



Friends of Panshanger Park

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What and where is Panshanger Park?

Panshanger Park is the remains of the estate built up by the Cowper family from the early 18th Century. The estate was extensive and covered much of the land which is now Cole Green, Birch Green, Hertingfordbury and Welwyn Garden City. The Cowpers originally lived in Cole Green house which was built around 1720. The grounds for this house were laid out by Capability Brown. In 1801 the 5th Earl Cowper pulled down Cole Green House and erected a much larger residence across the valley at Panshanger. The grounds of this house were laid out by Humphry Repton. Brown and Repton were famous and important 18th century landscape designers.

The current park is bounded by the A414 to the south, Panshanger Lane to the west, B1000 to the north and almost to Thieves Lane to the east where the only car park entrance exists.

Who owns Panshanger Park?

Lafarge Tarmac currently owns the park. In the 1980s, the agreement with HCC allowing gravel extraction required the restoration of exhausted extraction sites to the original, historically significant landscape and the creation of a Country Park with open public access for everyone to enjoy.

The remaining extraction of gravel should take no more than 3 years.

Some restorative work has been completed but so far little attention has been paid to the historic landscapes designed by Capability Brown and Repton.

Only a short path to the East of the site and Butterfield Way in the west along with an already existing Right of Way, are currently open to the public. The Friends have produced a vision for extensive public access starting in 2014.



Friends of Panshanger Park

The Friends of Panshanger Park (FPP) has been established to heighten the mounting momentum and increase the pressure on the present owners to honour their legal commitments of restoration and public access. It is a local group comprising members of all the interested local societies, e.g. Hertford Civic Society, Welwyn Garden City Society, Hertingfordbury Conservation Society, with the aim of consulting with the owners to provide what is believed to be relevant and realistic expectations of a modern day country park, as well as restoring the views and what is left of the buildings. The area is also important for wildlife of many different forms.



Dialogue with Lafarge Tarmac

Although only established in May, 2013, FPP has been involved in a number of meetings with Lafarge, and a positive dialogue has begun. Lafarge Tarmac has agreed that the current game bird shoot will be the last as it gets in the way of other visitors.

Lafarge Tarmac has produced a list of its actions for the park in 2014. One of FPP's aims for the coming year is to see that these actions are completed. We will be pressing for open access to the eastern end of the park before Easter including the removal of intimidating signs and obstructions



Practical Work

FPP has begun to clear a path into the park from Hertingfordbury. This path is the beginning of a right of way which goes up the side of the A414 and then into the western end of the park. It also leads to a permissive path into the eastern end of the park.

All help is welcome, contact us via our e-mail address.



Orangery and Conservatory

The original mansion was demolished in the 1950s. and only the footings remain. Two buildings which do remain, although in a dilapidated state, are the Orangery and the Conservatory. A longer term aim is to have these restored to something like their former selves.

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