

**MINUTES of the 574th Meeting of the BANSTEAD COMMONS CONSERVATORS
held on Saturday 15th October 2016 at Banstead Centre, The Horseshoe, Banstead.**

Present: Mr. J Peacock Chairman
Mr. J Mill
Cllr. V Broad,
Cllr. R Mantle
Mr D Atkins
Mr. J Milner Clerk
Mr. R Knights Warden

Also present was Alan Higgs, Reigate – and Mr & Mrs Reynders and Frances Smith from Winkworth Road & Greenhayes Avenue area.

Part 1

1. Apologies for Absence

Mr. N Cull,
Mr. J McCrae
Cllr. J Clarke.

2. Minutes of last Meeting

The minutes were agreed as circulated and signed by the chairman.

3. Matters Arising

i. Environmental Stewardship

a. **Grazing/Cut & Collect.** Pens on Park Downs had been erected and 20 sheep were already grazing one of them. The plan is to graze them on various areas of Park Downs and Banstead Downs before turning ownership of them over to the shepherdess.
All of the major fields had now been cut by our staff or contractors.

b. **Natural England.** There has been no specific contact with Natural England during the last three months in respect of Higher Level Agreement.

ii. **Travis Perkins** – The following had been received in email from Alan Parr, RBBC Legal Dept. – *“Travis Perkins have failed to respond to the Community Protection Notice Warning Letter which required compliance by 09 October 2016. I have therefore issued, today, Travis Perkins with a Community Protection Notice, (CPN), requiring compliance by 23rd October 2016.”* We await further developments.

iii. **Summer Walks** – It was agreed that the arrangements for Conservators Walks on the commons would be discussed at our meeting on January 2017.

- iv. **Blocked Culvert Winkworth Road** - This matter was now being dealt with by Mark Davies, SCC Highways, and a site meeting has been arranged on Monday 17th October at which John Peacock and Richard Knights will attend. Residents of Winkworth Road area present at the meeting stated their concerns with flooding of their houses if the present drainage system was not improved or maintained while BCC was concerned about the amount of “toxic Waste” off the roads that was being deposited on the common.
Hopefully there is a solution to both problems that can be identified on Monday and implemented as soon as possible.
- v. **Pedestrian & Cycle Connection from Banstead High Street to Railway Station** – Our request that if this plan goes ahead the area around the footpaths near Banstead Railway Station be taken out of the commons and replaced elsewhere had been passed to Justin Chatfield. An acknowledgement has been received but nothing further.
- vi. **Status of Forest Schools** - An email to Forest Schools asking if they were a commercial organisation had not received a response and there had been no further request from them to use the commons.

4. **SCC Highways Works on A217**

SCC Highways have received £10 million specifically to improve the A217 and A23 north from Gatwick and a meeting had been held in respect of their plans to improve the A217 at the “Mad Mile”. This would commence by them improving the footpath on the verge adjacent to the southern bound carriageway, which had fallen into disrepair, and bring it up to a standard that could safely be used by pedestrians and cyclists. Also, on both sides of the carriageway, the trees and shrubs needed reducing both in height and depth to which they would undertake as nightwork commencing on 13th October. This would give clearer vision, particularly of road signs on the verges. The road surface was being lifted by rainwater getting underneath the surface and would have to be replaced but in doing so they needed to ensure that improved drainage would prevent a recurrence of the problem. They therefore proposed putting in 5 double drains on each side of the carriageway which would filter the water through a large sponge then through into another filter and then through another filter into the aquifer. Both filters would be on the verge and would not drain water onto SSSI. On the northern verge at the Belmont roundabout an existing drainage filter would be removed for maintenance and then replaced. A more permanent surface would be required at the entrance to the golf club maintenance area and across the road at the point where golfers crossed.

Each drain would be 8 yards by 1 yard into the verge which totals 80 square yards and is in the de minimus range for replacement of commons but would be added to the 75 square yards SCC already owe us for work on the Kingswood railway bridge. It is our intention to charge SCC for working on the commons at a rate of £500.00 per drain and they will be sent an invoice for £5,00.00. Work on the roads and drains is not intended to start until January 2017.

We need to point out that the Heritage Site and an area of SSSI come very close to the road on the north bound carriageway.

5. **Warden’s Report**

The Warden reported that there had been no particular problems during the summer and grass cutting had gone well. The sheep were grazing Park Downs and it was

intended to graze a total of 5 areas, 3 on Park Downs and 2 on Banstead Downs but we could graze more if we needed to and keep the sheep until they had met all of our requirements.

There was the usual end of summer dumping of garden waste on the commons and Cllr. Broad explained RBBC tipping policy which was in the process of being clarified for the benefit of council residents.

The chairman stated that the cut & collect carried out by our staff on Park Downs looked absolutely superb and better than previous years. The Warden explained that it was the dryness of the grass that allowed for a better cut and more complete collection.

6. Forthcoming Events

No forthcoming events had been notified.

7. Any Other Business

- I. **Banstead Downs Golf Club** were considering using road planings on the car park to improve the surface but had a particularly poor area just at the entrance which is enclosed by the garden wall of the golf club and an already metalled area of road and had asked if they could put a more permanent surface down there. Unfortunately legislation governing the commons does not allow such permission to be given.
- II. The chairman stated that 2018 was the 125th anniversary of Banstead Commons Conservators and that we might consider producing a history in the form of a booklet or at least an entry on the web page. John McRea had already shown interest in assisting in such a venture and it was hoped that others would also. Cllr. Mantle could assist with introductions to Banstead Library where he knew there were photographs and prints of parts of the commons and probably literature as well. The chairman will produce a plan for further discussion.

8. Date of the Next Meetings

21st January 2017

22nd April 2017 (Easter intervenes on 3rd Saturday).

15th July 2017

21st October 2017