



Wimbledon and Putney Commons

Media Statement February 2021

DEFRA Appointed Conservator

The Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (WPCC) are pleased to announce that Lord Gardiner of Kimble, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Rural Affairs and Biosecurity at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has confirmed the appointment of Mr Oliver Bennett MBE to the position of Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservator for a three-year term in accordance with the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Act 1871. Mr Bennett will take up his position with immediate effect, taking over from Dr Ros Taylor who retired at the end of December following seven distinguished years in the role.

Mr Bennett brings with him a passion for the environment and for supporting his local community. He holds a degree in Environmental Science and has also undertaken a Research Masters in Environmental Science. He previously worked in the charity sector for the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and later the People's Trust for Endangered Species. Mr Bennett currently works in the House of Commons.

In taking up his position Mr Bennett commented: "I am pleased and honoured to have been appointed a Conservator of Wimbledon and Putney Commons by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The Commons have a huge cultural value and they play a crucial role in protecting rare and threatened wildlife at a local, national and international level. I am truly excited about this opportunity to work with the other Conservators, the staff and the users of the Commons to protect and enhance this wildlife for future generations."

Mr Bennett's appointment follows a recruitment process carried out by a selection committee of the WPCC which adhered to the spirit of the Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies.

ENDS

NOTES for Editors - Wimbledon and Putney Commons is a charity managed by the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (WPCC). It was established under the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Act of 1871. The Commons comprise some 1,140 acres across Wimbledon Common, Putney Heath and Putney Lower Common.

Contact: Stephen Bound, Acting Chief Executive
Tel: 020 8788 7655, E-mail: rangersoffice@wpcc.org.uk website: www.wpcc.org.uk

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