



Memorial Bench Unveiled On Wimbledon Common

The Club now has a memorial bench on the edge of Wimbledon Common, a stone's throw from where Wimbledon FC used to train, and Wimbledon Old Centrals, the original Wimbledon football team, and forerunner of Wimbledon FC, started playing in 1889.

The bench is in a peaceful area in the Commons' 'Memorial Ring' opposite the War Memorial and offers a place to sit and remember your loved one.

The address is: **Richardson Evans Memorial Playing Fields, 2 Friars Avenue, SW15 3DU.**

The Club would like to thank Iain McNay for sponsoring the bench and John Lynch from Wimbledon in Sporting History for driving this project and seeing it come to fruition.

Fittingly, Iain and John joined Gill Fielding, widow of friend of the Club Martin Fielding, and their children



to lay a wreath on the bench in memory of Martin who passed away 12 years ago, during the morning of the recent victory over Barnsley.



Martin was Wimbledon born and raised, a lifelong fan who travelled home and away, and even co-founded the Blue & Yellow Club alongside Iain. Gill said: "It's so important that we now have a memorial area for the supporters, and the friends of supporters, to come to sit and reflect. This is a really important part of the club's history and of its culture."

Over the years, many supporters have left money to the Club in their will which helps their love for the club

live on, even when they are sadly no longer with us.

Club board member, and former PLC board chair, Iain McNay said: "Sadly it will happen to us all, one day we will depart and not be here anymore. While what happens next remains a mystery, but what is certain is that AFC Wimbledon will still be playing, and we hope, will be going from strength to strength.

"It's really important that we all have an up-to-date will so that your assets can be distributed in a way you are happy with.

"And maybe you would like to leave something to the Club, as I will be. You can be specific on what you would like your bequest to go towards. For instance, it could be towards the playing budget, Academy, stadium improvements, or the training ground.

We proudly sing 'Womble 'til I die', and if you leave a bequest - you are a Womble 'til you die, and for a good deal longer."

For guidance on creating or updating your will, speak to your solicitor. If you require support, club partner Private Office Asset Management offer a Wills & Lasting Powers of Attorney's service as part of their wider wealth management offering.

Visit their website by scanning the QR code and please quote AFC Wimbledon when you enquire:



WiSH Help In The Delivery Process

In around 2017, John was asked by the Club and Dons Trust Board to do a paper looking at options for a memorial garden at Kingsmeadow, which was submitted to DTB for consideration. The pending move to Plough Lane meant this was pushed back, where the paper was updated to look at whether one could be facilitated at our new stadium or a dedicated plot at a local cemetery.

"There were considerable constraints on what could be achieved at the new stadium, suitability of site, health and safety issues over the scattering of ashes, potential further stadium developments, along with several changes of both the DTB and club senior management to start discussions again.

"I was aware that the Fielding family had waited many years to honour their loved one's ashes and that Iain McNay was also seeking a resolution on their behalf."

WiSH had already started partnership projects with the Wimbledon Common Conservators and the new

management team, so an approach was made with a proposal about a memorial bench on the common.

"I'm a big believer in fate, and at the same time, they were developing a new memorial ring copse around an existing monument adjacent to where Wimbledon Old Centrals played their first games in 1889 and having discussed this further with Kris Stewart, who was holding the Club reins at the time, he asked me to go ahead and make it so.

"We go on record to thank Iain and Cherry Red Records for kindly sponsoring the bench and installation costs. They say life is cyclical, and we now have a memorial area that's peaceful, where ashes can be scattered and next to where the Club's football journey started 136 years ago, unveiled by the Fielding family, who could finally fulfil Martin's wishes."

