

CANDIDATE BRIEF AND APPLICATION PACK

CLERK TO WIMBLEDON AND PUTNEY COMMONS



March 2020



Job Advert

Wimbledon and Putney Commons

Clerk to Wimbledon and Putney Commons

The Commons comprise around 1,140 acres of countryside split between Wimbledon Common, Putney Heath and Putney Lower Common. Approximately 900 acres of the Commons are recognised as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

We are now seeking to recruit an experienced person with secretariat skills to manage the Board meetings and substantive Committees. Applicants should have a minimum of 5 years' experience in a senior public or private position.

Remuneration will be at an hourly rate on a part-time basis, dependent upon qualifications and experience. For further information about the Commons you can visit our website: <http://www.wpcc.org.uk/>

To apply for an application pack contact:

Ranger's Office, Windmill Road, Wimbledon Common, Wimbledon SW19 5NR or tel 020 8788 7655.

For an informal conversation, contact Mr Simon Lee, Chief Executive on the number above.

The closing date for returned applications is Friday 21st March 2020

Interviews for the post will take place during early April 2020.

Wimbledon and Putney Commons is committed to equality of opportunities and operates a no smoking policy.

Job Context

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (WPCC) is a statutory corporation created by the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Act 1871 (“the Act”), a copy of the Act can be downloaded [here](#).

WPCC is also a registered charity (No 303167) and Conservators are also Trustees of the Charity. WPCC’s charitable object is to preserve and protect the Commons and make it available for exercise and recreation.

Under Section 8 of the Act the Board of Conservators consists of eight Conservators. Five Conservators are elected every three years from an electorate formed from everyone on the electoral register and living within the “levying area”, i.e. within 3/4 of a mile of Wimbledon Common or within the old parish of Putney. The elected Conservators represent the local interest in the Commons.

Election Byelaws (1990) regulate the election proceedings, including the appointment of The Returning Officer and The Scrutineer together with the preparation of a list of Electors who are eligible to vote or stand as a Conservator (Trustee) of the Charity.

Three Conservators are appointed, respectively, by the Secretary of State for Defence, the Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural Affairs and the Home Secretary. The appointed Conservators represent the wider public interest in the Commons. The appointed Conservators provide an important function in terms of continuity of governance for the Commons.

Under the Wimbledon and Putney Commons (Special Levies) Regulations 1990, as amended by the Wimbledon and Putney Commons (Special Levies) (Amendment) Regulations 1993, WPCC have the power to raise a “special 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 Act the Conservators have the power to make Byelaws to regulate and control the use of the land for which they are responsible.

Those parts of Commissioners Clauses Act 1847 as set out in the first schedule of the Act deal with the constitution and regulation of the organisation.

The first recognised formation of Wimbledon and Putney Commons arose when Earl Spencer came to terms with residents in drawing up the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Act which received Royal Assent in August 1871.

The Commons are an area of calm and tranquility in the midst of the urban sprawls of Wimbledon, Putney and Kingston-upon-Thames in South West London. The Commons comprise about 460 hectares (1,140 acres) of countryside split between Wimbledon Common, Putney Heath and Putney Lower Common. Putney Lower Common is separated from the rest

of the Common by about 1.5 miles. Approximately 360 hectares (900 acres) of the Commons are a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

The Commons consist of woodland, scrubland, heathland, and mown recreation areas and there are also nine ponds. They are the home to a wide variety of bird, animal and plant life. Being an unfenced Common, the whole area is open to the public 24 hours a day throughout the year.

Within the Commons there is an 18-hole Golf Course (played over by two Clubs), cricket pitches, 16 miles of horse rides and the Richardson Evans Memorial Playing Fields covering 20 hectares (48 acres), providing soccer and rugby pitches in winter and facilities for athletics in the summer. There is a large pavilion containing 16 changing rooms with showers and toilets.

Since 1st April 1991, the Commons have been largely financed by means of a levy on the Boroughs of Wandsworth, Merton and Kingston in a proportion relevant to the number of "D" Band properties in each Borough within 3/4 mile of the Commons or in the old Parish of Putney. The Boroughs pass on this levy by way of an addition to the Council Tax on properties in the area.

The first strategy for the Commons was approved by the Board of Conservators in June 2017, a copy can be downloaded [here](#).

In a [media release](#) following their 2nd December Board meeting, and at their General Open Meeting on 9th December 2019, the Board announced that they had been giving consideration to possible amendments to the charity's governing documents. More information can be found [here](#).

Further information about the organisation can be found at www.wpcc.org.uk

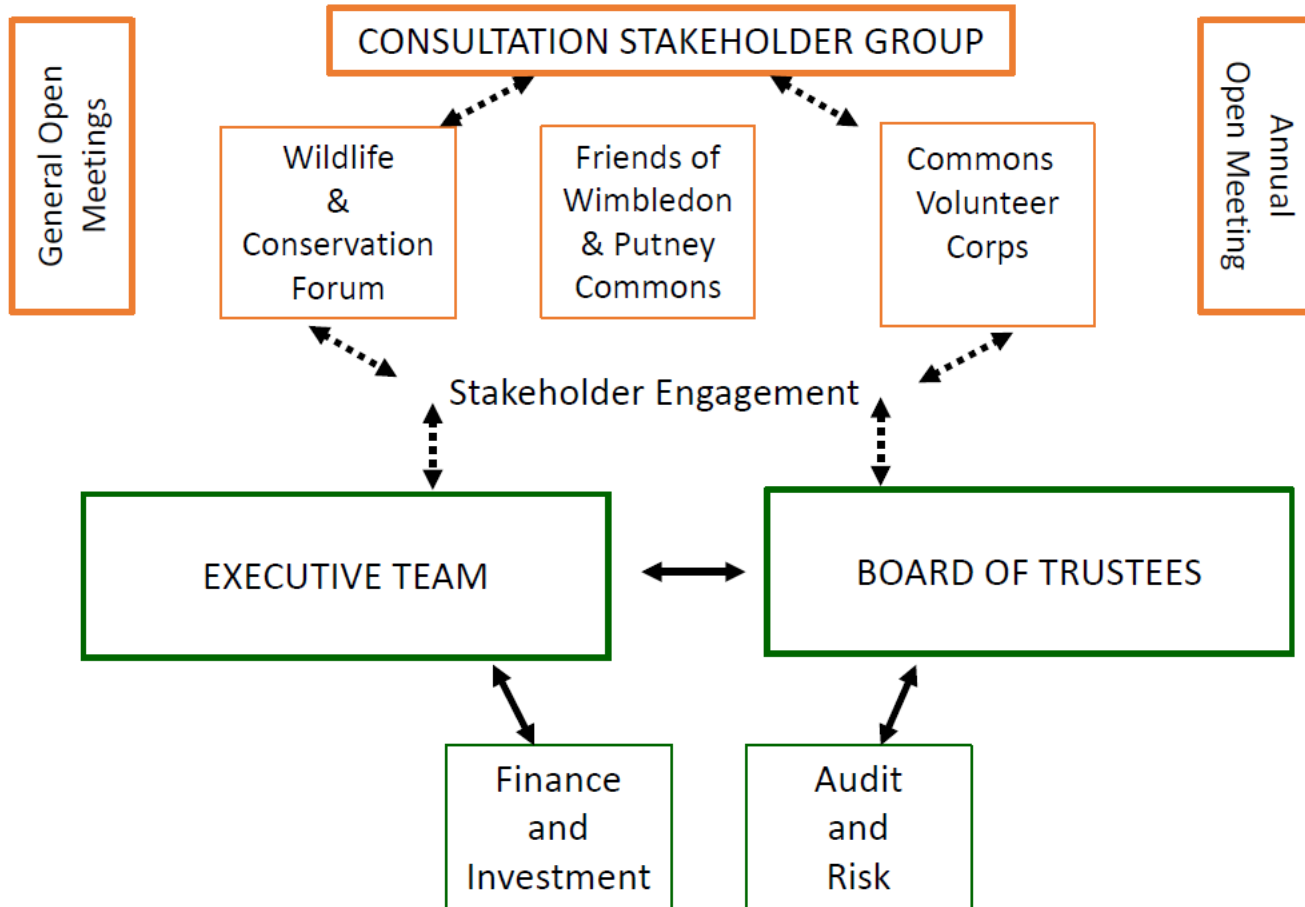
Process

Within the Application Pack there is a Role Description and a Person Profile. The first part of the process is for interested individuals to send in:

- 1) a letter of application (no more than two sides of A4) and should address how applicants fit the Role Description and Person Profile included in this Application Pack together with the following questions:
 - a. **Why do you want to be the Clerk to Wimbledon and Putney Commons?**
 - b. **What kind of expertise do you feel you could bring to the Board?**
 - c. **What has motivated you to become interested in a position within an environmental charity?**
 - d. **How you will support the implementation of the Commons' Vision and Strategy.**

This document together with a completed and signed Application Form must be received at the Ranger's Office by **21st March 2020**.

Governance and Engagement Structure



- Community Engagement
- Governance

The Role and Candidate



JOB DESCRIPTION	
Job Title	Clerk to Wimbledon and Putney Commons
Organisation	Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (WPCC)
Grade	Dependent upon experience
Responsible to	Chief Executive of Wimbledon and Putney Commons

Purpose of Post

To assist the Chief Executive and Executive Assistant in the effective management of the Board of Conservators and substantive Committees.

Main Duties & Responsibilities

1. Supporting the Chief Executive and Executive Assistant with effective management of the Board of Conservators and its Committees. This includes being aware of agenda items prior to each meeting to mitigate any potential issues that may arise.
2. Taking the minutes of agreed Board and Committee meetings and producing a set of minutes for approval within agreed time period.
3. Sharing meeting details with Board/Committee members in a timely manner.
4. Following up on agreed Board/Committee actions in collaboration with the Chief Executive and Executive Assistant, ensuring actions which may interlink between committees are understood and developed accordingly.
5. Responsible for the annual trustee appraisal schedule including recording conflicts of interest, ensuring all Conservators have an effective meeting with the Chairman of the Board.
6. Organise the process of Committee paper preparation, including making contact with key stakeholders, proof reading and checking for consistency of approach to paper layout and timely distribution before each meeting.
7. Updating the Conservators portal and ensuring that all relevant documents are uploaded on a timely basis.

8. The production of a clear, concise calendar of Board and Committee meeting dates which is imperative for ensuring effective meeting management.
9. Assist with undertaking governance reviews, including potential amendments to WPCC's constitutional framework.
10. Assisting with the management of the Trustees succession plan and appointment process for Appointed Conservators and Co-Opted members of the Board.

Other Duties

11. Actively seek to implement the WPCC's Equal Opportunity Policy and the objective to promote equality of opportunity in relation to the duties of the post.
12. Undertake any other duties that may reasonably be requested appropriate to the grade



PERSON SPECIFICATION	
Job Title	Clerk to Wimbledon and Putney Commons
Organisation	Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (WPCC)
Grade & Level	Dependent upon experience

Please find below the key skills, experience and core behaviours required to undertake this post.

Technical Skills / Professional Qualifications / Relevant Education & Training

- ◆ Degree or equivalent in discipline relevant to the governance and administration role
- ◆ Member of the Chartered Governance Institute or equivalent
- ◆ Good IT skills, enabling use of internet, emails, word processing, financial spreadsheets and website administration.
- ◆ Good at communicating clearly and working with a range of people in different roles. Able to write clearly and accurately.
- ◆ Excellent skills in organising own workload, and meeting deadlines.
- ◆ Diplomatic and tactful, and able to show political sensitivity.

Experience Required

- ◆ This requires excellent communication and organisational skills
- ◆ Experience of managing Boards management experience working at senior strategic level with senior officers and Conservators representatives
- ◆ Knowledge and an understanding of the charitable sector and particularly environmental charities

Other Relevant Information e.g. working hours or desirables (only if applicable)

- ◆ Able to attend and service morning, afternoon, evening meetings / weekend functions on Wimbledon and Putney Commons.
- ◆ Interest in the environment
- ◆ Full Driving Licence

Core Behaviours

Planning and Organising... Managing time effectively, prioritises and uses resources in a structured way.

- ◆ Organised and able to meet deadlines.

Communication and Influence... Presenting information and arguments verbally and/or in writing to improve understanding, influence outcomes and gain support.

- ◆ Ability to present information both verbally and in the written form.
- ◆ Excellent public facing and telephone manner.

Team Working... Using appropriate interpersonal skills and working through others to contribute to the development and management of positive and cohesive teams and partnerships within WPCG and beyond.

- ◆ Able to work well with others
- ◆ Ability to develop and motivate team, individuals and self to enhance performance and create a positive and dynamic team/ service and environment.
- ◆ .

Accountability... Being responsible for one's own actions, seeing things through, doing what we say we will.

- ◆ Develops and maintains effective controls to ensure integrity of the service.
- ◆ Sets the standards for delivering a high standard of service, on time and achieving results – leads a disciplined achieving team.
- ◆ Remains abreast of situations and adapts service and strategy in response to changing pressures keeping all stakeholders informed of any changes/issues.
- ◆ Recognised as someone who delivers what they say they will and ensures that team do the same.

Recruitment – Note to Applicants

These key skills and core behaviours will be used in the decision making process for recruitment. Please give examples of how you have exhibited these behaviours in your previous role(s). It is essential you address each of these on the application form on the section for supporting information.

Be as specific as possible, we cannot guess or make assumptions, but will assess your application solely on the information provided. Try to provide evidence, by examples, where possible, of skills, knowledge and experience contained in this person specification.