

FRIENDS OF GUNNERSBURY PARK & MUSEUM

NEWSLETTER

NO 105
JANUARY 2017



A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL FRIENDS!

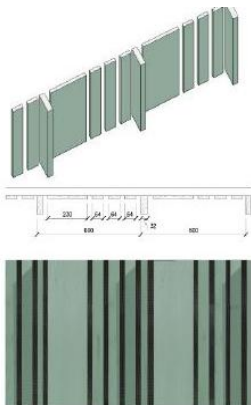
GUNNERSBURY MASTERPLAN PUBLIC UPDATE, 18.30-20.00, 24 January 2017

The Project Team has organised a meeting to share information about progress on the refurbishment works at Gunnersbury. It will take place at the Old Actonians Club-house in Gunnersbury Drive W5 4LL; this is the road which runs off Popes Lane opposite the main gates to the Park. All are welcome. Please note that there is only very limited parking on site and that the E3 bus stops in Popes Lane close by.

SPORTS HUB DESIGN

A year ago, when the planning application for the new facilities at Gunnersbury was being considered, the Friends' committee organised site meetings for members to discuss the design and location and submitted detailed comments. We felt the location was very intrusive and the box-like design ugly, characteristics made much worse by the glowering black finish of the timber cladding on the upper floor and the metal panels of the ground floor, designed to weather from a rust finish to black. Planning permission was granted without any change to the location or design but it was conditional upon the colour scheme being revised before approval by Hounslow's Chair of Planning working with the relevant ward councillors.

A special meeting of the Gunnersbury Park Joint Advisory Panel, which includes several ward councillors, was held last November to consider the appearance of the new building. A sequence of different colour schemes prepared by the architects was presented and green tones were agreed to be by far the least intrusive or dominating in this Park setting. The soft green in these illustrations is the recommended colour.



GUNNERSBURY PARK EXTERNAL MATERIALS REVIEW

Issue 2_28112016

SPACE PLACE
ARCHITECTURE FOR HUMAN BEINGS



ARCHAEOLOGY

The Learning and Events team worked with Museum of London Archaeology last summer to provide free archaeology-themed outdoor learning workshops for local secondary schools, families and adults.

Participants were able to get involved in a hands-on excavation looking for evidence of past occupation and human activity. This was followed by the chance to view locally excavated artefacts now in the Museum's collections.

TIMBER SCULPTURE

You may have spotted through the Popes Lane railings a fenced-off compound where felled and fallen trees are being carved into features for the Park. During the Summer Term of 2016, students from Acton High School worked with Tim Norris and Bill Hudson, the sculptors, to create designs inspired by nature for seating along the new Nature Trail.

They began by sketching ideas on a guided tour of the Park led by Head Gardener, Chris Ellis. They created their designs first in clay and then in wood.

The timber for the new seats has come from trees in the Park that have either fallen naturally or were storm damaged and so needed to be felled. All these trees have been replaced.



PROGRESS IN THE GARDENS



After a period of anxiety, when it looked as if unpredictable repairs to the Round Pond were way beyond the budget, an affordable solution has been found. In a neat move, linking two heritage sites, clay excavated from the works at the Victoria & Albert Museum has been brought to Gunnersbury to make the Pond waterproof again. External repairs to the Temple are nearly done; the Learning Team is already using the refurbished interior for Victorian school sessions. The Café roof was going on in December; the contract is being let to Benugo and it will open later this year. Works on a new play area and landscaping round the Café have begun.



Elegant stone balustrades at the west end of the Terrace are now in place (left), and the 17th century boundary wall near the Bathhouse has been conserved. The gothic screen east of the Terrace is being repaired thanks to extra grants from Historic England and HLF. The Nature Trail has an accessible path of bonded gravel; a wild flower meadow at the end of the Trail has been planted in silt dredged from the Round Pond. You can see the new western half of the Horseshoe Pond, where the arches of the 'bridge' at the east end are being re-built. And a replica Anderson shelter, below, has arrived for the WW2 section of the Community Garden!



GUNNERSBURY PARK JOINT ADVISORY PANEL

The GPJAP met as scheduled in October and also for an extra meeting in November. The agenda and minutes can be read online at tinyurl.com/z7popg4 and tinyurl.com/grf56xz respectively. Future meetings will take place on 27 January and 28 April in Chiswick Town Hall's Board Room at 18.30.

The Panel received an update on improved security now that Park Guard is patrolling. An events policy has been commissioned from specialist consultancy, The Parks Umbrella, to be reviewed at a future meeting. Members are very anxious about events, especially potential annoyance from noise and crowds, but an imaginative events programme will bring much-needed income to support Gunnersbury at a time of local authority funding cuts in England.

There had been great success in raising funds for the Sports Hub and refurbishment of pitches and other facilities. A Sport England *Park Life* grant of £4m been secured, linking the upgrading of Gunnersbury's facilities to improving one park each in Ealing and Hounslow. (Both councils have since allocated a further £500k each to the project). The Lawn Tennis Association has agreed to a grant of £500k and new courts should be completed in 2017. The London Marathon Charitable Trust has pledged £500k and funds will also come from Brentford FC's charitable trust. Construction work is unlikely to start before April 2017.

BIDDING FOR THE SMALL MANSION & STABLES

Ealing & Hounslow Councils advertised for potential partners to work with them on restoring these two listed buildings in early November. They sought bidders who could identify viable new uses to complement the *Gunnersbury 2026 Masterplan*. They hope to bid for an HLF Enterprise Grant to support the substantial restoration work required. Closing date is 20 January 2017.

SUSIE BATCHELOR

Susie joined the Gunnersbury team in May 2016 as Museum & Learning Programmes Manager. She leads on collections, interpretation, learning, community involvement and volunteering for both Museum and Park. She is enjoying being part of Gunnersbury's transformation and sees huge potential for expanded learning, volunteering and events programmes for local people. She's particularly enjoying learning about collections care and looking forward to seeing more of the collections as they return from storage for the new displays.

She came to Gunnersbury after several years' freelance work and an interim post as Head of Learning at the Watts Gallery near Guildford. She has worked on several major HLF-funded projects. As Head of Education for Historic Royal Palaces 2002–2013 she led the transformation of the service at 5 sites, principally the Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace and Kensington Palace, developing inspiring programmes for schools, families and adult learners which reach over 300,000 each year. Previously she worked for the National Trust in a regional education and interpretation role and in SW London primary schools as a teacher and senior manager. Susie is especially interested in arts- and literacy-based approaches to young people's learning through built heritage and museum collections, and in the preservation and development of traditional craft skills. She is a judge for the Sandford Award for Heritage Education and a former trustee of GEM, the voice for heritage learning.

And . . . A GUNNERSBURY CHIEF EXECUTIVE?

The person appointed to this key post last summer withdrew before starting work. The recruitment has been re-run but we do not yet know the outcome.

GARDENS TRUST

In a report called *Uncertain Prospects* this Trust calls for parks to be made a statutory service, for funding to be reviewed and for a new national champion for parks in this time of austerity. The report, along with *Beyond the Playground*, a report on providing play facilities in historic landscapes is online at thegardenstrust.org

PAINT RESEARCH

Paint analysis has revealed that the window joinery of the Large Mansion was formerly painted brown rather than the white gloss used in recent decades.

The conservation architects, Rodney Melville & Partners, have provided this elegant visualisation of the proposed colour scheme; it



uses a shade of soft stone for the external render.

Despite the scaffolding, you can get a glimpse of the wall colour from the grassy slope below the Terrace.

ARTS AWARD

Last summer the Museum ran *Arts Award Explore*, a week's project for 7–11 year olds led by Musson and Retallick and a *Bronze Arts Award* project for 14–21 year olds, led by Natalie Ryde. Museum staff supported the professional artists.

Their theme of *Metamorphosis* encouraged participants to reflect on the changes taking place at Gunnersbury. They produced sculptures and other artwork inspired by the Large Mansion's architecture and interior design and by the Park's natural heritage. These were shown in the Lost Tennis Court and the Large Mansion at September's Open House.



Demonstrating mould making and plaster casting, Bronze Arts Award

DEVELOPMENT TRUST

The Gunnersbury Museum & Park Development Trust is now registered as a charity, no 1168709. So far it has raised £75,000 from the Country Houses Foundation (Large Mansion) £100,000 from the Foyle Foundation (Industry Gallery) and £10,000 from the John & Ruth Howard Trust to restore the Popes Lane gates.

THE CURVE BITES THE DUST

Hounslow's January Planning Committee unanimously rejected the application for this huge development at Chiswick Roundabout; it was opposed by many local groups and individuals. Planning officers commented on the poor quality design, inappropriate and excessive scale for this site and the fact that the proposed affordable housing was unlikely to promote mixed and balanced communities. They also stated that it would inflict 'substantial harm' on significant sites like Gunnersbury Park and Kew Gardens. We expect revised proposals to be submitted which could still have an impact on Gunnersbury.

JOAN CATTERALL

We are delighted that the GPJAP has formally resolved that the Volunteers' Room in the new Museum should be named after Joan, founder membership secretary of the Friends. She was also a long-standing volunteer and a part-time Museum steward.

NIGHT-TIME JOY RIDING DESTRUCTION

On 15/16 January a second joy riding incident saw the Rothschild polo mounting block and a young tree (funded by the Friends) destroyed. The photo shows the damage and the burnt-out vehicle.



SUBSCRIPTIONS

These fall due on 1 April and renewal forms will accompany the next Newsletter. Membership costs £10 a year; the application form can be found at gunnersburyfriends.org/friends/join-the-friends. Send your cheque and form to the Membership Secretary, 62 Creffield Road, London W3 9PS

Do encourage others to join since larger numbers make us stronger. Donations are welcome, and we are happy to discuss proposed legacies.

gunnersburyfriends.org

Registered Charity no 286310

NEWSLETTER 106

This will be sent out in April. Send items for inclusion to the Editor at info@gunnersburyfriends.org or 25 Hartington Road, W4 3TL.

ADVANCE NOTICE

The Committee proposes to hold the **Annual General Meeting** on the morning of Saturday 30 September 2017.