



# AELTC COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2023

## DEAR NEIGHBOURS

I am writing to introduce myself as the new Chair of the All England Club.

I have been involved with the Club for more than four decades: as a player at Wimbledon, as a Club and Board member, and now as its Chair. I am delighted and honoured to take up this role at what is a crucial time for the Club and The Championships.

It is now 101 years since tennis was first played on Centre Court, the centrepiece of our Church Road Grounds. During the past century there have been many changes at the Club but it retains its strong sense of history and tradition. Those changes have taken place for a reason. The Championships is an internationally-renowned sporting event and we strive to maintain this reputation, which brings with it so many wider social and economic benefits to the local area. But we cannot stand still and take this position for granted in what is a hugely competitive and rapidly changing sporting marketplace.

Our event's standing at the pinnacle of sport is a great source of pride for many who live locally to our Grounds as it is for the hundreds of people we employ year-round to work on The Championships, our Club, the Wimbledon Foundation (our official charity), and our Museum and Tours operation.

I, myself, live locally and am aware that there are some in our neighbourhood who question why our plans to transform the former Wimbledon Park Golf Club land are necessary. I would like to take this opportunity to share my view on why these proposals are essential to protect and enhance The Championships, while at the same time being able to deliver substantial benefits for the wider community.

Wimbledon is the only Grand Slam tournament that doesn't host its Qualifying Competition on the same site as the main tournament. Currently our Qualifying Competition takes place on what is ordinarily a cricket outfield. This is viewed by the world's best players as a significant weakness. In addition, our limited space on site means that as the event has grown, for example, expanding our Wheelchair Tennis draws and introducing the Under 14 Junior Championships, we are now in the position where there is simply not enough space to accommodate the increasingly complex range of facilities and services required for an international event of this calibre. There is no doubt that failure to address these issues will prove detrimental to the long term success of The Championships.

For the local community, I am fully committed to delivering the opportunities that the AELTC Wimbledon Park Project proposals offer. I recognise and understand that there have been concerns about our proposals, but I am also aware that there has been a significant amount of misinformation circulating relating to our plans. It is, therefore, important to me to clarify these matters.

Our priority will be to deliver a new 23 acre public parkland with permanent access on land that was previously inaccessible to the local community as it formed part of the private members' golf

club. This land will be transformed into a park for your enjoyment and will be connected to the existing Wimbledon Park that is owned and operated by Merton Council, which is unaffected by our proposals. This new public parkland will be open year-round and will mirror the opening times of Wimbledon Park.

Our plans have been meticulously developed with the assistance of a range of industry-leading experts to ensure the maximum environmental benefit possible and to transform what has been an ecological monoculture into a beautiful parkland providing habitats for nature to thrive. Our proposals for the former golf course will significantly increase the extent and quality of biodiversity which will lead to a measurable environmental net gain of 10%.

Importantly, all the 41 veteran trees on the site will be protected and only 300 trees of lesser quality (which were planted to reinforce the golf course fairways) will be removed. Our plans will double the number of trees through significant new planting resulting in an additional 1,500 trees. These new trees will be of different ages and sizes to ensure that we have a varied and diverse tree population for generations to come.

Access to the whole site has also been discussed and I wish to confirm that there will be the opportunity for the local community to play on a number of the grass courts following The Championships through to the end of the grass court season. In addition, the former clubhouse will be available for community use, which we hope will become a valued community facility.

Turning to the lake we will carry out much needed desilting work to ensure its long-term health and create a boardwalk for the local community to use.

In summary, our proposals will, I firmly believe, transform the former golf club into a space that benefits the local community through improved sporting and leisure amenities whilst keeping The Championships at the very top of world sport.

As the Planning Committees of Merton and Wandsworth Councils prepare to discuss these plans at their forthcoming meetings, I encourage you to view our proposals on the Wimbledon website ([wimbledon.com/wpp](http://wimbledon.com/wpp)) and, if you have time, we would be delighted to welcome you to one of our community events. Our series of guided tours of the proposed public parkland will next run on 27 and 28 October and you can sign up by emailing [community@aeltc.com](mailto:community@aeltc.com) or view future dates at [wimbledon.com/community](http://wimbledon.com/community).

I look forward to meeting you in the coming months.

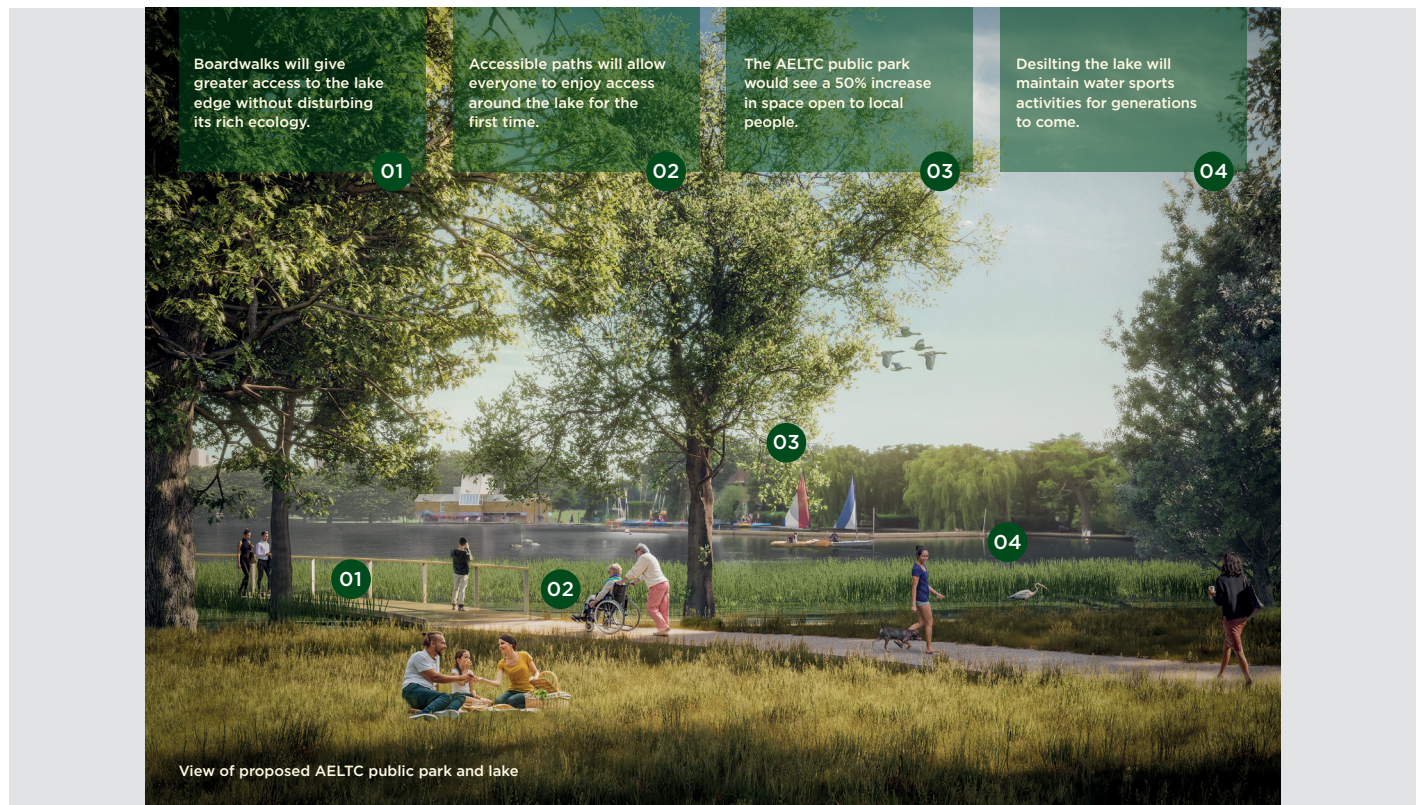
With best wishes,

**Deborah Jevans CBE**





# VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE AELTC WIMBLEDON PARK PROJECT





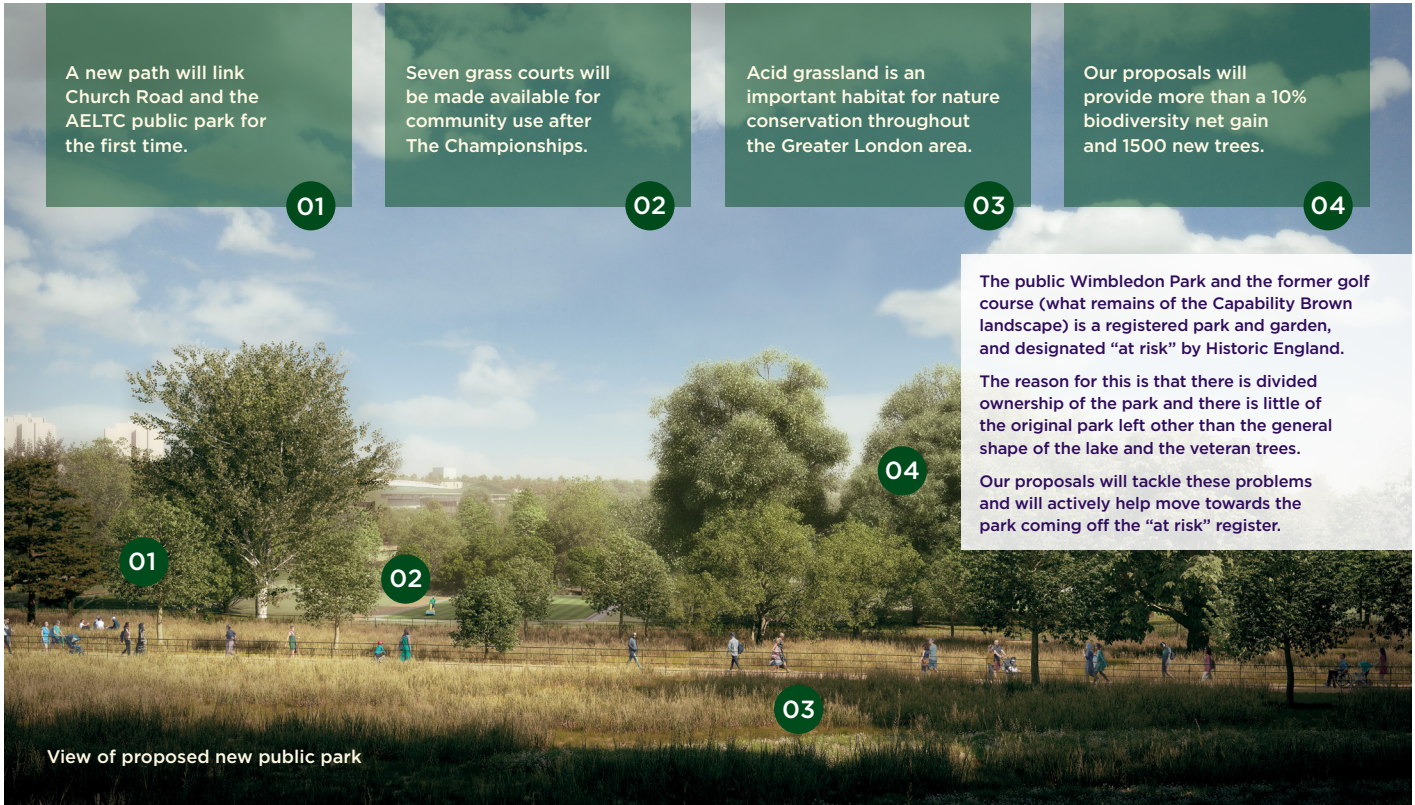


Proposed view of the Wimbledon Qualifying Competition

Our proposed tennis courts will sit into the landscape rather than dominating it.

The grass courts will be in use from May to September. They will not have permanent fencing around them, which will help keep the landscape open when they are not in use.

Maintenance of courts and the landscape will bring with it new local jobs and provide training in specialist skills.



01 A new path will link Church Road and the AELTC public park for the first time.

02 Seven grass courts will be made available for community use after The Championships.

03 Acid grassland is an important habitat for nature conservation throughout the Greater London area.

04 Our proposals will provide more than a 10% biodiversity net gain and 1500 new trees.

The public Wimbledon Park and the former golf course (what remains of the Capability Brown landscape) is a registered park and garden, and designated "at risk" by Historic England.

The reason for this is that there is divided ownership of the park and there is little of the original park left other than the general shape of the lake and the veteran trees.

Our proposals will tackle these problems and will actively help move towards the park coming off the "at risk" register.

View of proposed new public park



## COMMUNITY SPORTS OFFER

We would like to remind local residents of the opportunity to play tennis at our two local facilities: the Community Tennis Centre on Grand Drive in Raynes Park, and the Wimbledon Qualifying and Community Sports Centre in Roehampton, both fully open to the public.

Raynes Park offers nine hard courts of which six are indoors, and 16 grass courts. The centre runs adult and junior coaching courses, pay & play sessions, as well as junior tennis camps during the school holidays. Our Raynes Park centre is also home to the Wimbledon Junior Tennis Initiative coaching programme and hosts the Wimbledon Ball Boys and Ball Girls training in the lead up to The Championships.

At the Community Sports Centre in Roehampton, there are four outdoor hard courts, 18 grass courts, four grass pitches, two netball courts, a synthetic turf pitch and a studio. The venue hosts the Wimbledon Qualifying Event, however from September to May, the Centre is open for community sport where we work in collaboration with local schools and community groups to host sporting activities, training sessions and matches.

Joining our Community Sports Centres is £4 for adults and £2 for juniors. Players can then book courts or enrol for coaching at our Raynes Park and Roehampton venues via the website.

For more information, please visit:  
[communitysport.aeltc.com](https://communitysport.aeltc.com).



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