

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



MEDIA RELEASE

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

May 2016 Update

Wimbledon Windmill - Heritage Lottery Fund

Implementation plans for the Windmill restoration works (part funded through a £100,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund), have progressed. Specialist millwrights will start work on site later this month. Preliminary work to the sails is underway at their workshop near Reading.

The restoration will involve the temporary removal of the wooden tower cladding in order to replace the perished membrane that is allowing water to penetrate to the first floor of the building. The wooden cladding will then be returned, the structure painted and the sails replaced by the end of the summer.

Nearly £8,500 has been raised through generous public donations to supplement the grant-funded works. However, deterioration of the wooden balustrades on the roof of the Windmill means that additional public donations are sought to assist with this further essential restoration work.

Volunteers are always needed to help at the Windmill Museum and the Trustees have a new range of interesting roles, including education and managing events in addition to room stewarding. Do please get in touch if you would like to know more, either by calling in person or via email at: wimbledonwindmill@gmail.com

The Commons

Through the auspices of the Conservation and Wildlife Forum, a detailed monitoring report on The Plain has been produced for the second year running. Dr Ros Taylor, DEFRA appointed Conservator and Chair of the Forum, has coordinated this excellent piece of work.

The return of a pair of Skylarks who settled to raise a brood was a highlight of the year, confirming that the grassland management policy is producing real benefits for wildlife. Volunteers also recorded some eighty plant species, including the notable Southern Marsh Orchid.

Once again, we would ask all visitors to take note of the notices on the body of The Plain that require dogs to be kept on leads and for all users stay within the mown paths.

The Board has approved funding for a detailed Vegetation Survey of the Commons. Penny Anderson Associates, one of the leading ecological consultancies in the UK, have been appointed to conduct the survey. Work commenced in late April this year and is scheduled to be completed in late autumn 2016.

Annual Open Meeting – 22nd June 2016

The Conservators' Annual Open Meeting is to be held this year on the 22nd June 2016 at St Margaret's Church, Putney Park Lane, London SW15 5HU. Doors open at 7.15pm for an 8.00pm start.

Goodbye 'Voltaire' and Welcome 'Willow'

On Tuesday 19th April 2016 we said a sad goodbye to one of our patrol horses, Voltaire, who set off to spend his retirement with The Horse Trust in Buckinghamshire.

As with many of our horses, Voltaire started his working life with the Household Cavalry. Thought initially unsuitable for Cavalry life, one of the instructors saw Voltaire's potential as a showjumper, and took him under his wing. Voltaire went on to compete successfully at Foxhunter level, and also took part in most of the major ceremonial events, including Trooping the Colour. Voltaire has given us 10 years unblemished service and will be much missed. The attached link is for The Horses Trust <http://www.horsetrust.org.uk/>

We welcomed Willow, a ten year old grey Irish Sports Horse, to the stables on Wednesday 4th May 2016. He is steadily getting into the rhythm of daily patrols across the Commons.

'Alabama Rot' Cutaneous and Renal Glomerular Vasculopathy (CRGV)

We have been advised by a local veterinary practice that the suspected case of CRGV, or "Alabama Rot", in a local dog has been confirmed.

However, as the dog was also walked in other local parks and open spaces, it is still not certain that the disease is here on the Commons.

The causes of the disease, and how it is contracted, are not yet understood but given its potential seriousness, we would encourage dog owners and walkers to be aware of the symptoms and, if at all concerned, to seek veterinary advice as soon as possible.

The symptoms to look out for are

- unexplained redness, sores or swellings anywhere on the body
- unexplained lesions or wounds, particularly on lower limbs but also on the chest or in the mouth.
- severe depression, loss of appetite and vomiting.

Further information can be found on the website of the vets leading investigations into the disease [Anderson Moores](#)

Conservators' Board Meeting - 11th April 2016

Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Prue Whyte and Shirley Gillbe were both re-elected unopposed as the Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively for the coming year.

Putney Hospital Site

The Board are continuing to work with charity lawyers Charles Russell Speechlys on the implementation of the Charity Commission's Formal Action Plan.

A further update will be made at the Annual Open Meeting.

May 2016

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.

Contact: Simon Lee, Chief Executive

Tel: 020 8788 7655, E-mail: rangersoffice@wpcc.org.uk, website: www.wpcc.org.uk