

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators
Manor Cottage
Wimbledon Common
London SW19 5NR



Chief Executive: Simon Lee

MEDIA RELEASE

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Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

At their Board meeting on the 14th December 2015, the Trustees considered a number of matters:

Putney Hospital Site

The first stage of the agreed Formal Action Plan set out by the Charity Commission in their letter of the 22nd October 2015 requires the Board to appoint appropriate legal advisers to guide/advise Trustees.

A number of legal firms have been contacted and the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive met with a shortlist with a view to making a recommendation on which firm to appoint. Following a presentation to all Trustees on 6th January 2016, we have invited Charles Russell Speechlys to make proposals for how they would guide and advise the Trustees through the implementation of the Formal Action Plan.

Levy 2016/17

The Trustees are always very mindful of the need for the careful husbanding of the asset that is the Commons, particularly at a time of general austerity. They have sought to maximise investments and achieve other efficiency savings in the long-term interests of the Commons. Over £550,000 has been “ring-fenced” from reserves and invested in the infrastructure of the Commons in the recent past.

Further investment is also needed in the REMPF pavilion, footpath renovations and on-going tree management works, including those associated with the Oak Processionary Moth.

To support this investment, the Trustees will be increasing the Levy by 2.5% for 2016/17, generating an additional £25,747. This is likely to represent a very small increase in the Levy paid by each household.

Conservator Vacancy

The Board considered independent legal advice on the vacancy arising from the recent resignation of an elected Trustee. On balance, the decision was taken not to hold an election in the near future. Several important factors were considered in reaching this decision, including the estimated cost of £50,000 to undertake a by-election. In terms of effective governance there continues to be a majority of elected Conservators (four) over appointed Conservators (three). This decision will be kept under review by the Board.

Heritage Lottery Fund

Working in partnership with the Wimbledon Windmill Museum Trustees, an external funding bid will be submitted very shortly to the Heritage Lottery Fund under the “Our Heritage” scheme. If successful, these funds will allow essential restoration works to be undertaken on the Windmill, including the repair of the sails together with opportunities to enhance volunteering activities. It will also enable the development of a broader range of initiatives to engage the community and enhance understanding of the Windmill’s importance.

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.

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