



FUTURE OF WANDLE FORTNIGHT

Background

The Wandle Valley Forum's review of priorities, including the October 15 Wandle Futures workshop and the December 2017 Wandle Meetup, has identified a desire for more co-ordinated community-led activity celebrating the River Wandle. There are fond memories of the Wandle Valley Festival and a desire to rekindle something along these lines, albeit with a different name.

The Wandle Valley Forum Charter (2016) calls for action to *“Celebrate and inspire – Link millions more people to the Wandle through community events and arts, cultural and sporting activities and support an annual Wandle celebration.”*

Wandle Fortnight has emerged as the new annual celebration of the Wandle. It was led by Living Wandle Landscape Partnership with support from Wandle Valley Forum in 2016 and by Wandle Valley Forum with support from Living Wandle Landscape Partnership in 2017.

Aims and outcomes

The aims of Wandle Fortnight include to:

- support activities and events led by local community groups that celebrate the Wandle
- connect more people in local communities to the Wandle
- grow the number of community groups engaged with the Wandle
- strengthen the capability of community organisations engaged with the Wandle
- support better networking between community groups and voluntary organisations

It draws on local community interest and desire to run events and activities in the Wandle Valley and amplifies their number and impact by:

- providing a focus for Wandle activity at an appropriate point in the year
- shared publicity and promotion of events and activities
- offering micro-grants to community groups which support their projects
- sharing experience and developing skills in designing and delivering successful events
- boosting the profile and relevance of Wandle Valley Forum as a focus for community groups and voluntary organisations

The long term success of Wandle Fortnight can be measured by the following outcomes:

- more groups organising better run Wandle-related events
- increased public understanding and awareness of the Wandle
- increased engagement of local business, housing associations and other organisations with the Wandle
- wider recognition and support for Wandle Valley Forum
- long term delivery of community-led celebration for the Wandle

Approach

Wandle Fortnight is based on the following:

- Two weeks (three weekends) in September – coinciding with Heritage Open Days and Open House London (September 8th to 23rd in 2018)
- Wandle Valley Forum playing the lead role as co-ordinator and promoter but not putting on events and activities
- Local community groups, voluntary organisations and businesses organising taking the lead in putting on events and activities
- A light touch approach to management and administration to reduce the burden on volunteers and maintain the enthusiasm of Wandle groups
- Collaboration with Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust

We are also keen to support development of a small number of high profile events by organisations and local groups put on during Wandle Fortnight with a view to attracting a wider audience and raising the profile.

Micro-grants

There is clear evidence from the micro-grants scheme run in 2016 (£1,000) and 2017 (£3,000) that local groups benefit from having access to small amounts of money (£20- £200) to enable them to put events and activities on by covering basic costs. The approach needs to be very light touch administratively with proportionate due diligence so as to maximise the use of volunteer time and make best use of resources. As well as providing event details to be marketed and promoted, groups will be asked to provide evidence of the event (including photos) and a short blog in return for the funds.

We believe there is currently demand for a £5000 micro-grant scheme offering grants of between £50 and £200.

Publicity

Wandle Fortnight uses the following channels:

- Wandle Fortnight programme – printed and online. 5,000 leaflets circulated to local outlets (e.g. libraries, museums) and via local groups
- Wandle Bulletin – circulated to >1,500 inboxes
- Wandle Valley Forum website
- Social media – Wandle Valley Forum twitter & Facebook (including promoted)
- Supporter group network – Wandle Valley Forum has 128 supporter groups

Funding

Wandle Fortnight has been funded through Living Wandle Landscape Partnership (Heritage Lottery Fund) in 2016 and 2017 with a small amount of corporate support from L&Q and Goldcrest Land.

We have identified three future models for Wandle Fortnight

1. De minimis £2k

The De minimis option comprises:

- Online programme and publicity
- Microgrant fund - £1000

Funding sources: Wandle Valley Forum funds, donations, small grants

2. Roll out £5k

The Roll out option is similar to the approach in 2016 and 2017 and comprises:

- Printed programme circulated by volunteers
- High profile events put on by local groups without extra funds being available
- Microgrant fund - £3000
- Funded social media promotion
- Meetup event and online support from Wandle Valley Forum

Funding sources: As above plus business and other sponsorship: Sambrooks, Goldcrest Land, L&Q, Viridor, Landfill tax, Local trusts & foundations

3. Growth £10k-£20k

The Growth option comprises:

- Printed programme and leaflets (with some paid for circulation)
- Externally funded programme of high profile events and activities running through Wandle Fortnight
- Microgrant fund - £5000
- Dedicated webpages with searchable functions
- Funded promotion
- Support for Wandle Valley Forum supporter groups throughout the year to develop and organise events and facilities, including provision of Certa accredited training and two events
- Part time administrative support

Funding sources: As above plus Lottery (e.g. Awards for All, Sharing Heritage, Our Heritage) and major trusts and foundations (e.g. City Bridge)

Other potential funders – Ram Brewery, GLA, Suez, Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust, Southside Shopping Centre, Banhams, Greenland, Housing Associations, BIDs