



**WIMBLEDON AND PUTNEY COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

**REPORT OF THE CONSERVATORS**

**AND**

**AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED  
31 MARCH 2022**

**REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 303167**

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Reference and Administrative Details for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

<b>Conservators</b>	Oliver Bennett MBE – appointed by DEFRA January 2021 Sue Bucknall – elected April 2021 David Hince – elected April 2018; re-elected April 2021 Peter Hirsch – elected April 2018; re-elected April 2021 Michael Johnston – elected April 2021 Diane Neil Mills (Chairman) – elected April 2018; re-elected April 2021 Michael Rappolt – appointed by Ministry of Defence May 2017; re-appointed May 2020 (on an interim basis) Nigel Ware – appointed by Home Office March 2018; re-appointed March 2021
<b>Chief Executive</b>	Stephen Bound
<b>Principal Address</b>	Ranger's Office Manor Cottage Windmill Road Wimbledon London SW19 5NR
<b>Registered Charity Number</b>	303167
<b>Independent Auditors</b>	Kreston Reeves LLP Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor 9 Donnington Park 85 Birdham Road Chichester West Sussex PO20 7AJ
<b>Solicitors</b>	Bates Wells 10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1BE
<b>Bankers</b>	Barclays Bank plc 8 Alexandra Road Wimbledon London SW19 7JZ
<b>Investment advisers</b>	CCLA Investment Management Limited Senator House 85 Queen Victoria London EC4V 4ET

**Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**  
**Report and Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

**Contents**

	Page
<b>Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisers</b>	1
<b>Conservators' report</b>	3-27
<b>Independent auditors' report</b>	28-31
<b>Statement of financial activities</b>	32
<b>Balance sheet</b>	33
<b>Statement of cash flows</b>	34
<b>Notes to the financial statements</b>	35-58

***The following abbreviations are used in this document***

WPCC or Charity	The Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators
1871 Act	Wimbledon and Putney Commons Act 1871
Board	The Board of Conservators of WPCC
NLHF	National Lottery Heritage Fund
GAAP	United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Principles
LGPS	Local Government Pension Scheme

# **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

## **Report of the Conservators**

**For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

### **CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT**

Although the uncertainty, apprehension and despair that has characterised the past two years seems to be slowly in retreat, one of the enduring legacies of the pandemic is the heightened sense of gratitude felt by all for the Commons, a feeling that is reinforced by the current unrest in the world.

Owing to the pandemic, the 150th anniversary of the date on which the 1871 Act that created Wimbledon and Putney Commons received Royal Assent, 16 August 2021, was marked with respect but celebrated with restraint. We are, however, delighted that our postponed programme of events to collectively commemorate this important milestone is finally underway and will now be celebrated alongside the Platinum Jubilee. Given the links between the Commons and the monarchy over the centuries, in many ways, this coincidence of celebrations could not be more fitting.

The governance arrangements set out in the 1871 Act remain critical in defining the character of the Commons. It was therefore a welcome development that the Board that was constituted following the February 2021 elections was finally able to meet in person for the very first time in October 2021. The newly constituted Board also agreed to open the non-confidential part of Board meetings to the public in support of the Conservators' longstanding objective of increasing transparency and openness wherever possible.

Although COVID has brought to the fore the importance of this unique resource, it has also exposed its fragility, particularly that of the natural landscape. In recognition of this fact, we have prioritised the natural environment aspects of the emerging Masterplan, which will provide a long-term vision for both the natural and built landscapes of the Commons. These include projects such as wetland planting around pond edges, bog improvement works, restoration and creation of meadows, opening up of horse rides, planting of native tree saplings and desilting of ponds. All will improve biodiversity and increase resilience and we are hoping to deliver a major habitat restoration or creation project over the course of the next three years.

The Masterplan also identifies the need to invest in the footpaths whilst recognising the delicate balance between facilitating access, protecting the landscape and maintaining the natural state as far as possible. There is also a recognised need to improve signage and wayfinding both to increase accessibility and protect fragile habitats. Whilst facilitating access is important, the unique opportunity provided by the Commons to develop and practice navigation skills using natural landmarks must not be lost. We are hoping to consult on the proposals for the natural landscape, including the footpaths and signage, later this year.

To support our focus on this area, we have realigned our internal resources by bolstering our maintenance team and establishing dedicated fundraising capabilities. We also continue to examine the case for reforming the levy to support our operating budget. As we have previously stated, any proposal to progress reform in this area will be subject to public consultation with key stakeholders, including levy-payers.

In addition to the natural landscape, the Masterplan also includes an evaluation of the built heritage, including an assessment of the important contribution made by the historic buildings. These include the Grade II listed Windmill and the London Scottish Golf Club, as well as the historic monuments and cottages that are dispersed across the Commons. The plan highlights the substantial investment requirements of the built heritage, particularly the Richardson Evans Pavilion, named after the man who, through public subscription, saved 95 acres of what are now playing fields from development and donated them to the Commons.

The chronic underinvestment that the built heritage has suffered is due both to a lack of funding and in some cases a lack of constitutional clarity. Constitutional reform in this area is therefore necessary to provide a sound legal basis for future investment, ideally achieved through a scheme under the Charities Act. We continue to work with the Charity Commission on this initiative, generously supported by two eminent local barristers, George Laurence QC and Francesca Quint, to whom we are indebted.

The 1871 Act very clearly sets out the duties of the Conservators but is less successful in conveying the enormity of the role. I am grateful for the commitment, time and dedication of all those with whom I serve, be they appointed by government departments or elected by levy-payers. In particular, I would like to thank Mike Rappolt, the MOD-

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Report of the Conservators**

#### **For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

appointed Conservator, who will be retiring later this year having served over five years. During his tenure, he has made an important contribution to the Commons, particularly in his role of Chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee, for which I am grateful. I would also like to thank Mrs Sarah Wilton who has served as an external supporter of this committee for the insights, dedication and diligence that she has brought to this role over the past four years.

Although we have all witnessed the impact of the heavy usage of the Commons over the past two years, less obvious has been the invisible impact on the staff of working in an environment of continuous uncertainty, omnipresent health risks and environmental extremes. On behalf of the Conservators, I would like to thank all of the staff for their relentless effort in providing what has always been recognised by the local community as an essential service, even though it may have taken a pandemic to persuade the government to use this form of words. Their sense of duty and commitment has never been in question and we owe them all an enormous debt of gratitude. This is particularly true as they now face an intensive period of delivering all the works and initiatives that were suspended during the pandemic in addition to the day to day management that is absolutely vital to keep the Commons functioning properly. We are particularly grateful to Stephen Bound, the Chief Executive, who has led the team during these very challenging times. As Chief Executive, he has brought a renewed focus on the natural environment and led the necessary changes to support that development.

Finally, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to all of our volunteers, whether they serve on a committee or forum, don a florescent waistcoat whilst fording a stream or contribute in another fashion, including all those who support us anonymously. Regardless of the form that their contribution takes, they all give their time generously, motivated by nothing more than a passion for the Commons and a sense of community. We are also enormously grateful to those who have supported us financially either in aid of a specific project or more generally, including membership of the Friends. The generosity of all our donors is humbling and every contribution will help protect the Commons for current and future generations.

Thank you.

# **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

## **Report of the Conservators**

**For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

### **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S FOREWORD**

Following a year dominated by COVID-19, the Commons returned to some semblance of normality. As pubs, restaurants, shops, cinemas and other forms of recreation re-opened, visitor numbers on the Commons decreased. However, the new-found importance of the Commons in peoples' lives meant that visitor numbers did not, and may not, fall to pre-COVID levels. This has had an impact on the infrastructure of the Commons with path erosion and trampling of sensitive habitats remaining a feature of concern. Increased numbers of people bring higher quantities of litter and waste – and our waste management expenditure which increased five-fold during lockdown has remained significantly higher than pre-COVID despite the easing of restrictions. As an independent charity, with limited resources, this has had a significant impact on our budgets. We created a new post of Litter and Waste Operative to focus on managing this issue and to free up our Maintenance and Keeper Teams to return to their 'normal' roles.

This was not the only recruitment which occurred during the year. The decision was taken not to recruit to the role of Chief Operations Manager when this became vacant and to use the cost savings to recruit not only the Litter and Waste Operative, but also a part-time Office Assistant and an additional member of the Maintenance Team, in order to increase our capacity to maintain both the valuable habitats on the Commons and the visitor infrastructure. As mentioned above, we also created a new post of Fundraising Manager and successfully filled the post in January 2022. This brought our staff team from 21 to 25. Once again, I have only the highest praise for the dedication and hard work of our staff team during what have been busy and uncertain times. The year also saw the recommencement of volunteering activities on the Commons following a hiatus during the pandemic and we remain incredibly grateful to all those who give their time, whether as part of organised volunteer groups or working alone carrying out wildlife surveys or clearing litter. We are also extremely grateful to outgoing Conservators, Shirley Gillbe and Sarah Jane Holden, who did not stand for re-election in 2021, but who remained in office until the newly elected Board members took up their roles in early April 2021.

2021/22 saw the return of events to the Commons. The very popular Wimbledon Bookfest held two, small scale events during the summer and the funfairs, which have been a feature of the Commons for almost a century, were able to operate once more. The Rosslyn Park Schools Rugby Sevens, the largest schools' rugby tournament in the world, returned to the Richardson Evans Memorial Playing Fields after a two-year absence. The weekly Wimbledon Common parkrun recommenced in July 2021 along with other running events which had ceased. Running has always been an important activity on the Commons, which are home to Thames Hare and Hounds, the oldest cross-country club in the world. Income from events is vital to funding the management of the Commons and therefore their return is important to WPCC, as well as to all those who attend and/or participate.

Between 2016 and 2021 regulatory issues, particularly the Charity Commission's Statutory Inquiry and two first tier tribunals, engaged large quantities of Board and staff time. With the closure of the inquiry and other regulatory matters, the team has been able to focus squarely on the management of the Commons to serve the interests of the wildlife and the millions who visit each year. This return to normality coupled with a growing and incredibly committed staff team mean that we can look to the future with renewed optimism after a difficult and extremely challenging period.

### **WHAT WE ACHIEVED DURING THE PAST YEAR**

#### **Strategic Context**

In June 2017, the Board approved the first ever Strategy ('the Strategy'), following a recommendation from the 2014 Governance Review. The Strategy sets out both the broad vision and specific initiatives for managing the Commons over the ten-year period from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2028.

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Report of the Conservators

For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

#### Our Vision

*"Wimbledon and Putney Commons will be recognised as an exceptional and welcoming natural place for visitors where wildlife thrives"*

The Strategy demonstrates the way in which the Board will play its part in making this area of South-West London a great place to live, work and visit, contributing towards a world class city. (A copy of the Strategy can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/3fPF0rT>.) The Strategy identifies two overarching long-term Strategic Objectives, which remain relevant for the purposes of this Conservators' report and are set out in Figure 1 below.

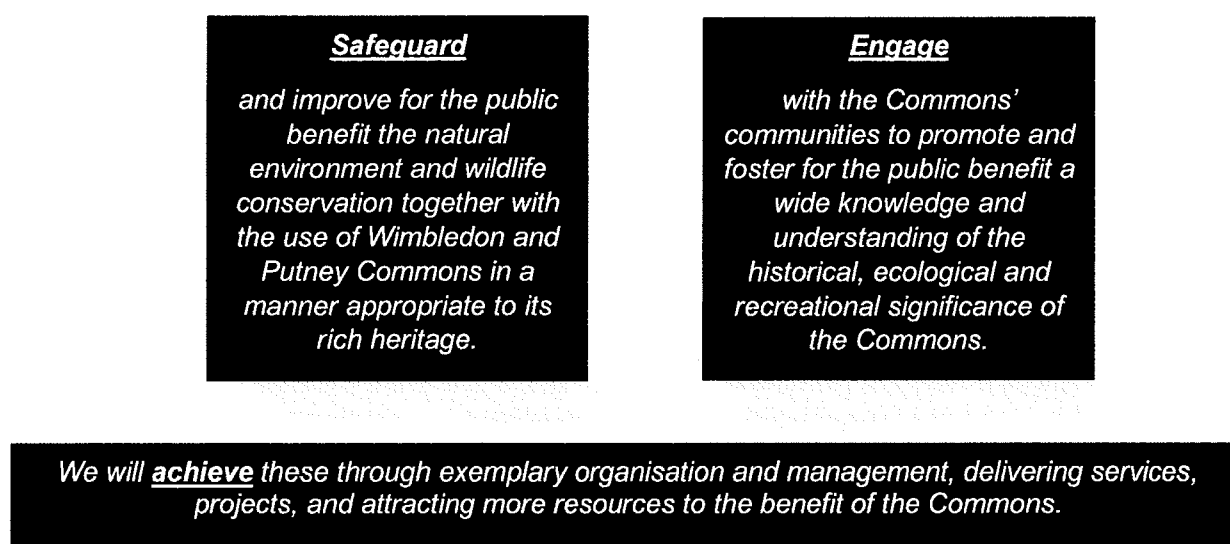


Figure 1 – WPCC Strategic Objectives

Within the Strategy, five Strategic Themes emerged:

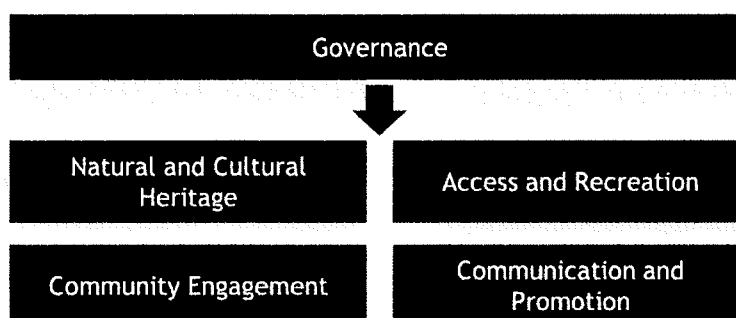


Figure 2 – Strategic Themes

#### Achievements and Performance 2021/22

It is within this strategic framework that individual initiatives are progressed through the development of a three-year rolling Business Plan. In June 2021, the Board agreed the three-year Business Plan for the period 1 April 2021 through 31 March 2024 in which 23 initiatives were agreed; progress on each of these initiatives over the past financial year is set out under each of the five Strategic Themes.

# **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

## **Report of the Conservators**

### **For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

The need to respond to the impact of COVID-19 has rightly been the priority for WPCC over the past two years. Although a number of the initiatives that had been included in the 2021 – 2024 Business Plan were suspended as the impact of the pandemic became clear, progress has been made in a number of areas over the course of the year ended 31 March 2022, details of which are set out below.

#### **Governance**

##### *Appointed Conservators*

WPCC's governance structure stipulates that three of the eight Conservators are appointed by government departments: the Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA); the Home Office; and the Ministry of Defence (MoD). In line with the term for elected Conservators, appointments are for a period of three years.

As previously reported, in May 2020, the first three-year term of the Conservator appointed by the MoD came to an end. The current Secretary of State, whilst recognising the current MoD appointed Conservator had acquitted himself well, chose not to re-appoint him for the full three-year term as he recognised the importance of the link between WPCC and the MoD and as such decided that the MoD appointed Conservator needed to have established links with the MoD. The current MoD appointed Conservator kindly agreed to continue to serve the Board until such time as a new appointment is made.

##### *Potential Constitutional Reform*

Planning for the long-term future of the Commons has been one of the Board's primary considerations and significant resources have been directed towards the work associated with clarifying and updating the charity's constitutional framework. There have been two key drivers for this; firstly, the Board recognised the need to update certain governance arrangements for the Commons as set out in the 1871 Wimbledon and Putney Commons Act and the 1847 Commissioners Clauses. This observation was also made by the Charity Commission in the Statutory Inquiry Report, which stated 'the charity's governing document, which dates back to 1871, contained provisions and powers that either required modernisation and/or were not fit for purpose'. The Commission highlighted the need for a review, which they stated the Commission would support 'where appropriate'.

The second driver has been the Board's desire to develop and deliver a Masterplan for the Commons. In particular, planning for the future identified that (a) the levy was insufficient to meet the needs of the organisation and (b) regularisation and clarification of land and building matters was required to enable WPCC to resolve a number of operational matters associated with managing the Commons. It is important to note that there is neither a desire nor intention of diluting or diminishing the very high level of protection that is afforded by the 1871 Act.

The Constitution Working Group (CWG) was established by the Board in April 2018 to identify the constitutional changes required and the procedures through which any such changes could be effected. The agreed Terms of Reference provide clarity of scope and purpose:

'The purpose of the CWG is to consider amendments necessary to WPCC's constitutional framework that will enhance WPCC's ability to achieve its fundamental purpose of preserving, protecting and enhancing the Commons for the purposes of exercise and recreation as established by the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Act 1871.

The review will identify areas where amendments to the constitutional framework are required in order to provide clarity, alignment, operational practicality and deliverability to WPCC's powers and rights and in doing so allow the organisation to consistently achieve high operational and strategic performance standards.'

By December 2019, much of the exploratory work had been completed and WPCC announced at its General Open Meeting its preferred option to amend certain elements of its constitution by means of a scheme under the Charity Commission and to consider amending the levy by means of a separate statutory instrument. Consultation on the proposals was designed to take place on a phased basis, commencing in spring 2020. Unfortunately,



## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Report of the Conservators**

#### **For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

COVID-19 restrictions precluded the ability to carry out a meaningful consultation exercise and further progress on this project through 2020/21 was limited due to COVID-19 restrictions.

In 2021, the Constitution Working Group was reconstituted as the Constitution Committee and following the easing of COVID restrictions, restarted its work. Progress on a section 73 scheme to amend the constitution has been hampered by the decision of the Charity Commission to review the scope of its powers to effect constitutional change in general. Notwithstanding this setback, WPCC is continuing to engage with the Commission to progress this as far as possible and plans to meet with the Commission in spring 2022.

Work on amending the levy has progressed and an assessment of predicted future capital and operating expenditure has been undertaken to identify the additional income required to (a) implement and maintain selected elements of the Masterplan (b) close the gap in the existing operational budget and (c) undertake planned preventative maintenance works that are currently not carried out due to insufficient funding. The work has also assessed the impact of any potential amendment to the levy on the levy-payers in terms of affordability. This analysis is necessary to support any potential increase in the levy. WPCC has also successfully engaged with the three constituency MPs and three local authorities to set out the historical position and examine affordability data and continues to work with these key stakeholders on this important initiative.

#### *Staff Restructure*

The promotion of the Chief Operations Manager to the role of Chief Executive, which was confirmed in June 2021, provided an opportunity to look anew at the structure of the staff team. The increased use of the Commons had severely stretched the operational staff teams and highlighted the need for more 'boots on the ground'. The decision was therefore taken not to recruit to the vacant post of Chief Operations Manager but rather to prioritise the funding of additional maintenance staff and administrative support within the very busy Ranger's Office. In April 2021, a full-time Litter and Waste Operative was recruited, to focus on emptying litter bins, dog waste bins and picking up litter from across the Commons. Management of waste had begun to consume significant amounts of the time of both the Maintenance and Keeper Teams, drawing them away from their core roles. In March 2022, the new Maintenance Team Operative joined WPCC. WPCC has recognised a need for greater emphasis on the management of the important habitats found on this Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Area for Conservation, whilst the increased number of visitors has created a need for greater management of visitor infrastructure. This new staff member will increase the Maintenance Team's capacity to achieve this work. Finally, the need was recognised for additional administrative support for the small management team operating out of the Ranger's Office and in January 2022 a part-time Office Assistant took up post.

#### *Increased Fundraising Capacity*

The 1871 Act is clear in that the levy is intended to serve as the primary source of funding, paid by all those who 'primarily benefit by the operation of the 1871 Act'. The revenue generated by the 42,000 households in the levy area, supplemented by the charity's other activities, no longer meets the requirements of the Commons and it is the preventative maintenance and long-term capital investment in particular that have suffered. As mentioned earlier, reform of the levy is under serious consideration but despite any increase, external funding will always be required to support major capital expenditure. In recognition therefore of the need to substantially bolster our fundraising capacity, in January 2022, WPCC recruited a Fundraising Manager to focus on bringing in new income from grants, appeals, donations, the Friends of Wimbledon and Putney Commons and legacies to help meet the charity's investment requirements.

#### *Natural and Cultural Heritage*

##### **London in Bloom**

The Commons submitted its annual entry to London in Bloom. Providing the opportunity for communities and organisations to be recognised for the improvements they make to the environment, London in Bloom, an independent charity and part of Britain in Bloom, is focused on the key issues of horticultural achievement, environmental responsibility and community participation.

# **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

## **Report of the Conservators**

### **For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

Having been involved with London in Bloom since 2013, Wimbledon and Putney Commons are proud supporters of this very special London campaign and each year Wimbledon Common (including Putney Heath) and Putney Lower Common are entered into the event separately.

In 2020 judging had to be undertaken remotely due to COVID-19 restrictions. Thankfully, 2021 saw the return of a site based judging visit. Both Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath and Putney Lower Common were presented with Gold Awards, which reflect an exceptionally high standard of management found by those who assessed the Commons.

#### **Land Management Plan**

2021/22 saw the commencement of work on the Commons' first five-year Land Management Plan. The Plan will guide the conservation and maintenance work to be undertaken across the site. It is intended that the Plan will be completed by the end of December 2022. A Steering Group, consisting of senior staff and Conservators, has been established to guide development of the Plan.

#### **Annual Conservation Report**

The Annual Conservation Report was produced by the Commons' Conservation and Engagement Officer, Peter Haldane at the end of the year. This annual report has been produced since 2000 and provides a summary of the conservation, volunteering and public engagement events that have occurred on the Commons during the past year.

A copy of this report can be found on the Wimbledon and Putney Commons' website  
<https://www.wpcc.org.uk/ConservationReport21-22>

#### **Management Works**

##### *Heathland and Acid Grassland*

Managed under the guidance of a five-year Countryside Stewardship Agreement with Natural England, all areas of heathland and acid grassland on Wimbledon and Putney Commons are found within the 364.5 hectares of the Commons that have been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), representing almost 80 percent of the Commons. SSSI and SAC designations are assigned to areas of land in the United Kingdom that are considered to be valuable in terms of the flora, fauna, physiological or geographical features that can be found on them and as a result, these areas are provided with a high level of legal protection.

One of the main management requirements for the heathland is removal of young trees and scrub. Much of this is undertaken by our volunteer scrub bashers and therefore the return of volunteering following the end of lockdown restrictions has been extremely important for the management of this valuable habitat. Other management within the heathland and grassland has included bracken control, the rotational cutting of gorse, the cutting back of scrub, the coppicing of large trees along the edge of two areas of heathland, removal of invasive weeds and the cut and collection of vegetation from five areas of heathland and acid grassland.

We are also working to enhance the ecological value of grassland/heathland around the edges of the golf course. In 2018, a series of scrapes was created to expose the heather seedbank which survived in the top layer of soil. Seed was also collected from elsewhere on the Commons and distributed on these scrapes. This technique has proved successful and three further (and larger) scrapes have been created within the golf course this year. The scrapes have been fenced temporarily to minimise damage by rabbits and by trampling.

At approximately six-yearly intervals, SSSI land is assessed by Natural England against six different conditions. At the current time, the heathland and acid grassland habitats that can be found on the Commons have all been classified as '*Unfavourable recovering*' which means that while various areas on the site are not yet fully conserved, all of the necessary management measures are in place. Provided that the recovery work on these areas is sustained, it is considered that the SSSI will reach favourable condition over time.

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Report of the Conservators**

#### **For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

##### *Woodlands*

Covering an area of 291 hectares, representing almost two-thirds of the total area of the Commons, woodland is the dominant habitat type found on Wimbledon and Putney Commons.

To help manage the Commons' woodland, all work is carried out under the guidance of a five-year Countryside Stewardship Agreement that has been agreed by WPCC, the Forestry Commission and Natural England.

Woodland management activities had been limited during 2020 as the large numbers of visitors to the Commons during lockdown had diverted the Maintenance Team to litter and waste management. During 2021/22, the team was able once more to focus on enhancing the ecological value of the woodlands on the Commons and completed some of the largest woodland management projects seen on the site in recent years. Most of the paths (known as rides) through the woodland on the Commons are narrow, with trees growing close to either side of the ride. This allows little light to reach the woodland floor, limiting ground vegetation and associated fauna. The Maintenance Team began a programme of ride widening by clearing trees along the edge of the Upper Gravelly ride. This work has hugely increased the sunlight reaching the woodland floor and it is hoped that over the coming years these sunlit, sheltered areas will see increases in populations of woodland flora and fauna. Two small ponds have also been created within the rides with the intention of attracting amphibians, such as frogs and newts, and invertebrates such as dragonflies and damselflies.

In the area between Robin Hood Ride and Lower Gravelly Ride, approximately 7 hectares of holly have been removed from within the woodland. Whilst small quantities of holly within a woodland can be beneficial, providing shelter and a source of food for birds, too much holly creates shading, preventing ground flora and understory trees from establishing. This limits the ecological value of the woodland. Over the next two years, a further 11 hectares of holly will be removed.

Storm Eunice brought with it a significant amount of 'clear up' work for the Maintenance Team, removing fallen trees from across the Commons, particularly where these blocked paths. This work is still ongoing. In addition, the ongoing programme of tree safety works continued, aimed at minimising the risk to users of the Commons and neighbouring land from falling trees or branches. Other operations that were carried out around the Commons' woodland between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 included the planting of 1,250 small trees, the creation of deadwood habitats, selective tree thinning, the management of invasive species such as Oak Processionary Moth and Japanese Knotweed, the provision of public information, survey work and the restoration of two woodland glades.

##### *Aquatic Management*

Despite many years of asking visitors to keep dogs out of ponds, the problem persists causing disturbance to the flora and fauna of these sites. During early 2022, areas have been enclosed at Scio Pond and Hookhamslade Pond to allow marginal vegetation to grow and to prevent dogs from disturbing wildlife.

Two duck tubes installed at Kingsmere in 2020 were refurbished. Both of the tubes had been nested in last year.

On the Beverley Brook, damaged in stream berms were repaired, dead hedging was laid along sections of the path adjacent to the Brook, to allow riverside vegetation to re-establish and management of invasive species, including Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam, was undertaken. Unfortunately in March 2022, a serious pollution incident occurred when a large quantity of waste oil was released into a tributary of the Brook. The oil was then washed downstream through the Common. We are extremely grateful to the environment Agency for their prompt response and the comprehensive 'clean up' work which they undertook. We do not yet know whether there will be any medium/long-term impact.

Bog restoration works undertaken include scrub bashing and dead hedging at Farm Bog and clearance of invasive vegetation at Stag Bog.

##### **Access and Recreation**

###### *Richardson Evans Memorial Playing Fields*

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Report of the Conservators**

#### **For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

The five-year agreement signed in 2016 with London Cornish Rugby Football Club (LCRFC) for the use of facilities at the REMPFF expired in August 2021. We are pleased to report that agreement was reached with LCRFC on a new five-year licence. This provides WPCC with essential income, whilst ensuring continued use of REMPFF.

#### *Path Restoration*

Repeated spells of heavy rainfall and the resulting run-off had led to severe erosion to the main footpath from the Windmill Car Park to Queensmere. This narrowed the route considerably and the gullies being formed presented a significant hazard. During summer 2021, the Maintenance Team constructed a drainage sump on the western edge of the Windmill Car Park to capture the run-off, and it is piped from the chamber into an area of scrub further down the slope, and away from the footpath. The gullies which had formed over the past few years have been filled, creating safer access along one of the most popular routes on the Commons.

#### **Community Engagement**

##### *Friends of Wimbledon and Putney Commons*

In April 2019, the Board agreed the basis for establishing the Friends of Wimbledon and Putney Commons as a Conservator-led, integral part of WPCC. The Friends bring together all of those who are connected by a passion for the Commons for the purposes of collective celebration and fund raising.

Two additional categories of membership were added during the year:

Patron - £1,000 per year (£85 per month)

Corporate - £5,000 per year (£420 per month)

The impact of COVID 19 continued to be felt throughout the year and Friends' events that had hoped to be rescheduled from 2020/21 once again had to be postponed due to either the government restrictions in place or the high numbers of cases being recorded and the potential risk of infection to our staff and visitors.

However, in early 2022 events restarted beginning with the first of the postponed events to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of Wimbledon and Putney Commons. A total of 150 Friends, special guests and other supporters of the Commons joined Conservators and staff for a celebratory Afternoon Tea at the All England Lawn Tennis Club. The event was a great success and raised some £2,926 for the charity; we are grateful to the AELTC for making available the facility to us and for supporting the Commons.

#### *Volunteer Programme*

During the period in which COVID-19 restrictions were in place, all organised volunteer group activities were suspended. We were therefore very excited in spring 2021 to welcome back members of the regular volunteer groups.

The long-standing weekend 'scrub bashers' resumed their work removing invasive scrub from areas of heathland on the Commons. This is time-consuming work, which our maintenance team would struggle to find the time to complete. Scrub clearance is vital to the health of the nationally scarce heathland habitat. Approximately 50% of London's heathland is found on the Commons.

The midweek 'estate volunteers' also recommenced their work. Projects that they have undertaken in 2021/22 have included painting around the Windmill complex, hazel coppicing, clearance of invasive vegetation and scrub bashing.

A new group was also established during the past year – the Beverley Brook volunteers, who focus on keeping the brook free of litter. The river restoration work undertaken on the brook in 2018/2019 by WPCC in partnership with the South East Rivers Trust, has already seen a noticeable improvement in the ecological value of the river where it passes through Wimbledon Common. However, the berms which have been installed to recreate a natural flow of water also trap litter which has been deposited into the brook upstream. The only way of removing

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Report of the Conservators**

#### **For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

this at present is to have people wade into the water and remove rubbish by hand. This is labour intensive work and having a team of volunteers to assist is invaluable.

Alongside the Beverley Brook group, the Commons were assisted by the involvement of a large number of volunteer litter pickers operating on dry land, some of whom are active on a daily basis. Covering all areas of the Commons, these individuals have provided invaluable assistance in helping to keep the Commons free of litter.

Along with the 89 young people who have helped to litter pick on the Commons as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Awards, between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, volunteer litter pickers have provided a total of 711 hours of assistance to the Commons. While this amounts to a very impressive number of hours, it should be noted that there are also many other individuals who continue to litter pick on the Commons but are either not known to us or simply do not keep us updated about the hours they spend on the Commons. It is virtually impossible to accurately guess how many hours these individuals spend litter picking on the Commons, but their efforts are hugely appreciated.

Over the past year, a total of 5,849 'known' volunteering hours (including that of the litter pickers) have been provided by individuals intent on helping WPC to protect the Commons.

#### *Masterplan for the Commons*

In September 2019, WPC secured a grant from NLHF of £126,100 (80% of the total approved project cost of £157,200) to create a Masterplan for the Commons, articulating the way in which the landscape and built assets relate to one another, looking at interpretation, education, volunteering, visitor facilities, perimeter conditions and landscape management.

The project was launched on 1 November 2019 and Barker Langham, a consulting firm with expertise in this area, was selected through a competitive tendering process in 2019 to manage the project. The intention was that the project would be completed by August 2020. However, when the nation went into lockdown on 23 March 2020, the project was put on hold, and neither WPC nor the consultants were in a position to recommence work until November 2020.

Barker Langham's work on the draft Masterplan was finally completed in July 2021 and all responsibilities with the NLHF were fulfilled. The draft document sets out proposals for improving both the built and natural environment of the Commons and identifies the investment required to deliver the proposals. It had been hoped to undertake consultation on the natural environment, access, interpretation and volunteering elements of the Masterplan during 2021. However, this was delayed by a lack of external resources to undertake the process. It is intended that consultation on these elements of the Masterplan will now be undertaken in 2022, potentially in conjunction with a consultation on the levy. Consultation on the built environment elements will be deferred until greater clarity on the constitutional position is achieved.

#### *Communication and Promotion*

As with the previous financial year, 2021/22 was also disrupted by the continued impact of COVID 19, with some of the major events such as the Commons' Open Day cancelled. The planned Celebration Games Day Anniversary event and the Reception at the House of Commons to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the Commons were also both postponed.

#### Online Events

Following the success of online events during 2020/21, we continued with these through 2021/22.

- In April and May 2021, local resident, Alan Blower, kindly provided two more opportunities to experience his virtual walk around the Ponds of Wimbledon and Putney Commons.
- The popular Birdsong Identification Workshop in April 2021 was able to take place online, although unfortunately could not be followed up with the customary Sunday morning walk.
- The Annual Open Meeting in June 2021, at which the Conservators presented their Annual Report and Accounts, was once again held via Zoom Webinar, with some 60 people attending.

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Report of the Conservators

#### For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

- In February 2022, our regular Winter Talk stayed on Zoom and we were delighted to welcome Edward Mayer of Swift Conservation who enthralled over 80 attendees with his talk about that most spectacular and charismatic of urban birds, the Swift, noting their sad decline and what we can all do to help reverse the trend.
- In March 2022, and following on from the success of his virtual pond walk, Alan Blower kindly invited us to join him for another virtual walk - The Grand Houses of Rushmere. This 60-minute guided talk revealed the history and residents of the magnificent houses and the labourer's cottages that overlook Rushmere Pond and the surrounding area on Wimbledon Common.

#### Face to Face Events

As the year proceeded and the restrictions lessened, we began to hold some smaller outside events.

- In June 2021, we held a smaller than usual Bioblitz Weekend of Nature event – this is one of WPCC's most important events that enables us to showcase the wildlife of the Commons.
- In July 2021, Alan Blower held a series of three physical walks on The Grand Houses of Rushmere (*later supplemented by the virtual walk – see above*).
- The popular Bird Walks led by two of our volunteers, Adrian Podmore and Les Evans-Hill, began again in September and October 2021 bird walks, giving an opportunity to see some of the migrating birds that come through the Commons.
- The Conservators' General Open Meeting was held at the London Scottish Golf Club in November 2021 and was attended by over 40 people. At this meeting the focus is more on operational matters and the Conservators welcomed WPCC's Maintenance Manager, Jack Rowland, to talk to the audience about the varied work that he and his team carry out to keep the Commons clean and safe for visitors.
- One of the most anticipated events in our calendar is the Carols at the Windmill in early December so we were delighted that the event could go ahead again in 2021, albeit out on the Common rather than in the courtyard of the Windmill to allow visitors to spread out. We were less fortunate with the weather but the 100 or so visitors that came along thoroughly enjoyed listening to, or singing along with, the carols played by the Wandle Concert Band.

Communication via our e-Newsletters continued throughout the year with 11 newsletters published between April 2021 and March 2022. We also produced a bumper 12 page 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition of our hard-copy Newsletter which was delivered to all levy-payers.

**Commons Picture Competition** - As part of the Commons' 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations, the Conservators launched a picture competition in August 2021, inviting visitors to the Commons to submit photographs of the Commons with the chance to win prizes donated each month by local businesses. The competition will continue until July 2022 and we are hoping to host an exhibition of the winning entries and many of the excellent runners-up later in the year. Up to the end of March 2022, over 1,000 entries had been received.

**Board Meetings** – Following the March 2021 triennial elections, the newly constituted Board agreed that to further the objectives of openness and transparency, the non-confidential sections of Board meetings would be held in public. As such, from 1 October 2021 members of the public have been welcome to attend the non-confidential part of Board meetings and to ask questions on any of the matters being considered at that meeting. The papers and minutes from these meetings are also posted on WPCC's website.

#### **WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE IN 2022/23**

It is hoped that as we move through 2022/23 and the day-to-day impact of COVID-19 on our operations recedes, we will be able to move away from the reactive approach that has been necessary through 2020/21 and return to a more strategic way of working, continuing to make progress against some of our long-term objectives. There will be particular focus on a number of key initiatives, all of which are integral to WPCC's 2022 to 2025 Business Plan.

- **Masterplan** – As one of the key priorities, WPCC intends to undertake a consultation on the natural environment, access, interpretation and volunteering elements of the draft Masterplan for the Commons.

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Report of the Conservators

#### For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

- **Constitutional Reform** – WPCC retains a desire to clarify and modernise certain constitutional provisions, to enable more effective governance of the charity by working with the Charity Commission and politicians. When appropriate, a staged consultation will be held on any proposed changes to the charity's constitution potentially including the levy that funds the charity's work.
- **Fundraising** – The charity recognises the need to build its fundraising capacity to provide the investment necessary to protect the Commons and to this end has recruited a Fundraising Manager. WPCC will finalise and begin implementation of a fundraising strategy for the charity.
- **150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration** – Celebratory events for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Act planned for 2021 were postponed due to COVID restrictions. However, it is hoped that further events, most notably a 'Games Day' to celebrate the varied sports which have taken place on the Commons over the years and a reception at the House of Commons, to celebrate our links with Parliament, will be held.
- **Land Management Plan** - The Land Management Plan, development of which is in progress, will set out the longer-term vision and operational direction for conserving and enhancing habitats and populations of priority species enhancement on the Commons. In particular, the plan will set out the work required to ensure the heathland, woodland, ponds and mires found on the Commons are managed in order to preserve and improve their condition and value for wildlife. A key medium-term goal will be returning the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to favourable condition.
- **Communications Plan** – WPCC recognises that communications with stakeholders is vital to engaging users and neighbours of the Commons as well as potential funders of our work. During 2022/23 the charity will develop a communications plan that sets out the key messages it wishes to communicate to stakeholders and how these will be communicated.
- **Access Improvements** – During the year, the footbridge across the Beverley Brook at REMPF will be replaced, the footbridge across the Brook at Putney Lower Common will be repaired and reopened and the busy path route from Roehampton/Roehampton Church School to Putney Heath Road, will be resurfaced. Funding for all three of these projects has been most generously donated from individuals and organisations over the past six months and we are grateful to all those who have so kindly supported us. We also hope, through additional fundraising efforts, to invest in a number of footpaths in an effort to ensure the Commons is accessible to all.

#### OUR FINANCIAL POSITION

##### Financial Review

During the 2021/22 year, the financial results were affected by the impact of Covid and other non-recurring costs to a much lesser extent than in the previous year. The table on the next page summarises the financial performance for the year ended 31 March 2022 and indicates an excess of income over expenditure of £7,803 before taking account of the additional charges in respect of the defined benefit pension scheme; these additional charges do not of themselves result in a cash outflow for the charity.

# Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

## Report of the Conservators

For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	<b>Year ended 31 March 2022</b>			<b>2021</b>
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Total income	1,888,945	80,433	1,969,378	1,871,961
Total expenditure before additional charges in respect of defined benefit pension scheme	(1,925,625)	(35,950)	(1,961,575)	(2,156,317)
Net income/(expenditure) before additional charges in respect of defined benefit pension scheme	(36,680)	44,483	7,803	(284,356)
Additional charges in respect of defined benefit pension scheme	(306,000)		(306,000)	(299,000)
Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains	(342,680)	44,483	(298,197)	(583,356)
Net gain on investments	147,350		147,350	279,616
<b>Net income/(expenditure) before other gains and losses</b>	<b>(195,330)</b>	<b>44,483</b>	<b>(150,847)</b>	<b>(303,740)</b>
Actuarial gain/(loss) on defined benefit pension scheme	782,000		782,000	(25,000)
<b>Net movement in funds for the year</b>	<b>586,670</b>	<b>44,483</b>	<b>631,153</b>	<b>(328,740)</b>
Total funds brought forward	145,627	71,385	217,012	545,752
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>732,297</b>	<b>115,868</b>	<b>848,165</b>	<b>217,012</b>
<b>Comprising:</b>				
Negative pension reserve	(2,381,000)		(2,381,000)	(2,857,000)
Other reserves	3,113,297	115,868	3,229,165	3,074,012
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>732,297</b>	<b>115,868</b>	<b>848,165</b>	<b>217,012</b>



**Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**  
**Report of the Conservators**  
**for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

*Income*

Unrestricted income for the year was £1,888,945 which was £127,925 higher than the previous year. The main changes in income were as follows:

- Income from sports facilities increased by £106,153 as a result of the reduction in pandemic related movement restrictions and was 22% above the level for the year ended 31 March 2019, being the last full year not impacted by the pandemic.
- Rent from filming and fairs increased by £21,880.
- Income from property rent and wayleaves decreased by £11,026. The main elements of this decrease were an increase in rental income of £15,459 from the temporary third party letting of a residential property and a reduction in licence fee income of £31,000 as a result of a change in tax status.
- The levy increased by £14,091 and represented 66% (2021: 71%) of the total unrestricted income of the charity in the year.

In view of the ongoing need to optimise the use of the charity's resources and recognising the requirement to commit investment to the Commons' buildings and infrastructure, the Conservators increased the 2022/23 levy to its maximum permitted level which will generate an additional £61,321 of income in the year ending 31 March 2023.

The main elements of restricted income in the year were £26,977 from the horse-ride appeal, grant funding of £22,321 in respect of the installation of cricket nets at Putney Heath, £15,509 from Beverley Brook bridge appeals, and a donation of £10,000 in respect of Putney Heath footpath restoration.

*Expenditure*

Total unrestricted expenditure on charitable activities for the year amounted to £1,925,625 (before taking account of the additional charges in respect of the defined benefit pension scheme) which represented a decrease of £104,567 over the previous year. Restricted expenditure decreased by £90,175.

The most significant changes in expenditure during the year were as follows:

- Property maintenance costs increased by £65,594 as a result of repairs to the roof at the sports pavilion which cost £27,870 and a general increase in maintenance and improvement works that had been held back during the pandemic;
- Although Commons' maintenance costs increased by a modest amount of £10,879, there were some significant changes as follows:
  - The first stage of the holly clearance project started at a cost of £34,466; the majority of this cost is being funded by the Woodland Countryside Stewardship grant.
  - Cleaning, skips and rubbish removal reduced by £15,142 from the very high level incurred during the first year of the pandemic.
  - £29,424 was spent on restoration work to the horse exercise ring.
  - Staff costs increased by £30,444 as a result of the impact of the remuneration review and recruitment
  - Expenditure on repairs and spares increased by £15,319 because of additional fleet repairs required and the increased cost of parts.

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Report of the Conservators for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

- In the previous financial year £80,000 was spent on the Beverley Brook path project.
- Support costs (before taking account of the additional charges in respect of the defined benefit pension scheme) decreased by £279,788 with the most significant variations being:
  - The triennial election cost of £58,250 was incurred in the previous year;
  - A reduction of £40,409 in NLHF project expenses as the largest part of the project had taken place in the two previous years;
  - Administration staff salaries and legal fees decreased by £102,277 and £94,800, respectively, as there had been substantial one-off costs in the previous year.

#### *Other matters*

The impact of the war in the Ukraine on the financial markets during the first quarter of 2022 caused a reduction in value of the charity's investments but overall, for the year ended 31 March 2022, the investments increased by £147,350.

At 31 March 2022 the charity's bank balances amounted to £332,543 (2021: £181,131).

#### *Pension Scheme*

The charity is a member of the London Borough of Merton LGPS. The latest triennial actuarial valuation (TAV) of the LGPS was published in March 2020 and set out the actuarial position of the LGPS at 31 March 2019 and the contributions required for the three years ending 31 March 2023. At the valuation date, the LGPS had assets sufficient to cover 103% of its accrued liabilities and WPCC's share of the LGPS was assessed at 104% of its accrued liabilities. A copy of the 2019 actuarial valuation can be inspected at <https://bit.ly/2zEKepW>.

The TAV is prepared to assess the funding position of the LGPS and to determine the contributions actually payable by participating employers for the ensuing three years. For accounting purposes, a different valuation methodology is used which is intended to aid comparison between different entities with defined benefit pension schemes. The element of the valuation methodology which causes the greatest difference between the two valuations is the discount rate used to compute the liability to pay pensions. The TAV at 31 March 2019 used a discount rate based on the expected return of the assets in the pension fund, adjusted for risk, of 4.8% whereas the valuation at 31 March 2019 for accounting purposes used a discount rate of 2.4%, based on the annualised Merrill Lynch AA rated corporate bond yield curve. The use of a discount rate that is calculated on a different basis and as a result is much lower than that used in the TAV resulted in WPCC's share of the LGPS recording a deficit of £2,713,000 for accounting purposes whereas the TAV showed a surplus of £276,000.

As at 31 March 2022, WPCC's pension deficit within the LGPS for accounting purposes (based on a discount rate of 2.6%) was £2,381,000, a decrease of £782,000 over the previous year. The changes to the deficit are shown in note 24 to the financial statements.

GAAP in the United Kingdom requires the inclusion of the deficit on the LGPS that is calculated for accounting purposes in WPCC's accounts. The deficit itself is shown as a liability on the balance sheet with a corresponding amount charged to a negative pension reserve. The movements in the deficit from year to year are charged/credited within the Statement of Financial Activities and the main components for the year ended 31 March 2022 were:

- the current service cost of providing the pension which at £407,000 was £240,000 in

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Report of the Conservators for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

excess of the contributions payable to the LGPS by WPCC;

- a notional net interest charge on the defined benefit pension obligation which amounted to £56,000; and
- an actuarial gain of £782,000.

It should be noted that the pension liability included in the balance sheet does not represent a liability which is payable because, as described above, the contributions payable to the LGPS are based on the results of the TAV.

Further details of the LGPS will be found in the notes to the financial statements.

#### **Principal Risks and Uncertainties**

The Conservators have considered the major risks to which the charity is exposed and satisfied themselves that systems or procedures are established in order to manage those risks. The annual report of the Audit and Risk Committee will be found later in this report. Set out below are the principal risks and uncertainties to which the charity is exposed.

The principal risk to the charity during the year has been the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. The impact of the pandemic on the operations of the charity has been described earlier in this report. On the assumption that the lifting of the remaining restrictions by the Government earlier in 2022 remains in place, it is anticipated that there will be negligible impact on the charity's finances in the year 2022/23.

Despite various amendments that have been introduced over the years, the administrative provisions of the 1871 Act have not been materially updated since 1871 and this presents a risk that has been acknowledged by the Charity Commission. The Constitution Committee, originally established as a working group in 2018, continues to review the current arrangements. This is not about introducing a more permissive regime or diluting the fundamental purposes of the charity but introducing a workable set of rules to enable the organisation to fulfil its core objectives in a 21st century working environment. The charity had planned to commence a public consultation process on the potential changes to the constitutional arrangements in April 2020, but the COVID-19 restrictions and a decision by the Charity Commission to review the scope of its powers to effect constitutional reform in general meant that the process had to be postponed. As noted earlier, the Board continues to liaise with the Charity Commission on this matter.

The recent rises in inflation in the UK and elsewhere caused by price increases arising from cost pressures as economies emerge from the pandemic induced recession, particularly energy price increases, which were compounded by the effect of the war in the Ukraine, are likely to have a negative impact on the charity's costs. However, the charity is fortunate in that its principal source of income is the levy which is tied to the Retail Price Index.

As described earlier in this report, the charity has developed a number of ambitious projects for the Commons which will necessitate the raising of grants and donations from third parties. In the event that such funds cannot be raised, the projects may need to be curtailed or postponed.

The Commons contain a large number of buildings, many of which are over 100 years old. The age of such buildings brings the risk that unforeseen expenditure may be required to maintain the operational capability of such buildings.

Risks to the charity's buildings and other infrastructure are managed by means of routine inspections which are aimed at identifying problems before they arise. However, given the age of such buildings and infrastructure it is inevitable that unforeseen and sometimes costly expenditure will arise from time to time.

#### **Fundraising**

WPCC's new Fundraising Manager launched her first appeal in January 2022 to raise funds for the repair of the footbridge over the Beverley Brook in Putney Lower Common, which had been closed since early summer 2021 for safety reasons. The cost of the repairs had been identified as £15,000 and this was the target of the appeal. We are delighted to report that this figure was reached in early April 2022. There

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Report of the Conservators for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

were more than 70 separate donations to the appeal and we are incredibly grateful to everyone who supported the project. We hope to complete the repairs during summer 2022.

The Wimbledon Village Stables continued their fundraising activities in order to provide capital to invest in improvements to the equestrian facilities on the Commons including the horse rides and the exercise rings. The Stables Charity Ball, held in early March 2022, raised £15,866 for the Commons. This will fund restoration of horse rides and we intend to undertake this work during late spring/early summer 2022.

The memorial bench donation scheme, relaunched in 2018, has continued to be successful. Donations made to sponsor memorial benches during 2021/22 totalled £25,721.

WPCC received grants totalling £10,000 from the Elizabeth Frankland Moore and Star Foundation during the year. These grants have been restricted for the restoration of a footpath route on Putney Heath and this work will be undertaken during spring 2022.

In 2017, WPCC established a car park donation scheme which enabled visitors to make donations for car parking via a coin operated pay and display machine or online. Regular users can also make an annual donation of £120. During 2021/22 the donation scheme brought in income of £2,643. A new, contactless payment donation machine, which will make donating much easier, was ordered by WPCC in winter 2021/22. Current supply chain issues have meant that the machine will not be installed until July 2022.

The Friends of Wimbledon and Putney Commons were established during 2019/20 and membership continued to grow during 2021/22. At 31 March 2022 there were 544 subscriptions (increased from 506 at the end of March 2021) which had generated income of £44,179 including Gift Aid. This compares favourably with 2020/21 when the Friends raised £36,113. In addition, the Friends organised an Afternoon Tea event at the AELTC held in February 2022 which succeeded in raising £2,926 for the Commons.

Apart from the appeal described above in relation to the Putney Lower Common bridge, the membership scheme for and the events held by the Friends of Wimbledon and Putney Commons and the voluntary donations scheme at the Windmill car park, the charity did not undertake any significant fundraising activities during the year and it was not subject to an undertaking to be bound by any voluntary scheme for regulating fundraising or any voluntary standard of fundraising. The charity received no complaints about its fundraising activities and makes every effort to ensure that any fundraising it undertakes is not unreasonably intrusive, persistent or pressurised.

**Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**  
**Report of the Conservators**  
**for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

**Reserves**

At 31 March 2022, the charity had unrestricted reserves (excluding the negative pension reserve of £2,381,000) of £3,113,297 and restricted reserves of £115,868.

The charity's free reserves can be analysed as follows:

	£
<b>Unrestricted reserves, excluding negative pension reserve</b>	
Per balance sheet	732,297
Add back negative pension reserve	2,381,000
	<hr/> 3,113,297
Deduct:	
Estimated cost of next triennial elections in 2021	(60,000)
Funds required to fund the net book value of tangible fixed assets	(1,380,205)
Free reserves, before negative pension reserve	<hr/> <b>1,673,092</b> <hr/>

As noted earlier, the negative pension reserve represents the net liability in respect of the LGPS and is calculated in accordance with the specific requirements of the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). The net liability is being funded by regular contributions to the pension scheme out of the charity's annual income at a rate determined by the scheme's actuary.

The Conservators' estimated potential requirements for reserves are set out in the table below:

Provision of working capital to cover day to day fluctuations in income and expenditure and meet, in the short term, either unexpected expenses or income shortfalls	£495,000-£550,000
Allowance for potential impact of COVID-19 if the movement and distancing restrictions were re-introduced in autumn/winter of 2022/23	£75,000-£150,000
Renovation works to estate buildings	£257,500-£360,500
Costs associated with changes to the constitutional arrangements	£116,000-£166,000

This gives a total requirement of between £943,500 and £1,226,500. As described above, WPCC's free reserves at 31 March 2022 were £1,673,092, which is more than the total requirement in the table above. Therefore, WPCC believes it has adequate resources to meet its reserves policy. It should be noted that the charity's estate is a substantial area which has on it a number of buildings which are in excess of 100 years old. Consequently, it is often the case that circumstances arise which involve unforeseen expenditure. Therefore, it is the Conservators'

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Report of the Conservators for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

intention to maintain high levels of reserves to cover such unforeseen expenditure.

The level of income generated by WPCC's activities in their present form are insufficient to enable the Conservators to make any significant investment in the Commons' estate. Accordingly, the Conservators are continuing to investigate ways of broadening and increasing their income base.

#### **Investment Management**

CCLA Investment Management Limited (CCLA) is the charity's investment adviser with a discretionary mandate. The charity's funds are invested in the COIF Charity Investment Fund (COIF), a specialist charity fund managed by CCLA.

The mandate given to CCLA sets out the charity's investment objectives as follows:

- A balanced attitude to risk, where the objective is to protect the real values over time but investment risk can be accepted in order to achieve this;
- A long term gross total return target of CPI +5% per annum with an annual income requirement of at least £35,000 per annum; the real value of income is required to rise in line with inflation, as far as possible.

The total return performance of the COIF investment in the year to 31 March 2022 was 11.6% and since inception in the second quarter of 2019 the total return has been 33.0%. The corresponding figures for CPI+5% have been 13.29% and 23.68%, respectively. The value of the charity's investment at 31 March 2022 was £1,677,706 and the investment income received in the year amounted to £48,029.

The charity realised £100,000 of its investment in COIF during the second half of the financial year to fund its anticipated cash flow requirements in the year ahead.

#### **Going Concern**

The Conservators have considered the charity's forecasts for the next three years.

If there were to be a return to lockdown restrictions as a result of a further wave or waves of COVID-19, this would have a negative impact on the level of income receivable from sports and other facilities and would result in an increase in costs in respect of litter collection and removal. On the basis of experience gained since March 2020, it is considered likely that the charity would be able to absorb the resulting reduction in net income by cost savings in other areas and, if necessary, the realisation of part of its reserves.

The significant increases in inflation in the last twelve months and the forecast further increases in the year ending 31 March 2023 are likely to have a negative effect on the charity's cost base. Although the charity is fortunate in that its primary source of income, the levy, is tied to changes in the Retail Price Index, over 30% of the charity's income is from non-levy sources and it may prove difficult to raise the rate of income from such sources sufficient to cover the cost inflation suffered by the charity.

On the basis of the foregoing, and the fact that the charity has a substantial investment portfolio, the Conservators believe that the charity has sufficient funds to continue to operate for the foreseeable future and, accordingly, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in the preparation of the financial statements.

**Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**  
**Report of the Conservators**  
**for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

**Objectives and Activities**

The 1871 Act, which can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/2Z6NbtO>, incorporated the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators as a body corporate. The 1871 Act set out the Conservators' statutory functions and duties, and it conferred powers on the corporate body. Section 8 of the 1871 Act provides: -

*"There shall be a body of Conservators for carrying this Act into execution, the full number of whom shall be eight, and who are hereby incorporated by the name of the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators, and by that name shall be one body corporate, with perpetual succession and a common seal, and with power to take and hold and to dispose of (by grant, demise, or otherwise) land and other property (which body corporate is in this Act referred to as the Conservators)."*

The preamble to the 1871 Act requires the Conservators to keep the Commons:

*"open and unenclosed and unbuilt on, and to protect... and preserve the same for public and local use, for purposes of exercise and recreation and other purposes".*

In addition, the Conservators have duties under the 1871 Act:

- to preserve the natural aspect and state of the Commons;
- to protect and manage trees, heather, gorse and other vegetation;
- not to sell, lease, grant or in any manner dispose of any part of the Commons, except as expressed under the 1871 Act.

On 14 April 1972 the site was registered as a charity with its charitable objective:

*"to preserve the Commons as open spaces for purposes of exercise and recreation and other purposes."*

Under the Wimbledon and Putney Commons (Special Levies) Regulations 1990, as amended by the Wimbledon and Putney Commons (Special Levies) (Amendment) Regulations 1993, WPCC has the power to raise a levy. This is collected by the boroughs of Wandsworth, Merton and Kingston in a proportion relevant to the number of "D" Band properties in each borough within the levy-Paying area. The boroughs pass on this levy by way of an addition to the Council Tax on properties in the area.

Under Section 84 of the 1871 Act, the Conservators have the power to make byelaws to regulate and control the use of the land for which they are responsible.

Governance is prescribed within the separate Commissioners Clauses Act 1847, as amended by the 1871 Act, that deals with the constitution and regulation of the organisation.

The Commons comprise 461 hectares (1,140 acres) and contain a wide variety of landscapes, buildings, infrastructure and visitor facilities. Unlike land that is constituted as parkland, the glory of the Commons is that they are a relic of the former manorial lands.

As stewards of the Commons and through our independent governance structure, Conservators safeguard the natural aspect and condition so that the Commons are safe, available, welcoming and accessible for all.

This requires WPCC to:

- conserve, enhance and protect the Commons' natural aspect and wildlife for present and future generations to enjoy;
- demonstrate sound governance and financial discipline by constantly reviewing operational procedures and all aspects of management;

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Report of the Conservators for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

- seek to balance the enjoyment of the majority of users who visit the Commons for informal activity and appreciation of the Commons' quiet natural aspect with the needs of groups who undertake formal and/or more rigorous recreational activities;
- improve the understanding and identity of the Commons and interpret their rich and varied heritage;
- work in partnership with stakeholders to promote and achieve the Vision;
- improve facilities used for organised recreation, sport and events;
- encourage volunteering as a rewarding activity engaging people of all ages and abilities;
- work in an environmentally sustainable manner.

The Commons are a part of the UK series of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) reflecting the importance of their grassland and heathland habitats. Under EU conservation legislation (as applicable following Brexit), they are also a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) with importance for beetles and insect diversity. The Commons are also designated as Metropolitan Open Land, which affords the land the same level of protection as the Green Belt, and this designation, together with the defining provisions of the 1871 Act, provide the Commons with a very high level of protection.

Volunteering is increasingly important in the delivery of the charity's activities and there are various opportunities for people to become involved. These range from supporting practical activities, such as heathland and woodland management, estate maintenance as well as litter management. Through the Wildlife and Conservation Forum, there is a group of expert volunteers who undertake monitoring of flora and fauna contributing towards the annual Ecological and Environmental Monitoring Report.

In planning and delivering its activities, the Conservators have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. We confirm that we have complied with our duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

The Conservators, through the Audit and Risk Committee, have assessed the governance of the charity against the Charity Governance Code and have drawn up, and made significant progress against, an 'action plan, in order to address any areas of non-compliance identified.

#### **Structure**

Governance is provided by a board of eight Conservators, five of whom are directly elected every three years by those local authority voters living within the levy-area and the remaining three are appointed by three government departments. The levy-area is defined as the area within three-quarters of a mile of Wimbledon Common in addition to the area within the old Parish of Putney. Both the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in the triennial elections are granted to all those living within the levy-area who meet the relevant criteria. The 1990 Election Byelaws supplement the requirements under the 1871 Act prescribing the timescales and procedures for undertaking the triennial elections.

Responsibility for appointing the three Conservators resides with three central government departments – currently the Department of Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the Home Office and the Ministry of Defence. The term of office for the appointed Conservators is also three years.

Conservators also serve as trustees of the charity and are its only members.

#### **Governance**

The work of the charity is overseen by the Board of Conservators, more commonly today referred to as trustees in the context of the charity. The Board sets policy and is responsible for the conduct of WPCC's affairs and for ensuring that the charity operates in accordance with its founding legislation, charity law and other statutory requirements and byelaws. The role of the Board is to develop and agree the charity's vision, mission, values and strategy. The Board is responsible for implementing and monitoring the Strategy through a three-year rolling Business Plan, which includes a financial plan.

The Chairman is elected from within the Board on an annual basis. The Board meets on a bi-monthly basis or more frequently as required. The Board receives regular reports at its meetings on the financial status of the charity and monitors progress against approved budgets, the status of its investments, and



## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Report of the Conservators for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

reviews the Top Ten risks. Reports are also brought to the Board on operational and property matters as required.

The Board has established four committees:

#### **Audit and Risk Committee**

On behalf of the Board, it is the responsibility of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) independently to:

- monitor the integrity of the annual financial statements of WPCC, reviewing significant financial reporting issues and judgements contained in them;
- ensure effective policies and procedures and compliance systems for managing risk are in place and to review their effectiveness;
- make recommendations to the Board in all matters in relation to the external auditor;
- ensure effective procedures and safeguards are in place to monitor the prevention of fraud and corruption;
- prepare and publish an annual report of the work of the ARC; and
- report back to the Board on all matters where decisions are required unless, exceptionally, authority has been delegated to the ARC by the Board in respect of a particular matter.

#### **Finance and Investment Committee**

On behalf of the Board, it is the responsibility of the Finance and Investment Committee (FIC) to:

- scrutinise and oversee all financial and investment aspects of WPCC so as to ensure short and long-term viability of WPCC; and
- report back to the Board on all matters where decisions are required unless specifically delegated by the Board.

#### **Constitution Committee**

On behalf of the Board, it is the responsibility of the Constitution Committee (CC) to:

- review, identify, consider and recommend to the Board amendments to WPCC's constitutional framework that will enhance WPCC's ability to achieve its fundamental purpose; and
- consider and recommend the way in which any such amendments could be effected.

#### **Friends Committee**

On behalf of the Board, it is the responsibility of the Friends Committee (FC) to:

- lead on fundraising undertaken under the auspices of the Friends for WPPC; and
- organise events for and on behalf of the Friends of WPCC.

Terms of Reference for the committees and the two working groups described below have been approved by the Board and are published on the WPCC website.

In addition to the committees, the Board has established two working groups:

- i. The Stakeholder Group, which comprises individuals with knowledge and interest in the Commons, representing different user groups and geographies and providing views and suggestions to the Board. There are currently 14 members of the Stakeholder Group, representing local organisations.
- ii. The Wildlife and Conservation Forum, which is chaired by the DEFRA-appointed Conservator and is comprised of volunteer experts. The forum supports the Commons' staff in their role of protecting the natural environment of the Commons.

Following their election or appointment to the Board, each Conservator receives a briefing pack outlining their role, together with information on WPCC, its founding legislation, its policies, structures and work. Every Conservator completes a register of interests and a related party transaction form, both of which

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Report of the Conservators for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

are updated annually or whenever any changes occur. Each Conservator also signs a Code of Conduct which sets out procedures and duties in relation to confidentiality, conflict of interest and other matters of pertinence to charity trustees. A formal induction process is provided for each new Conservator. All Conservators are offered opportunities to learn more about WPCC's work, through individual meetings with staff and site visits.

In the interests of transparency and openness the Board resolved at its meeting held on 12 July 2021 to hold part of the Board meetings in public. Board meetings are now divided into two parts – A(1) to which the public are invited to both attend and ask questions relating to matters discussed at the meeting and A(2) which is confidential and held in private.

#### Summary of the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report 2021/22

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) is a committee of the Board and its Terms of Reference were approved by the Board in May 2018 and most recently re-confirmed by the Board in June 2021. The role of the ARC is to review and scrutinise WPCC's corporate governance, financial reporting, internal controls and risk management ensuring that they support the achievement of the charity's objectives. The full ARC report for 2021/22 can be found on the WPCC website <https://www.wpcc.org.uk/ARCreport2021-22>

During 2021/22, ARC met on four occasions. The members of the Committee were Mr Michael Rappolt, Appointed Conservator (Chair), Mr Peter Hirsch, Elected Conservator, Mr Michael Johnston, Elected Conservator and Mrs Sarah Wilton, co-opted member. A risk based integrated work plan was established covering ARC's business for 2021/22 and beyond and was provided to the Board in December 2021.

ARC believes it has fulfilled its main duties as set out in its terms of reference as follows:

**Financial.** For the year ended 31 March 2022 ARC reviewed and where necessary approved the Audit Plan, compliance with accounting standards and practices, the draft WPCC financial statements, the external Auditor's Annual Letter and the WPCC Annual Report. They recommended the financial statements to the Board subject to a number of amendments. ARC members are satisfied that the external auditors have received the necessary assistance from WPCC when carrying out their audit and no limitations have been placed on the scope of their work.

**Internal Control, Risk Management and Compliance.** At each meeting ARC reviews tender waivers and write offs, debt write offs, the top ten risks, the full Risk Register (annually) and the actions arising from previous meetings and the progress with them. In addition ARC reviewed management of the WPCC internet portal; progress with the IT strategy and security; cybersecurity; contingency and disaster planning; progress on the Access framework; HR policies and practices; best recruitment practice; fraud and corruption controls; compliance with Natural England requirements; tree hazard management; Windmill safety inspections; fire safety controls; safeguarding policies and procedures; protection of personal data; benchmarking plans; licensing arrangements for personal trainers and other professional services; leaseholder/licensee compliance with legal obligations; governance of the Stakeholder Group and; the Conservators annual register of interests.

**Whistleblowing.** At each meeting ARC reviews any whistleblowing reports, of which there were none during 2021/22.

**Charity Governance Code.** ARC completed an assessment of WPCC's governance against the requirements of the Charity Governance Code <https://www.charitygovernancecode.org> and drew up an action plan for addressing areas of weakness. Throughout 2021/22 ARC has monitored progress against this action plan. A significant area of weakness identified was the lack of a statement or policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and as a result, the Board has recently agreed an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement for the Charity. Outstanding actions include: (a) updating WPCC's constitutional arrangements. This has been delayed as it requires the assistance of the Charity Commission, which they have not been in a position to provide (b) putting in place measures of performance for WPCC, which will now be introduced when the key strategic documents against which we will measure ourselves (Masterplan, Land Management Plan, Fundraising Strategy and Communications Plan) are in place (c) a review of the organisation's environmental performance, which is scheduled for year three of the current Business Plan and; (d) a review of the Board's performance which is planned for later in 2022.

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Report of the Conservators for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

Minutes of ARC meetings are received by the Board. At Board meetings the ARC Chair provides a written or an oral report to the Board on significant conclusions, concerns and recommendations arising from the Committee's work. The issues highlighted to the Board this year included that (a) external reassurance should be sought to assess GDPR compliance (b) land ownership and use in front of the Hand in Hand needed to be clarified (c) an independent review of cybersecurity should be undertaken and that password security and protection against phishing attacks needed to be reviewed (d) that a communications plan should be developed and (e) that efficiency improvement steps should be included in the Business Plan.

ARC believes that it has, to the best of its ability, met its Terms of Reference. It gratefully acknowledges the excellent support it has received from WPCC staff without which it could not have fulfilled its remit.

#### **Management**

The day-to-day management of the charity is delegated by the Board to the Chief Executive who has overall responsibility to the Board for the effective planning, performance, management, direction and leadership of Wimbledon and Putney Commons in accordance with policies and budgets set by the Board. The Chief Executive is supported by the Senior Leadership Team consisting of the:

*Deputy Clerk and Ranger* – responsible for finance, administration, HR and election/appointment of Conservators;

*Executive Assistant/Communication Officer* – responsible as executive assistant to the Chief Executive, secretariat to the Board, communications (including reception) and filming/events;

*Conservation and Engagement Officer* – responsible for conservation/ecology and public engagement;

*Fundraising Manager* – responsible for developing and implementing the organisation's fundraising strategy.

#### **Pay Policy for Senior Staff**

The Board considers that the Conservators and Senior Leadership Team comprise the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing, controlling, running and operating the charity on a day to day basis. All Conservators give of their time freely and the founding 1871 Act prohibits any Conservator receiving remuneration or holding any office of profit.

The pay of staff is reviewed annually by the Board as part of its budget preparation process. The Finance and Investment Committee has a responsibility to consider staff remuneration within their Terms of Reference for the Chief Executive and members of the Senior Leadership Team.

#### **CONSERVATORS' RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT**

The Conservators acknowledge their responsibility for the preparation of the financial statements for each financial year in accordance with Section 2 of the 1871 Act, which are required to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, surplus or deficit of the charity for that period.

The Conservators are also responsible for preparing the Report of the Conservators and the financial statements in accordance with applicable charity law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (GAAP) under FRS 102.

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Conservators to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Conservators are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Report of the Conservators for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures, which should be disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Board is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the 1871 Act. The Board is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

#### **Statement as to disclosure to auditors**

In so far as the trustees are aware at the time of approving the Conservators' Annual Report:

- There is no relevant information, being information needed by the auditor in connection with preparing their report, of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- The Conservators, having made enquiries of fellow Conservators and the charity's auditor that they ought to have individually taken, have each taken steps that she/he is obliged to take as a Conservator in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

Approved by order of the Board of Conservators on 29.06.2022

and signed on its behalf by:



Diane Neil Mills (Chairman)  
Elected Conservator

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

#### **Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standards applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the accounts to provide a true and fair view in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

#### **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### **Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Conservators use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Conservators with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (continued)**

#### **Other information**

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. The Conservators are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

#### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the Conservators Report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

#### **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the Conservators Responsibilities Statement, the Conservators are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements which give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Conservators determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Conservators are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Conservators either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (continued)

#### Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditors' Report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

#### *Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities, including fraud*

The objectives of our audit are to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud or error; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud or error; and to respond appropriately to those risks.

Based on our understanding of the charity and industry, and through discussion with the trustees and other management (as required by auditing standards), we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to health and safety, and employment law. We considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Statement of Recommended Practice. We communicated identified laws and regulations throughout our team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit. We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to: posting inappropriate journal entries and management bias in accounting estimates and judgemental areas of the financial statements. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Discussions with management and assessment of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations (including health and safety) and fraud, and review of the reports made by management and internal audit; and
- Assessment of identified fraud risk factors; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in its significant accounting estimates; and
- Checking and reperforming the reconciliation of key control accounts; and
- Performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships, including related party transactions, that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud; and
- Confirmation of related parties with management, and review of transactions throughout the period to identify any previously undisclosed transactions with related parties outside the normal course of business; and
- Reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance; and
- Review of significant and unusual transactions and evaluation of the underlying financial rationale supporting the transactions; and
- Identifying and testing journal entries, in particular any manual entries made at the year end for financial statement preparation; and
- Assessment of expertise with regards to the actuarial valuation of the defined benefit pension scheme.

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (continued)

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our Auditors' Report.

#### Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its trustees, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



**Kreston Reeves LLP**

Chartered Accountants  
Statutory Auditor

Chichester

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Kreston Reeves LLP are eligible to act as auditors in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.



# Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

## Statement of financial activities For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	3	102,705	52,486	155,191	87,523
Charitable activities	4	1,738,211	27,947	1,766,158	1,736,588
Investments	5	48,029	-	48,029	47,850
<b>Total income</b>		<b>1,888,945</b>	<b>80,433</b>	<b>1,969,378</b>	<b>1,871,961</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Charitable activities	6	2,231,625	35,950	2,267,575	2,455,317
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>2,231,625</b>	<b>35,950</b>	<b>2,267,575</b>	<b>2,455,317</b>
<b>Net (expenditure)/income before net gains on investments</b>		<b>(342,680)</b>	<b>44,483</b>	<b>(298,197)</b>	<b>(583,356)</b>
Net gains/(losses) on investments		147,350	-	147,350	279,616
<b>Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses)</b>		<b>(195,330)</b>	<b>44,483</b>	<b>(150,847)</b>	<b>(303,740)</b>
<b>Other recognised gains/(losses):</b>					
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension scheme	23	782,000	-	782,000	(25,000)
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>586,670</b>	<b>44,483</b>	<b>631,153</b>	<b>(328,740)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		145,627	71,385	217,012	545,752
Net movement in funds		586,670	44,483	631,153	(328,740)
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>732,297</b>	<b>115,868</b>	<b>848,165</b>	<b>217,012</b>

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 35 to 58 form part of these financial statements.

# Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

## Balance Sheet As at 31 March 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	10	1,228,405	1,275,084
Heritage assets	11	151,800	151,800
Investments	12	1,677,706	1,630,356
		<u>3,057,911</u>	<u>3,057,240</u>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	13	130,604	228,987
Cash at bank and in hand		332,543	181,131
		<u>463,147</u>	<u>410,118</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(208,374)	(303,496)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>254,773</u>	<u>106,622</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<u>3,312,684</u>	<u>3,163,862</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	15	(18,163)	(19,460)
Provisions for liabilities	17	(65,356)	(70,390)
<b>Net assets excluding pension liability</b>		<u>3,229,165</u>	<u>3,074,012</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	23	(2,381,000)	(2,857,000)
<b>Total net assets</b>		<u><u>848,165</u></u>	<u><u>217,012</u></u>
<b>Charity funds</b>			
Restricted funds	18	115,868	71,385
Unrestricted funds	18	732,297	145,627
<b>Total funds</b>		<u><u>848,165</u></u>	<u><u>217,012</u></u>

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Conservators and signed on their behalf by:



Date:  
Mrs D Neil Mills  
(Chair of Trustees)  
Elected Conservator  
29.06.2022

The notes on pages 35 to 58 form part of these financial statements.

**Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

**Statement of Cash Flows  
For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2022 £</b>	<b>2021 £</b>
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net cash provided/(used) by operating activities	20	<b>43,147</b>	<b>(185,368)</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Dividends, interests and rents from investments		<b>48,029</b>	47,850
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		<b>(37,563)</b>	(7,995)
Sale of investments		<b>100,000</b>	-
<b>Net cash provided by investing activities</b>		<b>110,466</b>	<b>39,855</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Repayments of borrowing		<b>(2,201)</b>	(5,485)
<b>Net cash used in financing activities</b>		<b>(2,201)</b>	<b>(5,485)</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		<b>151,412</b>	<b>(150,998)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		<b>181,131</b>	332,129
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	21	<b>332,543</b>	181,131

The notes on pages 35 to 58 form part of these financial statements

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

#### **1. Accounting policies**

##### **1.1 General information and basis of preparation of financial statements**

WPCC is a body corporate incorporated under the 1871 Act; it is also a charity registered in England. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 1 of these financial statements. The nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are included within the Conservators' report.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes to these financial statements. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued in October 2019 and Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

WPCC constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

##### **1.2 Going concern**

The financial statements have been prepared on a going-concern basis. The Conservators have prepared detailed cash flow forecasts to ensure the Charity can continue to operate for at least twelve months following the signing date of these financial statements.

##### **1.3 Income**

All income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donated services or facilities are recognised when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use of the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised but see pages 5 & 11 of the Conservators' report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the Charity which is the amount it would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

**1. Accounting policies (continued)**

**1.4 Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity.

**1.5 Grants**

Grants received in respect of fixed assets are classified as deferred income and recognised in income over the expected useful life of the asset to which they relate.

**1.6 Interest receivable**

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

**1.7 Taxation**

The charity is exempt from taxation on its income and gains falling within part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that they are applied to its charitable activities.

**1.8 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following bases:

Freehold buildings	- 25 - 50 years
Long-term leasehold property	- Life of lease
Plant, machinery and equipment	- 3 - 10 years
Fixtures and fittings	- 5-15 years
Computer equipment	- 4 years

A review for impairment of a fixed asset is carried out if events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value of any fixed asset may not be recoverable. Shortfalls between the carrying value of fixed assets and their recoverable amounts are recognised as impairments. Impairment losses are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

#### **1. Accounting policies (continued)**

##### **1.9 Heritage assets**

The charity considers that while the lands comprising the commons are heritage assets, the buildings, other than the windmill on Wimbledon Common, are not. As more fully explained in note 11, the heritage assets are recognised in the balance sheet at cost, where it has been possible to determine cost.

Heritage assets are depreciated over their useful economic life. However, because the majority of such assets are land with an indefinite useful economic life, the element of depreciation that would apply to the remainder of the heritage assets is considered immaterial to these financial statements. Heritage assets are reviewed annually at the reporting date for indications of impairment.

##### **1.10 Investments**

Investments are recognised initially at fair value which is normally the transaction price excluding transaction costs. Subsequently, they are measured at fair value with changes recognised in 'net gains / (losses) on investments' in the Statement of Financial Activities if the shares are publicly traded or their fair value can otherwise be measured reliably. Other investments are measured at cost less impairment.

##### **1.11 Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

##### **1.12 Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

##### **1.13 Liabilities and provisions**

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts, discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities as a finance cost.

##### **1.14 Financial instruments**

The Charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

**Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

**1. Accounting policies (continued)**

**1.15 Finance leases and hire purchase**

Assets obtained under hire purchase contracts and finance leases are capitalised as tangible fixed assets. Assets acquired by finance lease are depreciated over the shorter of the lease term and their useful lives. Assets acquired by hire purchase are depreciated over their useful lives. Finance leases are those where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership are assumed by the Charity. Obligations under such agreements are included in creditors, net of the finance charge allocated to future periods. The finance element of the rental payment is charged to the Statement of Financial Activities so as to produce a constant periodic rate of charge on the net obligation outstanding in each period.

**1.16 Redundancy and termination benefits**

It is the Charity's policy to recognise termination benefits when they become committed, by legislation, by contractual or other agreements with employees or their representatives or by a constructive obligation or a desire to act equitably, to make payments (or provide other benefits) to employees when it terminates their employment. Termination payments do not provide the Charity with future economic benefits therefore it is the Charity's policy to recognise them as an expense in the Statement of Financial Activities immediately.

**1.17 Pensions**

The charity operates a defined benefits pension scheme and the pension charge is based on a full actuarial valuation. The latest full actuarial valuation was as at 31 March 2019.

Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and the costs of scheme introductions, benefit changes, settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs as incurred. Net interest on the net defined benefit liability/asset is also recognised in the Statement of financial activities and comprises the interest cost on the defined benefit obligation and interest income on the scheme assets, calculated by multiplying the fair value of the scheme assets at the beginning of the period by the rate used to discount the benefit obligations. The difference between the interest income on the scheme assets and the actual return on the scheme assets is recognised in other recognised gains and losses.

**1.18 Fund accounting**

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Conservators in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Conservators for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

#### 2. Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgment

As detailed in note 23 the company operates a defined benefit pension scheme for the benefit of employees. The cost of operating the scheme is determined using actuarial valuations undertaken by the scheme actuary. Their valuation involves making assumptions about discount rates, future salary increases, mortality rates and future pension increases. Due to the complexity of the valuation, the underlying assumptions and the long term nature of the scheme, such estimates are subject to significant uncertainty.

The annual depreciation charge for fixed assets is sensitive to changes in estimated useful lives and residual values. The useful economic lives and residual value are re-assessed annually and amended as necessary.

#### 3. Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
<b>Donations</b>				
Horseride appeal	-	26,977	<b>26,977</b>	4,906
Beverley Brook bridges' appeals	-	15,509	<b>15,509</b>	-
Footpath restoration	-	10,000	<b>10,000</b>	-
Other donations	102,705	-	<b>102,705</b>	82,617
<b>Total 2022</b>	<u>102,705</u>	<u>52,486</u>	<u><b>155,191</b></u>	<u>87,523</u>
<b>Total 2021</b>	<u>82,617</u>	<u>4,906</u>	<u><b>87,523</b></u>	



# Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

## Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

### 4. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
Levy received from councils	1,262,008	-	1,262,008	1,247,917
Countryside stewardship grant	31,229	-	31,229	36,677
Sports facilities	310,589	22,321	332,910	222,388
Property rent and wayleaves	106,735	-	106,735	117,761
Rent from filming and fairs	27,630	-	27,630	5,750
Logs and timber sales	-	-	-	50
Publication sales	20	-	20	10
NLHF grant	-	5,626	5,626	46,035
Beverley Brook path project grant	-	-	-	60,000
<b>Total 2022</b>	<b>1,738,211</b>	<b>27,947</b>	<b>1,766,158</b>	<b>1,736,588</b>
<b>Total 2021</b>	<b>1,630,553</b>	<b>106,035</b>	<b>1,736,588</b>	

### 5. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
Investment income	48,029	48,029	47,850
<b>Total 2021</b>	<b>47,850</b>	<b>47,850</b>	

### 6. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2022 £	Support costs 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
Charitable activity	1,600,962	666,613	2,267,575	2,455,317
<b>Total 2021</b>	<b>1,515,916</b>	<b>939,401</b>	<b>2,455,317</b>	

# Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

## Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

### 6. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

#### Analysis of direct costs

	<b>Charitable Activities 2022 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2022 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2021 £</b>
Windmill	6,692	<b>6,692</b>	8,345
Keepers and Commons security	514,272	<b>514,272</b>	515,304
Commons maintenance	595,826	<b>595,826</b>	584,947
Playing fields maintenance	231,885	<b>231,885</b>	220,627
Property maintenance and improvements	252,287	<b>252,287</b>	186,693
	<u>1,600,962</u>	<u><b>1,600,962</b></u>	<u>1,515,916</u>
Total 2021	<u>1,515,916</u>	<u>1,515,916</u>	

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

#### 6. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

##### Analysis of support costs

	Charitable Activities 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
NLHF expenses	5,626	5,626	46,035
Administration staff salaries	98,309	98,309	200,586
Audit and accountancy	15,210	15,210	16,525
Office expenses	16,570	16,570	8,440
Insurance	68,520	68,520	52,171
Utilities and services	17,150	17,150	15,162
Advertising and printing	21,553	21,553	14,799
Computer and IT support	31,826	31,826	24,360
Events	7,592	7,592	8,085
Council tax	26,282	26,282	24,543
Defined benefit pension cost in excess of contributions paid	250,000	250,000	240,000
Profit on sale of fixed assets	3,633	3,633	-
Interest cost on pension liability	56,000	56,000	59,000
Legal fees	37,311	37,311	132,111
Professional fees	10,727	10,727	28,414
Bad debts	304	304	10,920
Election costs	-	-	58,250
	<u>666,613</u>	<u>666,613</u>	<u>939,401</u>
Total 2021	<u>939,401</u>	<u>939,401</u>	

Included in support costs above are governance costs totalling £52,521 (2021: £206,886). These costs include audit and accountancy fees, legal fees and election costs.

#### 7. Auditors' remuneration

The auditors' remuneration amounts to an audit fee of £10,075 (2021: £10,075) and amounts relating to non audit services of £5,135 (2021: £6,450).

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

#### 8. Staff costs

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Staff Salaries</b>		
Wages and salaries	876,071	914,403
Social security costs	92,638	96,024
Other pension costs	416,979	449,497
	<u>1,385,688</u>	<u>1,459,924</u>

Total termination payments amount to £Nil (2021: £97,380) and relate to payments made to and on behalf of former WPCC employees. These payments include payments in lieu of notice; employers national insurance contributions; contributions to the defined benefit pension schemes; accrued holiday pay; and legal expenditure incurred by the former employees.

The average number of persons employed by the Charity during the year was as follows:

	2022 No.	2021 No.
Chief Executive	1	1
Chief Operations Manager	-	1
Deputy Clerk and Ranger	1	1
Administration	2	1
Wildlife and Conservation Officer	1	1
Security	7	7
Maintenance	6	6
Playing Fields	3	3
Property	1	1
	<u>22</u>	<u>22</u>

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2022 No.	2021 No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	-	1
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	1	-
In the band £110,001 - £120,000	-	1

The Board considers that the Conservators and Senior Leadership Team comprise the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing, controlling, running and operating the Charity on a day to day basis. The Senior Leadership team consists of the Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Clerk and Ranger, Wildlife Conservation Officer and EA to Chief Executive Officer.

Total key management personnel remuneration for the year was £277,521 (2021: £427,799).

## **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

### **Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

#### **9. Conservator's remuneration and expenses**

During the year, no Conservators received any remuneration or other benefits (2021 - £NIL).

During the year ended 31 March 2022, no Conservator expenses have been incurred (2021 - £NIL).

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

10. Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold buildings £	Long-term leasehold property £	Commons plant and machinery £	Playing fields equipment £	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost or valuation</b>							
At 1 April 2021	1,450,448	219,080	345,671	98,611	96,730	16,028	2,226,568
Additions	7,068	-	20,487	2,656	3,916	3,436	37,563
Disposals	(4,969)	(5,884)	-	(3,250)	-	-	(14,103)
At 31 March 2022	1,452,547	213,196	366,158	98,017	100,646	19,464	2,250,028
<b>Depreciation</b>							
At 1 April 2021	454,472	97,057	245,654	68,062	80,080	6,159	951,484
Charge for the year	35,064	7,375	15,822	5,343	7,005	4,116	74,725
On disposals	(1,553)	-	-	(3,033)	-	-	(4,586)
At 31 March 2022	487,983	104,432	261,476	70,372	87,085	10,275	1,021,623
<b>Net book value</b>							
At 31 March 2022	964,564	108,764	104,682	27,645	13,561	9,189	1,228,405
At 31 March 2021	995,976	122,023	100,017	30,549	16,650	9,869	1,275,084

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

#### 11. Heritage assets

##### Assets recognised at cost

	Heritage assets 2022 £
Carrying value at 1 April 2021	151,800
<b>Carrying value at 31 March 2022</b>	<b>151,800</b>

As explained in note 1.9, the charity considers that its heritage assets are the lands that comprise Wimbledon and Putney Commons within the meaning of the 1871 Act, together with the windmill on Wimbledon Common. The majority of the lands were acquired under the provisions of the 1871 Act together with all the buildings thereon in return for an annuity payment to Earl Spencer which terminated in 1958. The purchase price has been treated as the cost of the heritage assets together with amounts paid to third parties to acquire additional small parcels of land subsequent to 1871. Although part of the purchase price would have been attributable to those buildings which are not heritage assets, it is not possible to determine what the appropriate allocation would have been and therefore the whole purchase price has been allocated to the heritage assets.

The Richardson Evans Memorial Playing Fields were acquired in the 1930s but no detailed records exist of their cost to the charity, consequently no amount is included within heritage assets in respect of the playing fields.

There have been no additions to heritage assets since 1 April 2015.

#### 12. Fixed asset investments

	Listed investments £
<b>Cost or valuation</b>	
At 1 April 2021	1,630,356
Disposals	(100,000)
Revaluations	147,350
At 31 March 2022	<b>1,677,706</b>
<b>Net book value</b>	
At 31 March 2022	<b>1,677,706</b>
At 31 March 2021	1,630,356

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

#### 13. Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Due within one year</b>		
Trade debtors	52,492	51,931
Other debtors	44,381	40,545
Prepayments and accrued income	33,731	136,511
	<u>130,604</u>	<u>228,987</u>

#### 14. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	70,518	210,031
Obligations under finance lease and hire purchase contracts	-	2,201
Other creditors	59,235	49,065
Accruals and deferred income	78,621	42,199
	<u>208,374</u>	<u>303,496</u>

#### 15. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year

	2022 £	2021 £
Accruals and deferred income	18,163	19,460

#### 16. Deferred income

	2022 £	2021 £
Deferred income at 1 April 2021	40,687	22,054
Resources deferred during the year	21,234	19,930
Amounts released from previous periods	(21,228)	(1,297)
<b>Deferred income at 31 March 2022</b>	<u>40,693</u>	<u>40,687</u>

Deferred income at the year end related to the Heritage Lottery Fund grant for the information centre of £19,460 and rent received in advance of £21,233. Deferred income at the previous year end related to the Heritage Lottery Fund grant for the information centre of £20,757 and rent received in advance of £19,930.



Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

17. Provisions

The charity occupies a building which it built on land leased from a third party. Under the terms of the lease it has an obligation at the end of the lease to reinstate the land to its original state. A provision is made for this liability and the movements in the provision were as follows:

	Provision for liabilities £
At 1 April 2021	70,390
Change in discount rate	(5,884)
Interest cost charged to expenditure	850
	<hr/>
	65,356
	<hr/>

# Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

## Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

### 18. Statement of funds

#### Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 March 2022 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>						
<b>Designated funds</b>						
Election Sinking Fund	-	-	-	20,004	-	20,004
<b>General funds</b>						
General Conservancy Fund	3,002,627	1,888,945	(1,925,625)	(20,004)	147,350	3,093,293
Defined Benefit Pension	(2,857,000)	-	(306,000)	-	782,000	(2,381,000)
	<u>145,627</u>	<u>1,888,945</u>	<u>(2,231,625)</u>	<u>(20,004)</u>	<u>929,350</u>	<u>712,293</u>
<b>Total Unrestricted funds</b>	<u>145,627</u>	<u>1,888,945</u>	<u>(2,231,625)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>929,350</u>	<u>732,297</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>						
Windmill Restoration Fund	19,468	-	-	-	-	19,468
Horseride Appeal	28,802	26,977	(29,424)	-	-	26,355
Wildlife Garden Appeal	18,115	-	-	-	-	18,115
Beverley Brook WC Bridge Appeal	5,000	10,000	-	-	-	15,000
Footpath Restoration	-	10,000	(900)	-	-	9,100
Beverley Brook PLC Bridge Appeal	-	5,509	-	-	-	5,509
E W Cricket Trust	-	22,321	-	-	-	22,321
NLHF Masterplan	-	5,626	(5,626)	-	-	-

**Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

**Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

**18. Statement of funds (continued)**

**Statement of funds - current year (continued)**

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 March 2022 £
	71,385	80,433	(35,950)	-	-	115,868
<b>Total of funds</b>	<b>217,012</b>	<b>1,969,378</b>	<b>(2,267,575)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>929,350</b>	<b>848,165</b>

# Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

## Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

### 18. Statement of funds (continued)

#### Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 March 2021 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>						
<b>Designated funds</b>						
Election Sinking Fund	36,672	-	(58,250)	21,578	-	-
<b>General funds</b>						
General Conservancy Fund	2,980,511	1,761,020	(1,971,942)	(46,578)	279,616	3,002,627
Defined Benefit Pension	(2,533,000)	-	(299,000)	-	(25,000)	(2,857,000)
	447,511	1,761,020	(2,270,942)	(46,578)	254,616	145,627
<b>Total Unrestricted funds</b>	484,183	1,761,020	(2,329,192)	(25,000)	254,616	145,627
<b>Restricted funds</b>						
Windmill Restoration Fund	19,558	-	(90)	-	-	19,468
Horseride Appeal	23,896	4,906	-	-	-	28,802
Wildlife Garden Appeal	18,115	-	-	-	-	18,115
NLHF - Masterplan	-	46,035	(46,035)	-	-	-
Beverley Brook path project	-	60,000	(80,000)	25,000	-	5,000
	61,569	110,941	(126,125)	25,000	-	71,385
<b>Total of funds</b>	545,752	1,871,961	(2,455,317)	-	254,616	217,012

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

The Election Sinking fund is maintained to provide for the fees and costs of conducting the triennial election of five Conservators.

The Windmill Restoration fund represents the fund remaining from a Heritage Lottery Grant received for use in restoring the Windmill, on Windmill Road.

The Defined Benefit Pension fund represents the defined benefit pension scheme liability.

The Horseride Appeal fund includes donated income and related expenditure on the horse ride route restoration campaign started during the year ended 31 March 2018.

The Wildlife Garden Appeal fund includes donated income on the campaign to create a new wildlife garden at the Ranger's Office.

NLHF - Masterplan fund includes the grant income from the NLHF for the new 'masterplan' and its related expenditure.

Beverley Brook path project - included grant income from South Western Railway's Customer and Community Improvement Fund and related expenditure for resurfacing pedestrian and cycle routes alongside the Beverley Brook.

Beverley Brook bridges' appeals - donated income in respect of repairs to bridges over the Beverley Brook on Wimbledon Common and on Putney Lower Common.

Footpath restoration - donated income in respect of repairs to paths on Putney Heath.

#### 19. Analysis of net assets between funds

##### Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £
Tangible fixed assets	1,228,405	-	1,228,405
Fixed asset investments	1,677,706	-	1,677,706
Heritage assets	151,800	-	151,800
Current assets	347,279	115,868	463,147
Creditors due within one year	(208,374)	-	(208,374)
Creditors due in more than one year	(18,163)	-	(18,163)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(2,446,356)	-	(2,446,356)
<b>Total</b>	<b>732,297</b>	<b>115,868</b>	<b>848,165</b>

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

#### 19. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

##### Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £
Tangible fixed assets	1,275,084	-	1,275,084
Fixed asset investments	1,630,356	-	1,630,356
Heritage assets	151,800	-	151,800
Current assets	338,733	71,385	410,118
Creditors due within one year	(303,496)	-	(303,496)
Creditors due in more than one year	(19,460)	-	(19,460)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(2,927,390)	-	(2,927,390)
<b>Total</b>	<b>145,627</b>	<b>71,385</b>	<b>217,012</b>

#### 20. Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2022 £	2021 £
Net expenditure for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	<b>(150,847)</b>	(303,740)
<b>Adjustments for:</b>		
Depreciation charges	<b>74,725</b>	74,785
(Gains)/losses on investments	<b>(147,350)</b>	(279,616)
Dividends, interests and rents from investments	<b>(48,029)</b>	(47,850)
Loss on the sale of fixed assets	<b>3,633</b>	-
Decrease in stocks	-	85
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	<b>98,383</b>	(80,020)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	<b>(94,218)</b>	151,457
Pension fund adjustments	<b>306,000</b>	299,000
Interest cost on provision	<b>850</b>	531
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities</b>	<b>43,147</b>	(185,368)

**Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators**

**Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

**21. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents**

	2022 £	2021 £
Cash in hand	332,543	181,131
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>332,543</b>	<b>181,131</b>

**22. Analysis of Net Funds**

	At 1 April 2021 £	Cash flows £	Other non- cash changes £	At 31 March 2022 £
Cash at bank and in hand	181,131	153,613	(2,201)	332,543
Finance leases	(2,201)	-	2,201	-
	<u>178,930</u>	<u>153,613</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>332,543</u>

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

#### 23. Pension commitments

The Charity operates a defined benefit pension scheme.

Retirement benefits to employees of WPCC are provided by the LGPS which is a defined benefit scheme.

The LGPS is a funded scheme, administered by the London Borough of Merton. Contributions are set every three years as a result of an actuarial valuation of the fund. There are no minimum funding requirements but the contributions are generally set to target a funding level of 100%, using actuarial assumptions.

In general, participating defined benefit schemes mean that the employer is exposed to a number of risks:

- Investment risk
- Interest rate risk
- Inflation risk
- Longevity risk (where members live longer than assumed)

In addition many unrelated employers participate in the London Borough of Merton scheme, and there is a potential orphan liability risk where employers who leave the Fund with insufficient resources to cover their pension obligations, will leave a deficit in the scheme that may fall on the remaining employers. There is however no way of ascertaining the potential loss, should such an event take place.

Principal actuarial assumptions at the Balance Sheet date (expressed as weighted averages):

	<b>At 31 March 2022 %</b>	<b>At 31 March 2021 %</b>
Discount rate	<b>2.60</b>	2.00
Future salary increases	<b>4.25</b>	3.85
Future pension increases	<b>3.25</b>	2.85
<hr/>		
	<b>At 31 March 2022 Years</b>	<b>At 31 March 2021 Years</b>
Mortality rates (in years)		
- for a male aged 65 now	<b>21.2</b>	21.1
- at 65 for a male aged 45 now	<b>22.5</b>	22.4
- for a female aged 65 now	<b>23.9</b>	23.9
- at 65 for a female aged 45 now	<b>25.4</b>	25.3
<hr/>		



## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

#### 23. Pension commitments (continued)

The Charity's share of the assets in the scheme was:

	At 31 March 2022 £	At 31 March 2021 £
Equities	4,549,000	5,770,000
Gilts	989,000	729,000
Property	292,000	239,000
Cash and other liquid assets	143,000	341,000
Diversified growth	1,766,000	722,000
Multi asset credit	768,000	743,000
Infrastructure	817,000	362,000
<b>Total fair value of assets</b>	<b>9,324,000</b>	<b>8,906,000</b>

The actual return on scheme assets was £501,000 (2021 - £2,088,000).

The amounts recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities are as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Current service cost	(407,000)	(363,000)
Past service cost	-	(79,000)
Interest cost	(56,000)	(59,000)
Administrative expenses	(10,000)	(8,000)
<b>Total amount recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities</b>	<b>(473,000)</b>	<b>(509,000)</b>

Movements in the present value of the defined benefit obligation were as follows:

	2022 £
Opening defined benefit obligation	11,763,000
Contributions by scheme participants	58,000
Benefits paid	(298,000)
Service cost	407,000
Past service costs	-
Interest expense	233,000
Change in financial assumptions	(478,000)
Change in demographic assumptions	-
Experience loss on obligation	20,000
<b>Closing defined benefit obligation</b>	<b>11,705,000</b>

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

#### 23. Pension commitments (continued)

Movements in the fair value of the Charity's share of scheme assets were as follows:

	2022 £
Opening fair value of scheme assets	8,906,000
Interest income	177,000
Contributions by employer	167,000
Contributions by scheme participants	58,000
Return on assets	324,000
Benefits paid	(298,000)
Administration expenses	(10,000)
<b>Closing fair value of scheme assets</b>	<b>9,324,000</b>

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Closing position</b>		
Defined benefit obligation	(11,705,000)	(11,763,000)
Scheme assets	9,324,000	8,906,000
<b>Deficit</b>	<b>(2,381,000)</b>	<b>(2,857,000)</b>

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Total actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension scheme</b>		
Return on assets	324,000	1,945,000
Change in financial assumptions	478,000	(2,211,000)
Change in demographic assumptions	-	130,000
Experience loss on obligation	(20,000)	111,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>782,000</b>	<b>(25,000)</b>

## Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

#### 24. Financial instruments

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Financial assets</b>		
Financial assets measured at fair value through income and expenditure	<b><u>1,677,706</u></b>	<u>1,630,357</u>

The fair value of these assets is readily obtainable as there is a ready market for their sale at publicly listed prices.

The gain on these assets during the year was £147,350 (2021: £279,616).

The dividend and interest income generated by these assets during the period was £48,029 (2021: £47,850).

#### 25. Related party transactions

The Charity has not entered into any related party transaction during the year (2021: none), nor are there any outstanding balances owing between related parties and the Charity at 31 March 2022 (2021: £Nil).