

**Wandsworth Council: Community Services Overview and Scrutiny
Committee: 16 February**

Comments by Friends of Tooting Common

Friends of Tooting Common have comments on two of the agenda items - Byelaws and fixed penalty notices for specific parks and open spaces (item 3), and Quietways (item 11)

**Byelaws and fixed penalty notices for specific parks and open spaces
(item 3) (Paper 17-72)**

Friends of Tooting Common note the plans to adopt byelaws to apply across all 47 parks and open spaces in Wandsworth.

We certainly support the principle that all parks and open spaces in Wandsworth should be protected by byelaws, to allow the Council to deal with unacceptable behaviour, or other issues that might detract from the general enjoyment of these spaces by the public.

However, administration and enforcement of byelaws across this much larger number of open spaces, as proposed, will have at least some, and probably considerable, resource implications for the Council's Parks and Events Police. We note that the paper does not consider these resource implications. We consider that these resource implications should be fully considered, in taking forward these plans; and that the Council should ensure that the Parks and Events Police are appropriately resourced for this considerably wider task, and that there is no reduction to the time and attention they are able to give to their existing work. Friends of Tooting Common would have strong concerns if, as a result of these changes, the Parks and Events Police were able to give less time and attention to their work on Tooting Common. Particularly in view of continuing problems of antisocial behaviour in several areas of Tooting Common, it is important that there be no reduction in the Parks and Events Police work on Tooting Common.

Quietways (item 11) (Paper 17-80)

Friends of Tooting Common note the outcome of the on-line consultation, and the recommendations in this paper for Quietway 5, which will run through Tooting Common.

In general, FOTC certainly supports the principle of encouraging cycling and of increased provision for cycling, including safe routes for cyclists. However there are some issues in applying this principle to the particular circumstances of

Tooting Common, and we doubt that Tooting Common is the right place for a Quietway. Reflecting this, as indicated, a questionnaire to our members shows that 55% have reservations about (or strongly oppose) the principle of a cycling Quietway going through Tooting Common, using currently existing paths as is proposed.

The main concern identified by FOTC members who have reservations is that some cyclists travel too fast on the current shared path, and show inadequate consideration for pedestrians; and that these problems would be exacerbated by designating a cycling Quietway through the Common.

We also have considerable concerns that, on the revised plan under which Quietway will use the diagonal path between Bedford Hill and the Lido car park, there will now be two shared pedestrian/ cycle paths in the area south of Bedford Hill - this path and also the existing shared cycle/pedestrian path on Chestnut Avenue. A number of FOTC members who have concerns about use of the diagonal path for the Quietway consider that this area of the Common is a quiet area, used extensively by walkers and dog users, and that, in cutting across that area, the cycling Quietway would create considerable problems.

FOTC recognise that Quietway 5 is likely to go ahead, running through Tooting Common on the basis proposed. We do though suggest that the concerns expressed, particularly about certain cyclists travelling too fast, do need to be properly addressed. The intended use of Breedon gravel for Quietway will certainly help on this. Very clear signage, which indicates clearly that pedestrians have priority, will also be important. And we suggest that the Council and TfL need to consider whether other measures to restrain excessive cycle speeds, and encourage moderate speeds, may also need to be introduced, particularly when the Quietway is first opened.

On surfacing, FOTC certainly supports the use of Breedon gravel, both in helping to restrain excessive speeds, and in helping to give the Common a more natural look. We assume that TfL and Wandsworth Council are satisfied that this gravel surface will be easily useable by wheelchairs and buggies; and that this surface will not give rise to problems of waterlogging that have arisen on some other gravel paths on the Common.

Friends of Tooting Common
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