



## **TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF CHURCH ROAD AND CAR PARKING DURING THIS YEAR'S CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Dear Resident,

As you will be aware, we are required to deliver this year's Championships in a very different guise than in previous years in order to adhere to the Government's guidelines. This has resulted in a number of issues and challenges we have had to find solutions to which have a direct impact on local traffic and car parking. We recognise the concern from many local residents and so this briefing note outlines the measures taken this year and why they are needed to deliver a safe, and successful, event for the benefit of all.

### **1. Temporary closure of Church Road**

The temporary road closure has been secured via an Experimental Traffic Management Order which has been issued by LB Merton.

It is important to stress that the closure of the road has been strongly recommended by the Metropolitan Police's Counter Terrorism Security Coordinator to ensure a secure and safe event, and to keep the broader community safe and secure as well. The current threat from international terrorism in the UK is classified as "substantial", which means an attack is likely. The fact that this is a major event of international and national significance, and one of the first larger gatherings since easing of the most recent lockdown started, provides an obvious profile. The addition of The Championships to the Government Events Research Programme has further increased this profile.

There will be police deployment for The Championships and counter terrorist measures will be in place in order to protect not only those attending the event but those living locally too. This includes road barriers and closing the road to deter and prevent threats from vehicles used as a weapon against infrastructure and people. The Metropolitan Police sees the closure of Church Road as proportionate and necessary for the safety and security of The Championships.

Given the circumstances and the need to deliver an event that is legally compliant with Covid-19 guidance, the closure also enables us to welcome guests and ticket holders in a bigger area to ensure social distancing is maintained at the critical point of entry to the Grounds. It also helps in diverting unnecessary traffic from the area during The Championships to reduce impact on local residents.

Throughout this process we have worked closely with LB Merton, LB Wandsworth and TfL to evaluate the impact on local traffic as a result of the closure and to mitigate that impact as much as possible.

The details of the road closures are as follows:

- The road closures are: Church Road between Bathgate Road and Somerset Road; Somerset Road between Marryat Road and Newstead Way.
- There are other roads where restrictions apply, but with controlled access being provided for residents (and their guests), AELTC transport, cyclists, pedestrians, taxis and emergency vehicles. These are: Church Road between Burghley Road and Somerset Road; Marryat Road between Burghley Road and Somerset Road; Somerset Road between Church Road and Marryat Road; Newstead Way; Somerset Road between Burghley Road and Newstead Way; and Bathgate Road between Seymour Road and Queensmere Road. Additionally, Burghley Road between Church Road and Marryat Road will be closed to all vehicles except resident pass holders and emergency vehicles.
- The closures are in place from Monday 28 June to Sunday 11 July between 09:00 to 23:30 which should allow for school run traffic and are not in place on Sunday 4 July unless play needs to take place. If play ends earlier the closures may be dropped earlier too.
- Emergency vehicles under blue lights will be allowed to get through the road closure at all times.
- The road closures are being advertised on road signs from the A3 to ensure traffic remains on Parkside and does not try to go down any of the closed roads.

- An outer zone controlled by a series of staffed checkpoints at each end, and at strategic points, will make sure only residents or their guests, visitors etc are able to access the restricted zone.

Neighbours within the road closures have received letters in relation to the closures, while representatives of residents' associations and councillors have had regular discussions with AELTC colleagues to help inform their respective residents.

## **2. Minimal effect on the 493 bus route**

The temporary closure of Church Road will result in a diversion to the 493 bus from Monday 28 June to Sunday 11 July inclusive. It is worth noting that this diversion does not impact on any of the usual stops along Wimbledon Park Road during the Wimbledon Fortnight period, and the bus will still serve both St George's and Queen Mary's hospitals – it will just travel via a different route. During the event the 493 bus does not stop at the Wimbledon Tennis Club / Museum and Church Road hill stops and so in reality there is little change this year apart from a section of the route and the Belvedere Avenue stop in Wimbledon Village (Church Rd) which will be bypassed.

As with the road closure, we have worked extremely closely with TfL to ensure that the diversion route is appropriate and minimises impact. TfL has test driven the route ensuring it can accommodate the size of buses used on the route. Mitigation measures to minimise disruption have been identified and are being implemented to TfL's satisfaction.

The diversion route is as follows from Southfields: no change on Wimbledon Park Road, then turning right into Bathgate Road, then up Queensmere Road to join Parkside and re-join its original route in Wimbledon Village. The route is then reversed coming from Wimbledon Town Centre.

## **3. Use of Wimbledon Park for event car parking**

As has been the case for many years, in agreement with LB Merton, we are allowed to use part of the public Wimbledon Park for car park provision for The Championships. As part of this agreement, signed with LB Merton in 2019, we have been able to work together to reduce commercial activities within Wimbledon Park following feedback from residents. In addition to the fees we pay to LB Merton to hire this space within the park, we also make a yearly donation that is ring-fenced for improvements to the public park, which is something we want to build on in line with the development of the AELTC Wimbledon Park Project.

With the new agreement in place, for the first time, the number of cars has been limited to 500. The space reserved for car parking is marginally bigger than in previous years, however, it very rarely, if ever, has been used at full capacity. While we are encouraging all ticket-holders to prioritise public transport, this year the car park will be a flexible space to ensure that it can accommodate guests and ticket holders who might not choose to do so given their own preferences as we continue to emerge from the pandemic. If car parks on the AELTC-owned golf course land are not used at capacity, we will ensure we move cars to there to minimise traffic and cars in the public park.

We have hired experienced practitioners CSP to manage the site in a safe and responsible way, recognising there are many young families and pets using the park on a daily basis. CSP are highly experienced in assessing ground conditions and likely weather on the day to make an informed judgment to ensure that parking is only in those areas where conditions are suitable. We will return the area to the same condition following The Championships, repairing any damage to the grass or surrounding areas immediately next to the site.

Preparation of the car parking site in the public park will start on Thursday 24 June and will be completely removed on Wednesday 14 July.

We appreciate that this is an inconvenience to park users and we ask for their patience and support in delivering a safe and successful event. There is no Queue this year so the space between the athletics track and the Revelstoke Road car park is not being used and so there will be considerable more space (60% more) available to all park users compared to a normal year when the Queue would be in operation.

There have been a number of comments suggesting we should be using the golf course land as a car park. We continue to use all areas suitable for parking on the golf course, but have also had to use additional golf course land to build new, temporary structures to accommodate services needed for The Championships which cannot be on our main site this year due to social distancing measures in place. We hope that this is only a factor for this year and that a more normal service will resume in 2022. Suitable golf course space has also been reduced through protecting the route structures of the veteran trees which can extend to over 30m around each tree.

Please note that the forthcoming planning application for the AELTC Wimbledon Park Project (i.e., the Wimbledon Park Golf Course land) does not include any areas of the public Wimbledon Park (apart from Wimbledon Park

Lake). Any event delivery taking place in the public park is negotiated separately with Merton Council who look after and manage the park.

Our long-held ambition is for The Championships to become a public transport event as much as possible. There has been a reduction in car borne traffic to The Championships in recent years which is a good first step, however, there is still more work to do. So, while we work towards that goal we will also work hard to minimise disruption and traffic impact on local roads. However, it does mean that the car park in the public park will remain for now, as agreed with LB Merton.

#### **4. Bicycle parking during The Championships**

This is something that we provide every year and we have capacity for 280 bicycles at Car Park 8 on the golf course.

#### **5. Cars parking on Church Road**

Over the last two weeks there have been a large number of vehicles parked on Church Road, and vehicles blocking the apex of Somerset Road, and we sincerely apologise for the problems this has caused. Adhering to government guidelines has meant extra work needed to make the Grounds ready for this year's tournament. The issue has not improved by the additional loss of car parking (for this year only) that we would normally have within our Somerset Road site. We have repeatedly implored these vehicles to refrain from parking on the road, and with LB Merton's support, have now been able to put some mitigation in place. We do not expect this to be a recurring issue next year, but we will put in extra work and effort in planning for The Championships 2022 to make sure the same situation does not materialise.

It goes without saying that we are all managing within unprecedented circumstances, and, as we enter the final week of our preparations for The Championships for the first time in two years, it has not been without its challenges. We fully appreciate that the measures outlined above have had an impact on our local communities and are an inconvenience that we would much prefer to avoid. We would not be implementing them if they were not strictly necessary, and in some cases, critical, to the staging of a safe, secure and successful Championships for our players, our guests, and our communities.

The Championships have significant direct economic impact in both Merton and Wandsworth, over £50m, and even though spectator numbers are down this year we do hope that being able to stage Wimbledon again brings excitement to Southfields, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon Village, Wimbledon town centre and beyond.

#### **6. Useful contacts**

For any concerns during the Fortnight, please note the following contact details:

##### **AELTC**

General enquiries: AELTC main switchboard - 020 8944 1066

Reporting non-emergency issues: Championships Event Control Room - 020 8971 2430

Reporting **emergency** issues only: Championships Event Control Room - 020 8971 2666

Community Liaison: Johnny Perkins - [jper@aeltc.com](mailto:jper@aeltc.com), 020 8971 2536

##### **Metropolitan Police**

Emergency: 999

Non-emergency: 101

Anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789321

##### **Merton Council**

Noise: 020 8545 3025 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm). 020 8543 9750 - Fri/Sat 11pm-4am [www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/report-a-noise-nuisance](http://www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/report-a-noise-nuisance)

Parking Services: 020 8545 4661 (10am-4pm) [www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/parking](http://www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/parking)

Litter: 020 8274 4901 (9am-5pm), [www.merton.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling/litter-fly-tipping-and-street-cleaning](http://www.merton.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling/litter-fly-tipping-and-street-cleaning)

##### **Wandsworth Council**

Noise/Nuisance: 020 8871 6127 [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/environment/nuisance-behaviour/report-nuisance-behaviour](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/environment/nuisance-behaviour/report-nuisance-behaviour)

Parking Enforcement: 020 8871 6660/8871, [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/parking/contact-parking](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/parking/contact-parking)

Litter: 020 8871 8558, [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/street\\_care\\_and\\_cleaning](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/street_care_and_cleaning)

We hope you have an enjoyable Championships.

AELTC, June 2021