

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



MEDIA RELEASE

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

June 2017 - Appointment of an Interim Manager

On 31st May 2017, the Charity Commission advised the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (Trustees) that it had appointed an interim manager, Mr Gordon Reid of Barlow Robbins Solicitors, to work alongside the trustees to fulfil a specific task.

The task relates to completion of the Commission's Formal Action Plan in connection with the easement granted to Wandsworth Borough Council in August 2014 - specifically whether the Trustees' decision not to pursue recovery of an identified loss is in the best interests of the Charity. Full details of the specific functions of the interim manager are included in the notes below.

Prue Whyte, Chairman of the Conservators (Trustees) commented that *'the appointment of an independent and neutral interim manager will provide a final and transparent resolution of this troubling issue. The Trustees will of course fully cooperate with the interim manager.'*

The Commission notes that the Trustees have demonstrated their ability to operate the Charity; all other functions will continue under control of the Charity.

The Charity looks forward with confidence to final resolution of this matter with a minimum of further delay and expense.

ENDS

NOTES for Editors - Wimbledon and Putney Commons is a charity managed by the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators. 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.

The Conservators (Trustees) were formally notified by the Charity Commission on the 15th September 2016 that it had opened a Statutory Inquiry. See www.gov.uk/government/news/new-charity-investigation-Wimbledon-and-Putney-Commons-conservators for further details.

SCHEDULE – Taken directly from the Order of the Charity Commission for England and Wales. Made under s.76(3)(g) the Charities Act 2011 to appoint an interim manager dated 31st May 2017 for the charity known as Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (303167):

The functions of the interim manager shall be limited to the following:

1. To consider the Charity's trustees' decision of the 8th February 2017 not to take legal action to recover the loss suffered by the charity following the granting of an easement to the London Borough of Wandsworth in August 2014 for access rights over Putney Lower Common for £350,000 which was a significant undervalue ("the decision"), and whether further action needs to be taken. In particular to:
 - a. Review the information supplied to the trustees' legal advisers and assess whether all relevant information was supplied and duly considered by the trustees;
 - b. Determine whether the decision was taken properly and was in the best interests of the Charity;

- c. If required, obtain further legal or valuation advice for a new decision to be properly made;
- d. Make recommendations as to whether legal action to recover property is proportionate and in the interests of the charity; and
- e. Report to the Commission in writing the reasons for either affirming or re-taking the decision with supporting information.

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