



Wimbledon Park Residents' Association



Easter 2018

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Easter edition 2018

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**Editorial help needed. Contact Iain Simpson on 020 8947 1301
email: iainsimpson@imi-consulting.com**

Chairman's Report

EGM on the 17th April

On page 31 you will see a notice for an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association. This is for the members to formally authorise the committee to proceed with an application to the Charity Commission to register the Association as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. We have mentioned this intention in past reports.

We have also decided to include a short lecture, after the conclusion of the formal meeting. This will be given by Nigel Israel, who is a committee member, and hopefully will be the first of many lectures that we intend to hold in Wimbledon Park Hall in future. New audio visual equipment has been installed in the hall recently by the Wimbledon Park Community Trust, which will facilitate this lecture and generally add to the value of the hall to the community.

Front Garden Awards

On page 14 there is a notice advertising the Awards for the current year. There is a substantial amount of time and effort required from the volunteer Judges, led by Jill farmer, to cover all the streets in the area. Jill is always looking for new people to help. If you are interested in helping out and getting to know Wimbledon Park a bit better, do contact Jill whose details are on Page 14.

Email the Association

Since the recent departure of Denica Fairman, our membership secretary, the main contact email for the Association has been changed to wimbledonparkra@gmail.com. Also any contact inquiries through the website will go to that address. We already have an established list of members and residents who we email on any matters of local interest. If you want to be added to that list just email me at the new email address, and I will add your name.

Focus on Wimbledon Park

You will notice that in this edition there is a strong focus on the park and particularly on the lake. Through the Friends of Wimbledon Park (FOWP) a great deal of effort is being made to improve the park. A big part of the management of the park has been outsourced to *idverde* and FOWP has been in discussions with their senior representative, Patrick Phillips (see article on page 16) about how they can work together for the betterment of the park. So far those discussions have been encouraging. The park is Grade II* listed by Historic England but is considered, by its general condition, to be 'at risk'.

Pollution of the lake seems to happen quite frequently and in some instances has killed a great many fish resulting in the fish stock being badly depleted (see article starting on page 8).

We have yet to hear from the Council about the results of the Masterplan consultation which took place in 2016. This was undertaken by consultants at considerable expense. Quite why the Council has failed to publish the results remains a mystery. However we are aware of an initiative by the Council to consider improvements to the lake. This is called the Wimbledon Park Lake Project and according to the Council website the main aims are described as follows:

“This project has been established to co-ordinate and deliver the required remedial works and improvements to the lake to meet the statutory obligations and duties of the Council in the interest of reservoir safety, flood risk, amenity, heritage and biodiversity, as well as to seek out opportunities to further enhance the lake as a key component of the landscape in line with the Wimbledon Park Masterplan - 2017.

“Technical Advisory Steering Group has been established with representatives from the landowners, leaseholders and organisations with specific technical knowledge and skills for such specialist works to guide the council.”

Regrettably the Council has chosen not to include the FOWP in the group. This is extremely disappointing given the dedicated interest and amount of time devoted by the group to the park. Rather limited minutes of these meetings are published on the Council website. If you want to follow progress you need to go to:

https://www2.merton.gov.uk/environment/openspaces/parks/parks_in_the_wimbledon_area/wimbledon-park/wimbledon-park-lake-project.htm.

Concrete Batching Plant

The Association submitted a very thorough response to the further submission from the applicants. Our thanks to Peter West for doing this. We are in regular touch with the planning department but progress is slow. So far we have not heard whether the application has been referred to committee or rejected.

The Woodman pub

As far as we know the agents for letting the pub premises have not received any acceptable offers. It may be that the rent they are looking for is considered too much in the current climate. A great many pubs have closed down in the last two to three years.

Update from Stephen Hammond MP

It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to provide an update in the WPRA newsletter. There has been much going on locally, with Merton Council failing to keep our streets clean, the Mayor planning to close our Police Station and our community still awaiting news on Crossrail 2.

Save Wimbledon Police Station

On Wednesday 7th February, Merton Conservative councillors put forward a credible plan to save Wimbledon police station from closure at a Council meeting of all local councillors. Labour and Lib Dem councillors refused to back the plan.

The plan is for Merton Council to buy the police station site from City Hall and then lease it back to the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC). This could be funded from Merton Council's capital programme underspend (£11 million in the current year) and the Council has £92 million of usable reserves.

Since first announcing our plan, the financial case for the police station closure is unravelling. The Labour Mayor's whole closure project is likely to cost more in the long run than the supposed short term savings. There is now likely to be a far smaller annual cost saving than expected but a long list of new costs appear not to have been factored into the Mayor's 'costs savings analysis'.

Wimbledon Park

My team recently met with the Friends of Wimbledon Park for a wide ranging discussion covering the management and upkeep of the Park.

Many good ideas were put forward, such as working to ensure the Wimbledon Park Road entrance is less muddy and the Revelstoke Road entrance is more appealing with murals produced by local primary schools being one option.

Of particular concern was water pollution in the lake, which is damaging fish stocks. I will be working closely with Justine Greening, the MP for Putney, and the Friends of Wimbledon Park on this.

Mucky Merton

Large numbers of people are continuing to get in touch with me to report litter problems. We are rightly proud of our area, and are frustrated when Labour Merton Council cannot provide a simple service like emptying bins on time and sweeping the streets. Their decision to stop weekly street cleaning and the weekly bin collection are making a mess of our community.

Crossrail 2

There is no confirmed progress on Crossrail 2 to report. However, Transport for London and the Department for Transport have announced the start of an



Independent Affordability Review to examine ways of making the scheme more affordable.

The review will submit an interim report to the DfT and TfL this summer, outlining options as to how the project could be made more affordable. A more detailed final report will be submitted at a later date in light of the recommendations made in the interim report.

You can read more about this review here: <http://crossrail2.co.uk/news/major-new-review-brings-crossrail-2-closer/>

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators Election

The result of the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators election has been announced, with Peter Hirsch, Sarah-Jane Holden, Diane Neil Mills, David Hince and Shirley Gillbe elected.

Congratulations to those who were elected and I wish them well in their important work overseeing the management of the Commons over the next three years.

Get in touch

You can keep up to date with my work locally and in Parliament on Twitter: www.twitter.com/s_hammond or Facebook: www.facebook.com/stephenhammond.net

You can also email me on hammondsp@parliament.uk

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The Decline of Wimbledon Park Lake

By Tony Borkowski, Chairman of the Wimbledon Park Angling Club, Resident of Wimbledon Park for over 40 years.

HISTORIC ENGLAND SAYS “ Wimbledon Park is a remnant of the C18 landscape that Capability Brown laid out for Earl Spencer of Wimbledon House, a C16 estate.

“The Lake is a survivor from this landscape and is in very poor condition. Designed views are obscured and the divided ownership results in discordant landscape management.” It also says that the condition is generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems. Vulnerability is HIGH and Trend is DECLINING.

Wimbledon Park Lake was designed and constructed for the 1st Earl Spencer by Capability Brown between 1765 and 1768. Although most traces of the Spencer Estate have now disappeared, the Lake remains the one element to have survived the intervening 250 years. The Lake is a core part of the Wimbledon Park heritage park and has been recognised with a Grade II* listing by Historic England.



View of the lake circa 1890



The Lake was primarily designed for boating and fishing and the Wimbledon Park Angling Club have been managing, at their own expense, the fishing and fish re-stocking element of this for the past 70 years. Thirty-five years ago the Lake was a haven for fish and wildlife and was covered with large expanses of water lilies.

View of the lake c 1980

Things have not been going so well for the Lake in recent times. For unknown reasons the lilies have completely disappeared and the fish population, as recorded in match weights, have declined markedly. Last March saw the worst of a whole series of pollution events which culminated in the loss of some 600 fish, mainly roach. Earlier, eels and tench had been killed by smaller pollution events.



Pollution in March 2017

This particular fish kill was spotted by a fishing club bailiff, and to their credit, Thames Water and the Environment Agency came out very quickly to see what could be saved. In fact Thames Water have been very helpful and recently published the following press release:

"To protect precious green spaces in Merton, Thames Water is reminding households and businesses to ensure drains are properly connected.

"The reminder comes as the UK's largest water and wastewater company's work to protect Wimbledon Park Lake has been recognised by the Environment Agency.

"The Lake, a beauty spot for locals, has been suffering from poor water quality over the past two years owing to a combination of fly-tipping and misconnected pipes, with water which should be destined for sewage works instead ending up in the watercourse.

"Gary Waddup of the Environment Agency said: 'Thames Water have carried out important work identifying and rectifying misconnections in this catchment following our requests to clean up the surface water drain that enters Wimbledon Park Lake. The Lake is a much loved community asset and this project is an excellent example of the Environment Agency and Thames Water working together to improve water quality'."

Continued on Page 10

In response to these various events the fishing club approached the L. B. of Merton, the actual owner of the Lake, to ask permission to carry out some re-stocking to prevent further deterioration in fish numbers. To its surprise permission was denied because “considerable dredging” was due to be carried out on the Lake, at a time unspecified, and that re-stocking should be delayed until this work was finished.

In October 2017 the L. B. of Merton set up a formal steering group under the heading of the “Wimbledon Park Lake Project” to address various issues associated with implementing the yet to be released Wimbledon Park Masterplan.

This steering group includes the adjacent landowners, (the Wimbledon Park Golf Club, the Wimbledon Club, and the All England Lawn Tennis Club), people from the Watersports Centre, Historic England, and the Environment Agency.

One interesting complication is that the L. B. of Merton are legally obliged to assess and repair the dam (the steel pilings on the public side) because Wimbledon Park Lake, which is also an official reservoir, was assessed by the Environment Agency as falling into a “High Risk” category. For example, any failure of the dam would lead to serious flooding and potential loss of life in Southfields.

The L. B. of Merton was aware of this issue and had set aside £1.5 million for such work. However, the November 2017 minutes of the Wimbledon Park Lake Project noted that the total costs of all planned works, including “dredging”, would be of the order of £5 million and that the balance of £3.5 million would have to come from outside of Merton, such as Government Grants or the Heritage Lottery Fund.

One element of the Project was the inclusion of a fish survey to assess just what fish were left in the Lake. This work, which was carried out by AGA Group, was completed in February 2018.

AGA's hunt for fish



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Their results, which were shared with the fishing club by L. B. of Merton, identified an extremely low density of fish, only 3 fish per 100 square metres, or an estimate of just over 2,500 fish in the whole Lake.

The fishing club recently invited Fishery Officers from the Environment Agency to attend the Lake and offer their recommendations. One interesting observation was how few marginal plants, such as lilies and reeds, were in the Lake, the absence of which would lead to very few protected areas for fish fry to hatch and grow. Their view was that this problem needed tackling very urgently and they were going to make these points at the next Wimbledon Park Lake Project steering group. The lack of small fish was cited as a reason for the decline of fish-eating birds on the Lake, including the decline of great-crested grebes and disappearance of kingfishers.

One issue that has taxed the mind has been the need for dredging. Apart from the very high cost of such work, and the risk of releasing further pollutants, space would have to be found, probably around the margins of the Lake, for silt to be deposited and somehow landscaped without compromising further the welfare of fish, birds and insects. There are certainly likely to be benefits for the Watersports club because of dredging, and the contribution of this club to the general public should not be under-estimated. But at least one ecologist the fishing club have spoken to sees no obvious benefits for wildlife as a whole.

The next steps hinge on the actions of the Wimbledon Park Lake Project steering committee. From the point of view of the Environment Agency, work needs to be started to re-build the water-plant margins to provide habitat for fish, birds and insects, and some selective re-stocking of fish just to retain minimum numbers. For their part Thames Water and the Environment Agency have publicly committed to long-term action to improve the water quality of the Lake. We wait for the next steps from the L. B. of



Merton and hope that they can commit to the restoration of the environment and ecology associated with the previously beautiful and thriving Wimbledon Park.



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Front Garden Awards 2018



Our scouts will be out again this summer to find the best front gardens in Wimbledon Park, so do please help to enhance our neighbourhood by making your front garden as attractive as possible. Even the smallest space has potential!

All gardens visible from the street are eligible for an Award in one of the following three categories:

Best Summer Interest Garden

Best All-year Interest Garden

Best Environmentally Sustainable Garden

Judging will take place on the following dates:

Preliminary selections: 21 - 27 June

Final round: Sunday 1 July

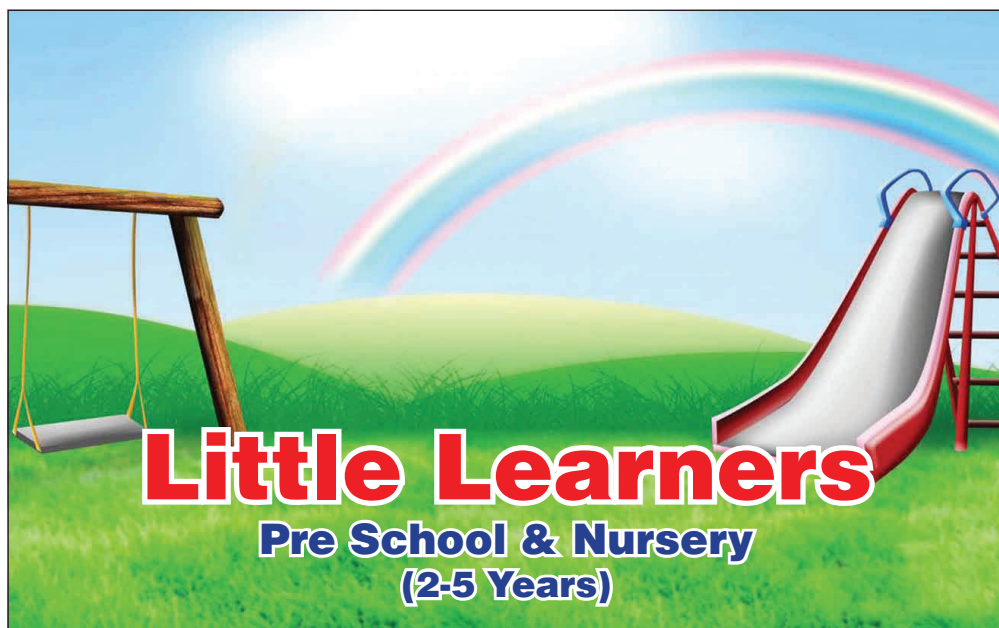
We will inform all those whose gardens are selected for the final judging, and results will be posted to them within a few days.

Presentation of the awards, including the John Uden Trophy for the overall Winner, will take place at the WPRA AGM in the Autumn.

We are always looking for new people to get involved with the judging, so if you are interested and are willing to spare a few hours of your time, please get in touch.

Contact Jill Farmer

Tel: 020 8947 6572; email: jill.y.farmer@gmail.com



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A warm welcome from idverde. As Europe's largest greenspace provider, we are delighted to be maintaining your park and you probably already know that we have been awarded a 24 year contract, (issued in sets of eight years and subject to approvals) covering both Merton and Sutton Boroughs through the South London Waste Partnership.

We began in February last year and it's hard to believe that 12 months have elapsed already - and almost straight into the beginning of the grass cutting season, (as soon as the snow stops snowing and the ground dries out sufficiently!). We also maintain and manage the parks in neighbouring Southwark, Bromley, Croydon, Kensington & Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham, Camden, Kingston-upon-Thames and of course both The Regents Park and the Olympic Park.

Over the last year we were faced with quite a task bearing in mind we had to not only successfully transfer members of the former Council's ground staff, but also several administrative officers too. On top of that, we also needed to resource the contract with all new plant and vehicles and take over the former depots. Currently the contract is delivered out of Cheam Depot in Sutton and Hillcross Depot in Morden.

We have therefore not only invested strongly, (having completely refurbished Cheam Depot) but will continue to do so throughout our tenure. Our aim is to leave the Boroughs in a better condition than when we took over – 24 years is a long time for a great partnership; and hopefully we may even be here long after that too – subject to tendering!

Last year, as usual in these types of scenarios, was problematic insofar as several members of staff immediately sought early retirement/redundancy prior to transfer; which meant finding replacements before the contract even started. Equally we have been beleaguered by a loss of employees not suitable for more senior roles and an unexpected hospitalisation of our Contract Director. However, we are now in a position with stable staff and all of the key managerial positions filled appropriately. 2018 will be a year we start to put down roots – if you'll pardon the horticultural pun!

Continued on page 18



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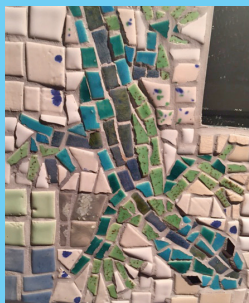
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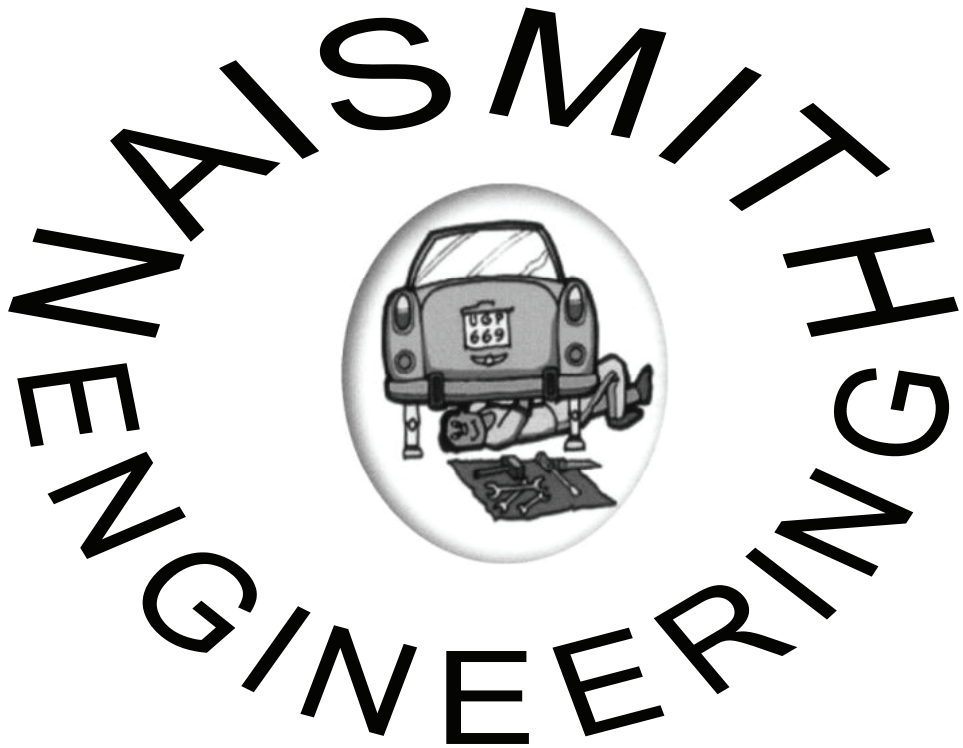
Our contract is maintenance based, predominantly for grass, shrubs, litter, sports provision and floral attributes. We also manage the hard landscapes such as paths, fencing gates and playgrounds too. In addition we manage sports lettings, allotments and the cemetery and burial service. Merton Council's vestigial parks team still set overall policy and administer tree maintenance themselves.

We feel very privileged to be looking after a number of high-profile parks including in particular Wimbledon Park – with its wealth of varied and undulating landscapes and full facilities; and most importantly a thriving and enthusiastic Friends Group and other key stakeholders. We have met your committee (FOWP) many times since inauguration and are aware of that 'special relationship' especially bearing in mind the extensive botanical, historical and riparian skills your group possesses. We very much look forward to working in true harness with you, ensuring the park continues to improve with new developments and where practicable a lessening of some of the anti-social behaviours.

Kind Regards

Patrick Phillips, Director of Parks Management Strategy





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Wimbledon Foodbank

Based in High Path, South Wimbledon, we pass on food donated by Merton residents to local people in food poverty.

From consternation to jubilation

In October, food stocks were running low and we didn't know how we would cope at Christmas-time. But Merton residents donated ELEVEN TONNES of food during November and December. Thanks to you, everyone who turned to us was helped.

Client stories

In the run-up to Christmas, we saw a mother of three struggling with the impact of financing visits to her son, who had been placed in a mental health hospital outside London. We helped a teenager caring for his grandmother and battling to get by. And we helped a self-employed mother, trying desperately to get back on her feet with her newborn, having been abandoned by her partner.

Foodbank in numbers

In December, we fed 889 people, many of them children – that's 300 local families in crisis who received food, toiletries and Christmas treats. On 28th December, we fed 165 people, almost 30% up on our busiest day ever.

Why do people need Foodbank?

The reasons people face food poverty are varied: job loss, illness, bereavement, domestic violence, delayed payments from employers and government. We meet parents going hungry to feed their children, and families facing financial calamity because of the death of a breadwinner.

Isn't it a free-for-all?

Clients are referred by schools, doctors, health visitors and other

agencies. They receive an emergency parcel of pre-picked food to last two to three days.

How can I help?

We don't get government funding, and we rely on our supporters.

There are many ways you can help – see wimbledon.foodbank.org.uk.

Locally, you can drop off food donations in our box at Waitrose

Wimbledon – there's a list of what we need most on the website.

We desperately need transport to deliver food to our branches. We

would also love to support seriously ill people and those at end-of-life

by delivering directly to them. Can you drive for us regularly? Do

you know a business that would sponsor or donate a vehicle? We'd

love to hear from you at wimbledonfoodbank@gmail.com.

For more information, go to www.wimbledon.foodbank.org.uk

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Wimbledon Park Ward Crime Statistics															
January 2018	2017											2018	12 Month Total	Average per Month	% of Total
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec				
Violence and Sexual Offences	12	11	15	10	14	12	13	26	13	13	9	10	158	13	19
Anti-Social Behaviour	10	8	19	18	15	12	8	11	14	13	7	11	146	12	18
Vehicle Crime	20	16	7	9	10	6	8	9	14	11	11	14	135	11	16
Other Theft	10	5	8	8	10	9	24	4	11	11	10	11	121	10	15
Burglary	4	6	5	2	10	6	7	4	5	10	14	8	81	7	10
Criminal Damage and Arson	5	6	6	9	6	4	3	5	5	3	3	1	56	5	7
Public Order	0	1	4	2	4	3	2	3	8	3	2	2	34	3	4
Shoplifting	1	0	3	1	2	5	7	1	2	2	2	5	31	3	4
Bicycle Theft	1	2	5	4	4	4	3	4	0	0	2	1	30	3	4
Drugs	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	2	0	1	1	9	1	1
Other Crime	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	8	1	1
Theft from the Person	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	7	1	1
Robbery	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
Possession of Weapons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
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Friends of Wimbledon Park Update

Not just bad news!

In the last newsletter we were delighted to tell you that we had planted a young (sapling) Hornbeam in the park – the first, we think! I am sorry to tell you that the young Hornbeam is no more as the planting site was vandalised. The circular protector surrounding the sapling was found discarded by the park's staff but the wooden stake and special plaque have not been found. When we visited the rather forlorn site after the event we found broken bits of the Hornbeam sapling mixed up amongst the surrounding mulch. It looked like a random act of vandalism - which is a surprise as we are reliably informed that, fortunately, not much vandalism takes place in the park. It is a very disappointing and upsetting incident and particularly for the pupils from St. Cecilia's School in Wandsworth who worked tirelessly to plant it, and for all the park goers who took such an interest in the young tree.

And now here comes the good news! We have bought another tree to take the place of the vanquished Hornbeam! A new Hornbeam, larger than the last one (approx. 2.5 metres) was planted over the weekend of the 24/25 February. As it is a larger tree it might be able to withstand the rigours of the park! Dave Lofthouse, Merton's Arboricultural Manager, has said that the tree will require a lot of watering. This is where we can all help! If, when passing through the park, you could take a bottle of water and pour the contents onto the mulched area around the tree that would be really helpful. Hornbeam grows fast, especially if it has plenty of moisture, particularly when young. So, remember the Hornbeam when next you decide to go for a walk in the park!

Another thing you can do is ... look out for some 'unwelcome' greenery in the surrounding mulch! There are daffodils planted in the immediate area around the tree which will hopefully blossom in the spring but weeds will also start to sprout so do get weeding and help us keep the weeds down. Let us all look after this young tree so that it can grow into its full Hornbeam glory in years to come.

Continued on page 26



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If you went down to the woods ...

on the 24 and 25 February you would have seen an amazing number of people digging, planting, and mulching on the southern edges of Horse Close Wood. Why and what for? We were planting over 600 trees - native species transplants such as hawthorn, dog rose, sloe and field maple under some veteran oaks on the edge of Horse Close Wood in order to discourage people from setting up barbeques dangerously close to vulnerable trees. This initiative was organised by the FOWP in conjunction with the Merton Tree Wardens and very well supported by Merton residents. We were blessed with sunny weather, which made it all the more delightful. A very big THANK YOU to everyone who joined us on that weekend.



Looking after 'our' lake

In 2017, one instance of pollution in Wimbledon Park Lake killed over 500 fish and this was not the only worrying incident. Another involved emulsion paint being poured into road sewers and getting into the lake.

Amazingly no fish were killed by this event
Following a series of incidents the FOWP and the Wimbledon Park Angling Club (WPAC) sought urgent talks with Thames Water and the Environment Agency to discuss on-going con-





cerns about lake water quality and the declining numbers of fish. These long ranging discussions have borne fruit. Thames Water have recently stated that the lake, 'has been suffering from poor water quality over the past two years owing to a combination of fly-tipping and misconnected pipes, with water which should be destined for sewage works instead ending up in the watercourse.' Thames Water is reminding households and businesses that drains must be properly connected as they have had to rectify a number of misconnections in order 'to clean up the surface water drain that enters Wimbledon Park Lake.'

This is an excellent example of your local community groups, in this case FOWP and WPAC alerting others to local problems, and subsequently working in liaison with them, to improve the environment and protect both pond life and precious green spaces.

Zilch treasure found!

Litter picks have been taking place on the second Sunday of every month (10-12:00) since October. Some have been better attended than others! This month we were joined by local Police Constable Paul Roberts, Councillor Guy Humphries from Wandsworth and Edward Gretton (prospective Councillor for Merton). This ended up being an unusual litter pick as a number of passers-by took the opportunity to air some of their grievances to our volunteers! We still managed to collect approximately seven bags of rubbish, which seems to be the norm. Having recently completed a litter pick in the park we did a brief analysis of the refuse collected. There were no real surprises although occasionally you wonder how some things ended up in the park! Big offenders were metal drinks cans and cigarette ends. Plastic featured strongly in various guises - bottles, shopping bags (most dug deeply into the soil), straws and cutlery. Given the well-publicised problems we are having with plastic (just 9% of plastics are being recycled, and 72% ends up in landfill or the sea), now

Why should I support the Residents' Association?

There has been some sort of Residents' Association in Wimbledon Park since 1906. The Association provides an important forum for discussing important local issues and a platform for action. Since its inception, the Residents' Association has helped hundreds, probably thousands of local residents, irrespective of religion, race or creed who have turned to the committee for guidance and support.

We regularly check local planning applications and have been very successful in opposing unsuitable developments. We promote planting and improvements in local parks and green areas. We work with the local police to help you to fight crime in your street and keep you informed by publishing the crime statistics in our newsletter which is produced three times a year and is delivered by volunteer street representatives to over three thousand homes in the Ward.

We have led some major initiatives such as the redevelopment of Wimbledon Park Hall – so that once again we have our own community centre. We have put on fairs and shows and supported numerous local campaigns, individuals and families faced with tragedy. The Residents' Association has given the Wimbledon Park Community a solid and respected voice when dealing with Merton Council. An individual can achieve only so much, but as a team we can and do achieve so much more.

Our income is derived from subscriptions and advertising in the newsletter. We need your support to ensure the continuation of our activities. Ideally for three years. Twelve pounds for a 3 year period will help us pay for printing and stationary to publish this newsletter, computer and IT software to run the website, materials and equipment to organise events and keep the flowerboxes blooming in Arthur Road; other important green space improvements and occasional support of other likeminded organisations.

Please take a moment to fill in the very brief form on the opposite page. We regret that unless an email address is supplied, we are unable to acknowledge receipt.

If you are already a member but are not sure of your current status, email to wimbledonparkra@gmail.com and we will check for you.

Thanks in advance for your support. It is hugely appreciated.

To Join the Wimbledon Park Residents' Association

Please complete this form and return it to us with your payment:

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Address _____

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Email*** _____

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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or

drop your subscription through the door of the our Chairman, Iain Simpson at
56 Home Park Rd.

Email* If you would like to be included on an e-mail list for crime alerts,
WPRA updates and information on other important local issues,
Please tick here**

☐

Please date...../...../.....

might be a good time to re-think some of the plastic items we use on an every-day basis. It is, of course, highly possible that those people guilty of leaving litter behind could still leave litter but it might be degradable or recyclable.

A blooming spring?

'Twas a cold and frosty December morning when our hardy volunteers set about planting the 1,000+ bulbs we have been kindly gifted by the Bulbs of London initiative. This is a collaboration between the charity Metropolitan Public Gardens Association (MPGA) & Taylors Bulbs of Lincolnshire. The areas chosen for planting were all rather sad looking and in sore need of brightening up; e.g. Revelstoke Road entrance and the spartan area to the side of the Bowl's Pavilion. We now have Narcissi, Tulips, Snowdrops, Garden Hyacinths, Alliums and Daffodils galore in the ground and all thickly mulched – let us hope it is enough to deter the squirrels! We look forward to seeing colourful springtime blooms 'fluttering and dancing in the breeze' - though there will be more than just daffodils!

Public Meeting about Wimbledon Park

What a great turnout! Nearly 100 people came to the public meeting at The Wimbledon Club organised by the FOWP and Justine Greening, MP for Wandsworth, in November 2017. The park is clearly much loved by many and fulfils a number of different roles. The meeting provided a valuable forum for everyone to air their views about the future of the park as well as giving the FOWP useful feedback for identifying their priorities over the next five years. A very big thank-you to Justine and Nick (Chair of the FOWP) for fronting the meeting and to everyone who came along.

Keep up to date by following us on:

Facebook [@Friends of Wimbledon Park](#).

Twitter: [FriendsoWP@FoWimbledonPark](#)

Main website: www.friendsofwimbledonpark.org.uk

If you would like to help with Sunday morning litter-picking, contact us through the website.

WIMBLEDON PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting

Tuesday 17th April 2018

8pm

Wimbledon Park Hall

170 Arthur Road

London

SW19 8AQ

To consider the following resolution.

The Members of the Association authorise their elected Committee to apply to the Charity Commission to register the Association as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

By order of the Committee

13th February 2018

After the conclusion of the meeting, we have asked Nigel Israel FSA, an elected Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, and an academic gemmologist and historian who has been a consultant to the Royal Collection, national museums, National Trust etc, to give us a lecture on Diamonds entitled:

‘A Social History of Diamonds – three thousand years in 30 minutes’

This will be an inaugural lecture and will be an opportunity to demonstrate the new audio visual equipment, recently installed in the hall.

Refreshments will be provided

Design and the Built Environment

I consider myself a 'building anorak'; that is a person that enjoys more walking the streets looking at the built environment, than doing the same in a green environment, a park or a common.

Ideal for this purpose is a sunny day in the middle of winter when most trees have shed their leaves and buildings, good or bad, expose themselves to scrutiny by the passer-by, who is often surprised by discovering a building that has been there for years but never caught their attention.

This time I started from Wimbledon Station and decided to walk up Wimbledon Hill Road on one side of the pavement all the way to the Village and then to come back on the other side to get the experience of appreciating the long vistas of the buildings framing the route in both directions.

The Station forecourt relatively recently up-graded, refurbished and rationalised from a pedestrian movement view point is surrounded by a collection of rather ordinary buildings and it is yet to develop as a meeting point and to provide a wow factor advert that you have arrived not to just any place but to Wimbledon Town Centre. Perhaps a larger scale centrally placed piece of art in the environment acting as a focal point could help to provide a better sense of identity.

Turning right into Wimbledon Hill Road, the buildings on the junction with Alexandra Road/St George's Road, due to their nature as corner buildings in a prominent position, catch your attention for their design disparity and lack of reference to the context.



Further up the road and just after the Worple Road junction at either side of Compton Road, the Wimbledon Library building and the former Bank Building provide a wonderful historic example of the design quality expected on a High Street.

Continued on page 36



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Beyond, facing principally Wimbledon Hill Road between Alwyne Road and Woodside, there is a good example of a modern building where the massing, scale and detailing in a contemporary language can be achieved complementing the older existing buildings which gave the town centre its distinctive character. This building acts as a gateway into the town centre when approaching from the Village.



Wimbledon Hill Road between Woodside and Belvedere Grove/Ridgway, with its pronounced gradient and street mature tree lining, has retained its dominant residential character over the years in spite of gradual redevelopment from what probably was a series of Villas marching up the hill and acting as a buffer zone between the town centre and the Village above. The buildings on this stretch vary enormously thus providing a good sample of the various design trends over the years.



The buildings facing the mini-roundabout at the junction with Belvedere Road/Ridgway are the gateway into the Village from the town centre approach so they play an important role. The NatWest building was until recently the focal point on

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this junction. Now it shares this distinction with the contemporary Tesco with residential above building on the opposite corner. This has been a point of debate both in terms of the design features and scale of the new building, and in particular in its relationship with the adjoining residential dwellings on Wimbledon Hill Road. While the jury is still out on this debate, the Tesco building is already there!



The Village, other than the previous example and probably due to its Conservation Area designation has retained its character mostly unchallenged by new developments. The variety of traditional forms and use of materials, the gradual reduction in scale and density when approaching the Common reflects exactly the essence of a village, hence there is a constant need to carefully scrutinise any proposals for new development in this area.



However, the quest for demanding quality design in all new development should not be restricted to Conservation Areas. On the contrary, this aim should be equally applied to proposals in more deprived areas where the improvement of the built environment is a prime objective for all.

Mario Avendano, RIBA



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A different view of Wimbledon Park — Strathmore Road to the Grid

Wandle Valley Forum



Wandle Valley Forum provides support and an independent voice for over 120 community groups and voluntary organisations which share a passion for the Wandle. The Wandle's story is a compelling one and it is about to write a new chapter. The recent multi-million pound boost from the Heritage Lottery Fund through Living Wandle ends shortly but there is new funding and support for the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust as champion of the Regional Park. Up and down the river we see local communities inspired to both protect and celebrate the nature and history it brings to our doorstep. We have joined the campaign objecting to a concrete batching plant right by where the River Graveney meets the Wandle. We are also campaigning to close the Earlsfield gap in the Wandle Trail and to see King George's Park rediscover its connections to the river. Looking ahead, we will be running Wandle Fortnight once again when communities come together to run events and activities in September. We're hoping to beat last year's record of 70 events in this year's programme, which will run from September 8th to 23rd. We are also working with others to celebrate the key Wandle Vistas where you can appreciate its geography. These include the vista across Wimbledon Park Lake. Once identified, we are keen to see these vistas protected by planning policy (including the neighbourhood plans which can be drawn up by local communities) and cared for by local communities. If you want to know more about our work, then sign up on our website (www.wandlevalleyforum.org.uk) or come along to our meetings - our next Meet-up is on 25th April at Merton Abbey Mills.

Tony Burton

Chair

Wandle Valley Forum



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