

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (WPCC)
Manor Cottage
Wimbledon Common London SW19 5NR
Chief Executive: Simon Lee



MEDIA RELEASE

OCTOBER 2019

Launch of the Friends of Wimbledon and Putney Commons

On the evening of Friday 20th September 2019, the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (WPCC) formally launched the Friends of Wimbledon and Putney Commons at a special event held on Wimbledon Common in front of a gathering of 125 Friends with the Right Honourable Justine Greening MP and Stephen Hammond MP in attendance. Both MPs have been loyal supporters of the Commons over the years and the Conservators were delighted that they were able to join in the celebration.

This special evening celebrated the historic links between the Commons and the London Scottish Regiment through words, music, food and wine, commencing with a piper led walk from the windmill through the woods to a recital on the banks of Queensmere.

The music recital began with a solo wooden recorder, whose melancholic tones pierced the darkness with a Scottish lament. St Mary's Church Choir sang from across the waters of Queensmere pond to a candle lit gathering of Friends on the opposite bank (see photograph attached). Following the recital, Friends processed to the London Scottish Golf Club for a reception and a short historic interlude.

In the welcome address, Diane Neil Mills, Chairman of the WPCC, thanked everyone for their support and commitment in taking the lead in becoming Founder Members of the Friends. She added, "As Conservators, we will do our utmost to ensure that the dual purposes for which the Friends have been established, collective celebration and fundraising, are pursued with equal vim and vigour".

The Conservators are delighted with the response they have received; since registration opened in early September, over 200 people have joined the Friends. More information regarding the Friends of Wimbledon and Putney Common is available at www.wpcc.org.uk/friends.

London in Bloom Competition

At the awards ceremony for the London in Bloom competition held on the 20th September 2019, WPCC was awarded the prestigious 'London in Bloom Common of the Year 2019' for Wimbledon Common. This was in addition to gold awards for both Putney Lower Common and Wimbledon Common. The awards recognise the outstanding effort of the staff, led by Simon Lee, Chief Executive of Wimbledon and Putney Commons, to achieve the highest standard of public open space.

Commons Open Day

The annual Commons Open Day, held in glorious sunshine on the 8th September 2019, attracted an estimated 10,000 people. True to the Open Day's origins, which date back over 20 years, the event maintained its ethos of being a local event for local people; meeting the horses and the Keepers in the Stable Yard remained as popular as ever, as did the now infamous Wacky Dog Show which ended the day. Along with the many local charity and business stalls, visitors enjoyed craft demonstrations, riding and dog-handling displays. The Conservators were delighted to see everyone enjoying themselves and to be reminded of how fortunate we all are to have this magnificent resource. We are grateful to everyone for supporting the occasion including the very generous donations that were received at the end of the day.

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Heritage Lottery Grant

Following the [announcement](#) that WPCC, in partnership with Wimbledon Windmill Museum, had received a £126,100 grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund for an exciting heritage project – ‘Commons for the Next Generations, Green Space for All’, the Board received a presentation by the consultants leading on the project, Barker Langham, at their meeting on Monday 10th October 2019. The Wimbledon and Putney Commons website has also been updated with more details about the work that will be undertaken and includes links to both the key principles of that work and a copy of the bid application. [Heritage Lottery Grant - an update](#)

Information Request

In our [September 2018 Media Release](#), we reported that a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 was received from a levy-payer in respect of the forced sale of Mill House. The Information Commissioner has now issued WPCC with a Decision Notice and a response to that notice has been sent. Copies of both documents can be found [here](#).

Governance

The [Resolutions](#) of the meeting of the Board of Conservators held on the 18th September 2018 have been posted on the Wimbledon and Putney Commons website.

ENDS

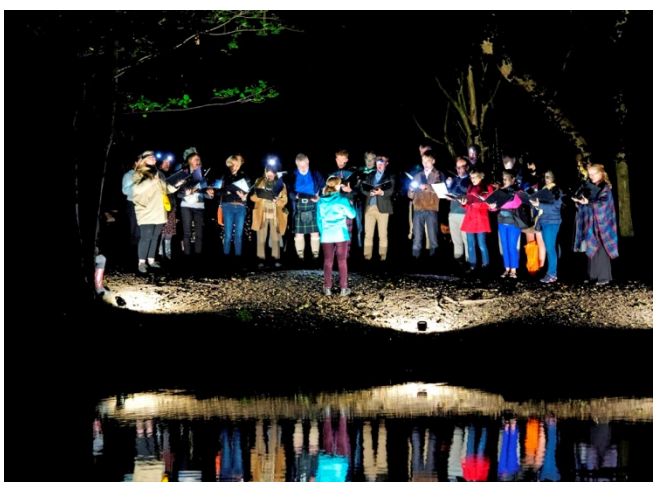
NOTES for Editors - Wimbledon and Putney Commons is a charity managed by the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (WPCC). It was established under the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Act of 1871. The Commons comprise some 1,140 acres across Wimbledon Common, Putney Heath and Putney Lower Common.

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Friends' Launch - Candlelit gathering at Queensmere Pond



Friends' Launch - St Mary's Church Choir at Queensmere Pond