepare a detailed specification and tender evaluation for the footpath repairs, as approved at the last meeting, were underway.

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- v. **Wimbledon Area Traffic Scheme** - The Chief Executive reported that nothing further had been heard from the Council on their proposed cycle route along Southside.

06.14.5 Chief Executive's Report

B GENERAL UPDATE

The Chief Executive began his report by informing the Conservators that the wife of Mr Peter Haldane, the Wildlife and Conservation Officer, had given birth to an 8lb baby girl on 5 June. She had been named Ava Rose. The Conservators asked for their congratulations to be passed on to Mr & Mrs Haldane.

- i. **Events** – The Conservators noted the events scheduled to take place on the Commons during July and August.
- ii. **Windmill Repairs** – The Chief Executive reported that the specialist company appointed to undertake a condition survey of the joists supporting the first floor of the Windmill had completed their on-site investigations. Their report had still to be analysed by Marcus Beale Associates.
- iii. **Staff Summer BBQ** – It was proposed, and agreed, that the staff summer BBQ be held at The London Scottish Golf Club on Friday 18 July 2014.
- iv. **Staff Vacancy** – The Chief Executive reported that a member of the Mounted Keeper team had tendered his resignation and would be leaving at the end of July 2014. A recruitment and selection process to find a replacement Keeper was currently underway.

C Communications

Ci. **Responsible Dog-Control**

The Conservators noted, and approved subject to some minor amendments, the draft wording for the responsible dog-control leaflet. The Chief Executive commented that the Verderers of the New Forest had successfully utilised animation-type drawings to illustrate the points they wished to make on their dog-control leaflet and he proposed to do something similar.

Professor Touquet commented that it might be useful if, particularly on the golf course, wherever there was a litter bin, a dog waste bin be placed next to it, and vice versa. The Chief Executive agreed that there were certainly some strategic locations where this would be possible and he would look into it.

- Cii. **Newsletter** - The Chief Executive reported that the Newsletter had now been printed and distribution to Levy-payers was complete. There had been some calls regarding non-delivery and Ms Evans had followed these up with the delivery company. Mrs Evanson and Mr Simon reported that it had not been delivered to their homes. Ms Evans was asked to follow this up and arrange a meeting with the delivery company in the near future. On a positive note, there had been very good feedback to the Newsletter and several residents had expressed their concern about the traveller issue.

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Ciii. **Templates** – The Chief Executive reported that a number of new templates were currently being prepared that would provide a more consistent framework for communications across the Commons.

06.14.6 Annual Report and Accounts

The Conservators approved the Annual Report and accounts subject to some minor amendments.

It was suggested that, before the Annual Open Meeting, the Conservators give some thought on how the generous legacy they had received from a local resident should be spent. Some discussion took place about the legacy being utilised in the Putney Lower Common area. The Chief Executive reported that he had been in contact with the family and they were happy that the money be spent on a renovation project, possibly the Windmill, or one of the staff cottages. Whatever was decided, it was agreed that the money should be used for a specific project and that a small plaque to acknowledge the legacy would be installed.

It was queried why the support costs for security were much larger than the other departments. The Deputy Clerk & Ranger explained that this was because the administration payroll was apportioned to each department. Security was by far the highest as the four administration staff were also Duty Officers and therefore also part of the security team.

06.14.7 Natural History Sub-Committee

a) Minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2014

The Conservators noted the minutes of the meeting held on 7 May; there had been a verbal report at the May Board meeting.

With regard to the query why the Alder trees had been planted at the Windmill car park, it was suggested that Mr Bill Rowland, the Senior Keeper, as the longest-serving member of staff, might be able to shed some light on this.

b) Minutes of the meeting held on 28 May 2014

Dr Taylor reported on the sad loss of the swans at Queensmere and the subsequent death of the pen from a stroke. It was hoped to improve the floating platforms for next year in an effort to attract another mating pair.

The organised recording on The Plain was going well and both the bird records and flora records were very good. Up to 60 species of flora had now been identified. There had been no feedback on insect recording but Dr Taylor was following this up.

c) Leaflet for the Bioblitz

The Conservators noted and approved the flyer for the BioBlitz subject to one minor amendment. It was noted that it had already been published on the website and would be circulated. A short article had appeared in the recent Time & Leisure magazine.

Mr Simon expressed his thanks to all those involved in organising the event.

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06.14.8 Any Other Business

Annual Open Meeting – Mr Horrocks reported that there was no notice advertising the Annual Open Meeting in the Noticeboard outside the Windmill. Ms Evans would follow this up.

Sunday Times Article on Horse Chestnuts – Mr Simon reported that an article in the Sunday Times had been able to publish an estimate of the number of Horse Chestnut trees in the country. He therefore considered that work to estimate the number of trees of each species on the Commons be undertaken. The Chief Executive commented that this was on his list of work for the future as part of the need for tree inspections.

06.14.9 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Monday 14 July 2014 at 5pm at the Information Centre

The meeting finished at 18.00pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Dewar', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.