

# Wimbledon and Putney Commons: Election of Conservators 2018



## John Cameron

### Why do you want to be a Conservator?

Self-inflicted financial stress has put the commons under threat. £400,000 has been wasted on legal fees in a futile attempt to deny the indefensible. The 2017 accounts have been “restated” by £2.8m. The levy maps are inaccurate. Assets have been starved of investment. In recent years the Trustees have ‘lost’ over £6m, due to financial mismanagement.

Despite the numerous criticisms of governance the WPCC is still a cosy clique. Independently elected Trustees are needed to act robustly, ONLY in the interest of the charity. These Trustees must be open, transparent and accountable. They must adhere to, rather than ignore the law.

Weak Trustees will NOT protect the commons for future generations. Managing the commons or charity is not difficult. Keep it simple, do it well, be a little better each year. Employ competent management. Elect Trustees who bring high standards of governance, transparency, clear communication. Questions / comment E: wpcctrustee@gmail.com

### What experience and skills do you feel you could bring to the role?

*“...there is or has been MISCONDUCT or MISMANAGEMENT in the administration of the charity\* ...”*

*\* Charity Commission, September 2016.*

The Statutory Inquiry instituted by the Charity Commission in 2016 is expected to report in 2018. The Interim Manager continues the investigation into *“whether the decision taken by the Charity was taken properly and in the best interests of the Charity or whether it would be in the Charity’s interests to seek to recover funds from any of the relevant parties”*.

As an elected Trustee, despite being unlawfully excluded, I have detailed knowledge of the misconduct and mismanagement by current Trustees and executive. I am also aware of the undeclared conflicts of interest between Trustees and professional advisors. This knowledge will be crucial once the outcome and directions of the Commission are published. Implementation must be by Trustees who are prepared to act appropriately and not further obstruct regulatory investigation.

### How will you support implementation of the Commons’ Vision and Strategy?

The 1871 Act that created the commons is as relevant today as it was 150 years ago. With competent, focused Trustees this legislation is sufficiently robust to protect the commons, ensuring they remain natural, protected, unenclosed.

‘Nonspecific’ amendments to the 1871 Act could remove democratically elected Trustees, accountability, transparency; in effect ‘privatise’ the charity, allowing it to be managed by the executive and ‘handpicked’ Trustees. Levy payers will lose the only control mechanism they have - the democratic election of Trustees.

The CV&S document is overly ambitious, uncosted, undeliverable. The proposed creation of a further group, ‘Supporters of WPCC’, will cause confusion, as unaligned groups vie for authority. Research of *“...where WPCC sits in terms of its purpose and place within Greater London”* or *“...developing and promoting a brand for WPCC that defines its special qualities”* is a POOR use of money.

Better to repair the footpaths - then maintain them.