

Gunnersbury Museum and Park Development Trust Trustee Search

Introduction and historical significance

Gunnersbury is a 72ha Park registered by English Heritage as Grade II* making it one of the top 30% of Registered Parks and Gardens in the country. It contains 22 Grade II* and Grade II listed buildings, some of the top 10% of historic buildings in England.

The Park has a rich history and a strong historic significance having been owned and developed as private 'country' estates by Princess Amelia in the 18th century and Baron Lionel de Rothschild and his family in 19th century, before finally becoming a public Park in 1926. The Palladian style manor house, built by John Webb for Sir John Maynard, was completed in 1663 and later occupied by Princess Amelia. It stood in the middle of the terrace with long distance views to the Thames and beyond. Payne's Watercolours of 1792 show the significant improvements made to the estate by the princess and her predecessor Henry Furnese MP including the Round Pond, Temple and Horseshoe Lake.

After the Webb house was demolished in 1800 the estate divided into 13 lots. Gunnersbury House, known as the small mansion, was built about 1806 on Lot 1 at the eastern end of the terrace and remained a separate estate until 1889. The remaining lots were all purchased by Alexander Copland who by 1802 had built Gunnersbury Park House, known as the large mansion and now home to the Gunnersbury Park Museum.

The estate was purchased by Nathan Meyer Rothschild in 1835. He engaged Sidney Smirke to improve the house and stables and add an orangery. The early 19th century form of the building and design is still identifiable.

Internally the building retains most of the 19th century decorative features, some by Edmund Thomas Parris, and the Victorian Kitchens, a largely intact example with many fixtures and fittings ranging from the 1830s to the early 1900s

The estate was extended in the 1860's with the acquisition of the Brentford Common Fields and Coles Hole clay pit, now the Potomac Lake. Horticultural journals of the late 19th century make frequent reference to the gardens of both estates as seats of progressive horticulture, rich in variety and interest. There were orchid houses, vineries and forced fruits of all kinds.

The Park was purchased by the boroughs of Acton and Ealing in 1925. Middlesex County Council contributed towards the cost and the Park was opened to the public in 1926. Brentford and Chiswick Council joined in the ownership and management in 1927. With the London Government Order of 1966 the property became vested in the council of the London Borough of Ealing and the Mayor and Burgesses of Hounslow. During the 1980s although many of the Parks buildings were in disrepair, the Park still offered extensive pleasure grounds, refreshment pavilions, a fishing lake and boating pond. Public toilets and dressing rooms were also provided with sports grounds for golf, putting, bowling, cricket, football, hockey, netball, rugby, lacrosse and tennis.

Transforming Gunnersbury - The Scheme

Gunnersbury Park is a nationally important site, with some wonderful places, assets and stories within it. The Park is entering a new chapter of its life, with a planned £48m of investment to be made over the coming years, as part of a phased approach. This investment, alongside a refinement

of governance and management will create a new future and deliver the core first phase of the overall master plan.

The impact of the new project will have highly significant benefits in the local community - helping to create value, attracting investment into the area, and also being a stimulus for people moving into the area. It will also help to deliver on tackling many of the issues related to the Public Health Outcome Framework - which is a key driver for the project.

The project is funded by a number of key partners, including:

- London Borough of Ealing
- London Borough of Hounslow
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- English Heritage

The aims of the project are to:

- Transform Gunnersbury Park to increase the range of audiences and number of visitors to 1 million per annum
- Conserve the significant heritage asset and contribute to its increased sustainability by:
 - restoring and conserving the building fabric, including the roofs, exterior facades, and the historic interiors
 - renewing the services within the House to ensure that the Museum can be run cost effectively and efficiently with modern services
 - improving visibility and conservation of the principal rooms
- Reconnect with the surrounding landscape, by
 - Restoring historic parkland setting for the Mansions
 - Restoring the Orangery
 - Recreating the west section of the Horseshoe Lake
- Develop the Gunnersbury Park Museum collections and display so that they appeal to a wide range of audiences of varying ages, social classes and ethnic backgrounds. The vision - the museum *'will be a vibrant, creative community hub and a leading visitor destination: a place of enjoyment, discovery, and learning. Engaging local, national and international audiences through its historic house and park land, extensive museum collections and inspiring programmes of events and activities.'*

Its mission - *'collect, care for and record the multicultural and diverse heritage of the London Boroughs of Ealing and Hounslow and make it accessible to all.'*

Future Governance Arrangements

The report on the future governance of the Gunnersbury Park Estate – Future Governance can be found by clicking on to the link (Agenda item 15)

<http://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/774/Committee/3/Default.aspx>

In summary: the boroughs have agreed to the incorporation of a Community Interest Company (CIC) to be jointly owned by the London Borough of Ealing and the London Borough of Hounslow. The CIC will take over the management of the Gunnersbury Park Estate (the Estate) following the completion of the capital works. When the museum opens in 2017 it will be under the new management arrangements.

The Councils have also agreed to the setting up of an independent trust - the Gunnersbury Museum and Park Development Trust. The trust will not have management responsibility for the estate but will play a key role in advancing the educational, community and public benefit entitlement of the museum and park through fundraising for activities and projects related to the site. The Trust will be a key stakeholder working with us to achieve our ambition for the transformation of the Gunnersbury.

Development Trust

We are inviting individuals who are prepared to utilise their skills and networks for the benefit of the Gunnersbury Museum and Park and the people of West London to help secure a further £1.2m of resources, donations and funds that will help conserve, transform and make more accessible the heritage, landscape, park land and sporting legacy of the estate.

Through the trustee search we hope to appoint up to 4 trustees. Upon the appointment of these new trustees, the Gunnersbury Museum and Park Development Trust will make an application for Charity Registration with the Charity Commission in February 2015.

The Trust will be supported by the combined (Ealing and Hounslow) professional bid writing team.

Please see the Trustee Specification and Trustee Role Description included in the Trustee Pack at <http://www.ealing.gov.uk/gunnersbury> for more information about the skills we need and what being a trustee involves.

Applying for a role as a voluntary Trustee

If you are interested in contributing to this exciting project as a new trustee, please read the Trustee Specification and send your CV and letter of application telling us how your skills and experience matches the Trustee Specification and equips you for this role.

Please send your CV and letter of application to Carole Stewart Assistant Director Arts, Heritage and Libraries by email: cstewart@ealing.gov.uk

Your application should arrive by 5th January 2015.

If you are shortlisted for interview, you will be invited to attend an information evening on 14th January 2015 and interview on 19th January 2015.