

GREAT BARR Observer



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MP joins fight to save historic Red House

by **Adam Smith**

District Chief Reporter

Great Barr's MP has backed the campaign to save the historic Red House.

Tom Watson, MP for West Bromwich East, is determined to help the Friends of Red House Park in their bid to stop the house being sold off to property developers by Sandwell Council.

"I wholeheartedly back the Friends campaign to save this very important local landmark," he said.

"I have been in contact with the group and am very impressed with their commitment to the cause I am sure they will be successful."

And the MP, now part of the Government, promised to do everything in his power to stop the Red House going the same way as Great Barr Hall.

"Everyone has to work together



■ The future of the historic Red House is in danger.

to ensure this beautiful house is restored to its former glory and not lost forever, depriving future generations of its grace and beauty," he declared.

The MP is set to enter into talks with the council and various conservation groups about the future of the 19th century house.

Last week the *Observer* repor-

ted that the council are searching for a new tenant for the historic house after it emerged the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers could no longer afford the upkeep of the property.

The council admitted last week that civil servants were drawing up plans for the house that the cabinet will get the final say on.

Chairman of the Friends of Red House Park Sarah Carter wants a more democratic decision.

"The house belongs to the people of Great Barr and I do not want the cabinet making a decision and then informing us afterwards what is happening," she said.

As well as keeping a close eye on any moves Sandwell Council make on the future of the house the Friends of Red House Park are busy organising their annual fun day.

Thousands of people attended last year's fun day and organisers are hoping next Sunday's event will be even bigger.

And Sarah is hoping the weather holds out for next week.

"Through the fun day we hope to entertain a lot of people but also highlight the Red House's plight and get a lot more names on the petition."

The fun day is between 11pm and 3pm on Sunday, July 3.