

WIMBLEDON PARK RIFLE CLUB

FOUNDED 1902



PLEASE HELP SAVE OUR CLUB AND MEMBERS ALLOTMENTS FROM REDEVELOPMENT

The planning application can be objected to by visiting: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/ and by searching for application reference number **2022/1429**. **Objections must be made by 13th May 2022**
If you have any questions, we will be holding a club open day on 8th May 2022 (see over)

Wimbledon Park Rifle Club has a long and proud history and has produced British Champions, as well as many county, national and international competitors. It has been located in Granville Road since **1904**, pre-dating all neighbouring houses. In 1992, British Rail put the site up for auction. Despite the club bidding 30% over the asking price, the site was bought by property developer, Brian Peck of ISC Properties Ltd.

There then followed a series of planning applications for housing and ultimately Mr Peck involved the huge property developer, St Georges (South London) Ltd, proudly announcing to the club that "you are finished now". We were delighted the council chose to refuse to grant planning permission and when St Georges took the council to appeal, Mr Peck still lost! We were eventually given a 20 year lease which expired in September 2021.

Our lease is protected under Part 2 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 which gives us security of tenure (i.e. the right to renew the Lease when it comes to an end). Landlords can oppose the renewal of the lease for certain specific reasons for example, where landlords want to redevelop the property. We have applied to court for a new tenancy because ISC Properties Ltd are opposed to us renewing our lease on the grounds that it intends to redevelop the land occupied by the club and its members allotments and it has applied to the council for planning permission for a nursery and 3 small junior tennis courts (of which there is already capacity for both in the local area)

Be under no illusions that the landlords primary aim is to remove our sports club from the site. He stated as much to the then Secretary after he lost the last planning appeal. We hope you will agree that **it is wrong for developers to buy ANY sports land with the expectation of being able to re-develop it.** This application is simply his best shot at getting the land back. There is absolutely no guarantee that the land will be built on as proposed as the land could simply lay empty whilst he (or a successor in title) puts in for fresh planning for housing.



Our club is one of only 2 rifle clubs in Wandsworth. It is the only one with outdoor floodlit ranges allowing members to compete after work in winter. Furthermore, it is the only one with the space and equipment to provide induction courses for those looking to learn the sport. If the landlord was to obtain planning permission, the Club would be forced to close and those looking to take up the sport in the area would have nowhere to go to in the locality.

The Club has a very long waiting list to attend an induction course which has only been made worse by the pandemic, proving that there is good demand for the sport in the area. If we had to close, those wanting to take up the sport in South West London, would have to travel far further afield to find a club offering induction courses.

We are **registered as a Community Amateur Sports Club**. It is run for the benefit of those members of the community looking to partake in target shooting and to tend allotments. In line with our unique history, it is also **registered as an Asset of Community Value**. The Landlord however is a property developer and town councillor from Gerrards Cross who has no interest in the area other than to redevelop.

As well as our ranges, the club also has land that, since the 2nd World War, has been tended by our members as allotment gardens. They provide a source of sustainable food production and the outdoor activity promotes wellbeing and contributes to our member's health and happiness. The green space also helps with carbon capture, pollution reduction and, with its insects, birds, bees (we have two bee hives on site) and other wildlife, adds to the local biodiversity. Additionally, it has recently been an educational resource for the local primary school.



The Landlord is proposing to destroy the club in favour of:

- A large (100 child) nursery. - There is already proven capacity for nursery space within the borough and **birth rates in the borough have dropped year between 2010-2020** (latest data available). Indeed, a couple of local nurseries have already closed citing lack of children and lack of staff. The landlords planning team claimed to our neighbours that parent drop off would be phased to about 17 parents per hour. This is clearly unrealistic. If there is one thing that the Club agrees with the Landlord on, it is his own comment to our neighbours that *'parents like to drop children off at about 7.30am and collect at 6.30pm'*. This will cause immense congestion on a stretch of road that has already had 10 accidents on it over the last 5 years. Furthermore, access to the site is already poor with limited visibility and certainly could not accommodate two way traffic together with a footpath from the road.

- Three junior tennis courts to the rear of the site. - There is already unfulfilled capacity for tennis courts in the borough, closest of which is the Southfields Lawn Tennis Club in Gressenhall Road. Furthermore, our site is festooned with a plant called "Horsetail" which is near impossible to eradicate. There is no doubt that it will grow through the tennis court surface within a matter of a couple of years, rendering them unusable.

The Club is preparing a list of matters that would be relevant to submit as comments to the planning department. We will make these available by Saturday 30th April on wprc.org.uk. If you would like to receive a copy and to be kept informed of developments, please do not hesitate to email sec@wprc.org.uk

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The Club will be holding an **open day** on **Sunday 8th May** between 10am and 4pm where we would be happy to answer any questions you may have. We invite you to show support by attending.

THIS HAS BEEN POSTED TO ALL RESIDENTS IN THE AREA HIGHLIGHTED TO THE RIGHT. PLEASE FORWARD TO ANYONE ELSE YOU THINK WOULD BE INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING THE CLUB, PARTICULARLY FROM WITHIN WANDSWORTH.

