



**Meeting 590 of the BANSTEAD COMMONS CONSERVATORS
held on Saturday 16 January 2021**

MINUTES – Part 1

Present:	Mr. J Peacock, Chairman Mr. J Mill Mr. D Atkins Cllr. N Moses Cllr. P Harp	Dr. W Bellenger Mr. V Broad Mrs. L Shea, Clerk Warden
Apologies:	Mr. N Cull	
Public Gallery:	Cllr Mark Brunt Cllr Jill Bray Ian Mockford, Tattenham & Preston Resident Association Gillian Hein, Tadworth Residents Association Richard McGreevy David Talbot Banstead Village Residents Miriam Maxim, Banstead Heath Consultative Group Sally Knight	Ralph Maciejewski, Nork Residents Jackie and Rob Sexton - neighbours of Park Downs Juliet Quartermain Jean Clew, Banstead Heath Consultative Group Bob Welfare - Belmont Resident Arrun Sutherland - Belmont and South Cheam Resident's Association (BSCRA)

1. Minutes of last meeting, matters arising

Signed.

Resurfacing of the footpath leading from Hatch Gardens on to Burgh Heath. Consent given, work commencing mid-January. Contractors are Marshalls.

2. Clerk's report

H&S update. Other than COVID, there are no health & safety concerns to report.

Tadworth Cricket Pitch. The issuing licenses to Tadworth Cricket Club and Chinthurst – to be covered in item 4.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to improve the area around the entrance of Burgh Heath, Chetwode Road, including Lonesome Ponds. The Clerk and Warden met with Cllrs Harp and Harper at the end of October. A project proposal was submitted which included the clearance of vegetation, woodland ride management and pond weed clearance. Due to the presence of the Great Crested Newt the Conservators connected with [SARG](#) to ensure due diligence and that work enhanced the area for the benefit of resident wildlife, as well as people.

Project proposal was approved by local councillors in December. Work at the site has commenced.

Community Engagement. 817 Facebook followers, 45 on Twitter. Due to Covid no further work has been done regarding the guided walks, these are simple to promote and organise at short notice. Walton on the Hill May Day Fair has been cancelled. BCC would be happy to give a virtual talk to any of the Resident Associations, covering background of the Commons and Conservators and the natural and cultural history of the Commons – liaise with Clerk. Currently looking at getting our website redesigned.

Thank you to the local litter picking volunteers. Acknowledgment of and thanks given to all those who help to clear litter from the Commons. Whilst it has been fabulous to see more people



discover the Commons during lockdown, fly-tipping and litter has increased greatly. The team are very appreciative for the support we get from our local communities.

Cllr Bray noted the lack of awareness of the Banstead Commons Conservators. Residents Associations would be happy to include an article in newsletters and websites.

Action: BCC to submit articles for the local RA newsletters. **Who:** Clerk

3. Warden's report

Cut and collect on all the sites were able to be completed. We continue to deal with trees suffering from Ash Die-back, a problem that will be continue for quite a while. The lockdowns have led to a dramatic increase in footfall on all the Commons. Whilst it is great that more people discover the Commons that has brought its own problems especially with litter and trampling. The recent very wet weather has not helped. Social distancing means that our activities are often affected in that we may have to stop work to allow people to pass.

Action: Warden to write report for inclusion in TWRA newsletter. **Who:** Warden

4. Meeting with Officers at Reigate and Banstead Borough Council

Cllr Bramhall requested that BCC contact **Greenspaces Team** to discuss our work; Chair and Clerk met with Officers Lee Wilcox and David Watts from the Green Spaces Team. At the meeting the role of the Conservators was discussed and Greenspaces have committed to regular walks on the Common and will report back to Cllr Bramhall.

Chair, Clerk and Conservator David Atkins met with Jo Stilwell from **Property Services** in January to discuss licenses in relation to a proposal for a mobile trader to operate on Banstead Heath and Tadworth Cricket Club and Chinthurst School. RBBC view is that as they own the commons only they are entitled issue licences and charge rent to groups and organisations operating on the Commons. However RBBC would do so in conjunction with us and include details and regulations from our Act.

The proposed practice pitches were mentioned at the meeting, Jo S highlighted they may be subject to section 38 of the Commons Act and may need to contact the Secretary of State.

Cllr Brunt highlighted that without BCC the maintenance could not be achieved and gave thanks. Regarding revenue from licenses, RBBC would issue the license and collect fee however they could issue a grant to ensure any revenue from licenses issued on the Commons was returned to the Conservators for conservation and land management.

Cllr Brunt committed to twice yearly meetings with BCC and acknowledged that RBBC was not able to manage Banstead Commons and the Council is incredibly grateful for the hard work.

Action: BCC to organise bi-yearly zoom meeting and a guided walk on the Common with Cllr Brunt. **Who:** John P/Clerk

5. Tadworth Cricket Club (TCC) proposal

TCC's proposal to lay two AstroTurf practices pitches and a similar all weather playing strip adjacent to the square on the Common was suggested by the RBBC to as prohibited work and come under Section 38 of the 2006 Commons Act and would therefore require approval from the Secretary of State.

V Broad mentioned that the area of land could be used by any club. The Square was set aside for cricket.

It was suggested a meeting is organised with TCC, Reigate and Banstead Council and BCC to discuss the viability of the proposals.

Action: Organise a meeting with Tadworth Cricket Club, Reigate and Banstead Council and Banstead Commons Conservators. **Who:** Clerk



6. Pond Management on Burgh Heath, SARG report

Met with Kevin Morgan at end of Nov to address aspects of Pond Management at Burgh Heath associated with the CIL grant. SARG happy with the project proposal that we submitted and gave advice on clearance of invasive species from Lonesome Pond.

SARG also recommended we apply for further funding to carry out the following:

- Desilt Lonesome ponds and sheepwash pond
- Construct additional pond in the open glade to the SW of Sheep Wash Pond
- Carry out regular GCN surveys, recruit and train local volunteers
- Consider erecting a fence around one or both ponds.

All the above suggestions were highlighted in the RBBC ecological survey carried out in 2013 in relation to the Preston Estate Regeneration.

David A acknowledged that there is a contract in place with Horley Piscatorial Society. John P confirmed that we would liaise with Horley Piscatorial Society, although no works were planned at Burgh Heath Pond (the main pond).

Cllr Bray would encourage the Conservators to apply for further grants from the CIL for a second phase of habitat management work in the area, which would include pond works.

Action: Organise meeting with Cllr Bray and Warden to discuss stage 2 of works. **Who:** Clerk

7. Christmas Tree at Nork

Cllr Harp asked if BCC would permit the local community to install Christmas lights next year on a pine tree on the commons (Banstead Downs) at the junction of Fir Tree Road and Nork Way (ie opposite the Co-Op). This pine tree is a modern replanting of the fir trees planted, we believe c1740, to denote the edge of the Nork Estate, and which gave their name to Fir Tree Road. It has been suggested that rather than feed electricity off the proximal streetlamp or cctv mast, it could use LEDs powered by a battery pack.

The Conservators unanimously voted in favour of the idea of LED lights on the tree at Christmas.

Action: Confirm agreement with Nork Business Guild. **Who:** Cllr Peter Harp

8. AOB

John M thanked Cllr Mark Brunt for attending and invited him to join a walk on the Common. Invitation accepted.

Cllr Bray asked if there was scope for volunteer groups on the Commons. Idea to be developed further by the Conservators.

John P raised the **Cancer hub at Belmont** and the proposed road changes around Downs Road and Banstead Park & Ride at Banstead Station. BCC would like to confirm that the Conservators would be against all proposals.

David Talbot, Chair BVRA, mentioned that Belmont and South Cheam Residents Association Neighbourhood Development Plan has been submitted to the BVRA and in it, it is suggested BCC are supportive of the plan. Latest draft has just been released. Arran Sutherland offered to connect John P with the Chair of the Belmont & South Cheam Residents Association, Peter Matthey.

David Atkins highlighted feedback from Tadworth residents and suggested we organise a guided walk for local residents. The role of the Banstead Heath Consultative Group mentioned, encourage participation from the RAs at future meetings.

Gillian Hein highlighted the ambition for the RAs to assist BCC with fundraising. BCC to write article for next newsletter. Friends of Group is currently being considered by BCC.

Cllr Brunt highlighted the Borough Magazine, especially if we were to launch a Friends Group.



Action:

Relevant articles to be submitted to RA publications.

Who:

John P/Clerk

Dates of 2021 meetings:

- 17 April 2021
- 17 July 2021
- 16 October 2021