



**Meeting 594th of the BANSTEAD COMMONS CONSERVATORS
held at The Banstead Centre on Saturday 15 January 2022**

MINUTES – Part 1

Present: Mr. V Broad, Chairman
Cllr. N Moses
Cllr. P Harp – left at 10:25am
Dr. J Peacock
Mr. J Mill

Mr. N Cull
Mr. I Mockford
Mr. D Atkins
Mrs. L Shea, Clerk

Apologies:

Public Ralph Maciejewski, Banstead History Research Group, Secretary & Nork RA
Gallery: Jane Davies, Banstead Heath Consultative Group
Gillian Hein, Kingswood Resident Association
Keith Robertson, Commoner – Banstead Heath
David Hatcher, local resident
Sal Wright, local resident

Chairman's statement

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming the public gallery, providing a background on the role of the Conservators and explained why there was a new Chair – the previous Chair resigned during a meeting with RBBC in November last year.

1. Minutes of the last meeting

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

2. Matters arising

Richard Knight resignation. In November last year we said goodbye to Richard Knight who served BCC as warden for 30 years. Recruitment for a new warden is on hold until our future working relationship regarding management of the commons has been confirmed with Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.

The track at The Green, Tadworth. The property services team at RBBC sent the proposed specification for the track to the Conservators on 3 December, approval was given. Meeting to update residents on the proposals for track replacement and parking is scheduled for 6pm on Tuesday 18 January. Property Services Manager Daniel Jones and Jo Stillwell will be leading discussions.

Public Engagement. Dates for our public guided walks have been confirmed this year, four walks in total. Clerk is exploring the possibility of holding a Banstead Downs Bioblitz Family Day in the summer.

Village Fairs. A stall has been confirmed for Tadfest on 18 June is confirmed. We have requested stall at Lower Kingswood Village Fete (2 May) and the Walton on the Hill May Pageant (21 May).

Memorial bench. We have one request for a memorial bench on Banstead Heath pending.

Social Media 1116 followers on Facebook Page. 127 Twitter followers.

AONB Boundary Review. Surrey Hills ANOB are reviewing their boundary. Clerk has submitted evidence for Banstead Heath and Park Downs and the consultation has been promoted on our social media pages.

Speaking engagements. Clerk to give a talk to Walton & District Local History Society (2 Mar).

Conservator appointment. Following Dr. Bellenger's resignation from the Conservators Mr. Ian Mockford was elected at the Executive Meeting on 18 November, 2021. Adverts for the March



recruitment process has commenced and applications are welcome.

Encroachments. We are currently dealing with one encroachment on Banstead Commons. We have received complaints regarding Walton Heath Golf Course encroaching on the Common, there were having a new water irrigation system installed and have been driving on the common. The course manager has apologised and will level out the ruts when the weather has improved.

CIL Funding Bid NE61 and NW108. Our CIL funding bid was successful and approved at Executive meeting on 20&24 Octobers. Councillors have recommended that the full award of £38,360 is allocated. Terms and conditions of the grant will be shared once discussions regarding the Service Level Agreement are complete. The tractor that we had on hold has now been sold and Haynes Agricultural Ltd. are waiting for a delivery, arrival anticipated no sooner than March/April 2022 - the whole of our industry is struggling to supply anything at this moment in time, and its likely to stay this way for the foreseeable future.

Finance meetings with RBBC. The date for our subsequent funding meeting with RBBC was postponed twice (24/11 & 9/12) and is now scheduled for Monday 31 January. Cllr. Mark Brunt sent his apologies for the delay. RBBC is currently in the process of finalising 22/23 budget proposals and these discussions needed to be completed first. Cllr. Brunt has advised that the Council has options to present to the BCC at our next meeting which should allow both the council and the BCC to move forward together and provide a sustainable future for the management of Banstead Commons. It was highlighted that RBBC has not consulted with BCC on the development of the proposed options.

Clerk mentioned that she'd recently met with the Clerk of the Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons who have a similar Act and budget (£177K). Whilst it is difficult to compare sites due to management duties and responsibilities, it was worth noting that TW&R Conservators manage 256 hectares (BBC manage 550 hectares) and contractors are used for day to date management. The working relationship with councillors and officers is positive and the CEO meets monthly with the Clerk and Finance Director attends guided walks. The Council increases their budget each year in line with RPI, 4.9% increase was allocated for the FY2022/2023. Visit - <https://twcommons.org/> - for more information.

2.1 Drainage concerns on Banstead Downs. Following a recent boundary inspection we discovered four illegal gullies had been dug along Sutton Lane on Banstead Downs and the Clerk raised this as a concern with Natural England (NE) on 16/11. Assent from NE should have been gained before any works are carried out on or adjacent to a SSSI. To address the concerns regarding the work already taken and any future works at Sutton Lane, a meeting on site was arranged with Jane Sevenoaks from NE, Vic Davey from RBBC and Mark Davies Surrey County Council (SCC). SCC carried out drainage investigation/cleaning works and found the outlets were blocked and exposed the outlets to restore flow. SCC suggested that interceptor chambers could be installed in the Highway verge behind the gullies to reduce contaminants and the outlets could then be routed into chalk filled soakaway pits which would have to be located just inside the SSSI boundary. Natural England thought that this would be an acceptable solution therefore SCC are to design a proposed scheme and send this to RBBC for consideration. Future works at the site will require authorisation from NE and BCC.

2.2 Chips Folly boundary concern. The residents of Chips Folly (southern property) have been in touch with the Clerk regarding the boundary line of their property. They would like to move the current fence out by approximately one metre. Supporting paperwork was inspected. Discussion ensued related to the new fence which was erected at Chips Folly (northern property) with



concerns it encroaches on Banstead Common and Common Land legislation will apply.

Action: Clerk to organise a site inspection with Conservators J Mill and D Atkins. Clerk to compile relevant background information and share with the Conservators with a report following the boundary inspection.

3. Quarterly report

The large tractor has been repaired and is back on the road and the cut and collect and topping regime on grassland and heathland areas are complete.

Footpath and bridleway inspections were completed at the beginning of the New Year and trees that had fallen during the festive period were cleared.

Scrub clearance across all sites has commenced, prescriptions from NE are followed on Park Downs, Banstead Downs and Banstead Heath.

Chalara Ash dieback. List of trees of concern has been sent to David Watts (DW). DW has confirmed that the identified trees outside Chinthurst School are being assessed by Connick Tree Care 27 February, works are being coordinated by DW.

Burgh Heath. Clearance work on Burgh Heath as detailed in the CIL Funding Grant NW94 is complete. Trees have been crown lifted and some trees identified along the Chetwode Road/Reigate Road footpath have been felled. Contractors Kings & Son will be completing the remaining work around Lonesome Ponds in February.

Park Downs. A large area of scrub has been cleared on Park Downs to increase the calcareous grassland areas and promote successional areas of scrub as prescribed in our HLS grant. Coppicing at the site will also take place this winter.

4. AOB

David Gradidge. The chairman spoke about the loss of David Gradidge. Over the years David had been a good friend to Banstead Commons Conservators and played a key role in introducing grazing on Banstead Downs and monitoring the livestock. The Conservators send their condolences to David's wife and family.

Wildlife Monitoring. Following the recent report from Natural England the clerk has put requests out through social media for wildlife monitors. Local birder Steve Gale has volunteered to make monthly visits to our site and upload his bird lists to [Bird Track](#). Mr Karl D Tarratt from Bisham Barn Owl Group/Middle Thames Bird Conservation Trust/Runnymede Ringing Group has also signed up to register birds on Bird Track and is keen to erect nest boxes for targeted species once the site has been surveyed. Clerk requested authorisation which was unanimously approved by the Conservators. Clerk to collect license and insurance details.

Clerk has re-connected with Surrey Butterfly Conservation and is building working relationships with other Conservation bodies with the intention to launch a Banstead Commons Advisory Group. Note, the butterfly transect on Banstead Downs was the very first transect in Surrey (started in 1986).

Meeting closed at 10:50am

Dates of 2022 meetings to be held at The Banstead Centre
15 January 2022; 16 April, 2022; 16 July, 2022; 15 October, 2022



**Meeting 595 of the BANSTEAD COMMONS CONSERVATORS
held at The Banstead Centre on Saturday 9 April, 2022**

MINUTES – Part 1

Present:	Mr. V Broad, Chairman	Mr. D Hatcher
	Cllr. N Moses	Mr. D Atkins
	Cllr. P Harp	Mrs. L Shea, Clerk
	Mr. N Mollett	

Apologies: Mr. N Cull, Mr. J Mill

Public Cllr. Nick Harrison

Gallery: Cllr. Rachel Turner
Jane Davies, Banstead Heath Consultative Group
Catalina Vassallo-Bonner, Banstead Federation
Ian Mockford
Andrew McManus

1. Apologies for absence

John Mill and Nick Cull

2. Appointment of Conservators and Election of Chairman

A proposal by Cllr. Peter Harp that Victor Broad be elected chairman for the ensuing year was seconded by Cllr. Nadean Moses.

The Chair welcomed new Conservators David Hatcher and Nathan Mollett and congratulated them on their appointment.

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes were agreed as circulated and approved by the Chairman.

4. Quarterly report

The Clerk recognised and gave a formal thanks to our two Keepers, who despite the absence of a warden and change in leadership, have continued with the winter work programme and have been supportive of the Clerk whilst new ways of working were established. It was noted that both Keepers have worked for BCC for over 10 years, are fully qualified and are very knowledgeable of the Commons and our working practices.

Dry weather in the new year enabled the team to commence scrub clearance on Park Downs (Higher Level Stewardship, prescription HK7) and have cleared an area c. 5,700 sq. m - it will take this area between five to ten years to transition to calcareous grassland.

On Banstead Downs, as part of our efforts to maintain successional scrub, c. 600 sq. m of blackthorn was cleared across two areas.

We had started hazel coppicing on Park Downs when work was disrupted due to Storm Eunice and Franklin. 53 trees were cleared from across the four sites, each one has been documented.

Work at Lonesome Ponds was completed – desilting ponds, invasive weed removal and



remodelling of the bank – and the area inspected by Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group (SARG). They were pleased with the work carried out and would like to encourage the installation of another pond as highlighted in the 'An Environmental Appraisal of the Burgh Heath Path Proposal A Report for Reigate & Banstead Borough Council (August 2013)'.

The storms provided us with two large oak trees that were planked for furniture. Three new benches on the Commons will be installed this Summer - Banstead Heath (dedicated bench, George Peskett), Park Downs and Banstead Downs – and 24 oak finger posts have been made to replace rotten and missing posts on the commons.

A barn owl box has been installed on Banstead Heath and is being monitored by Karl D Tarratt from Bisham Barn Owl Group. License and insurance details have been collected.

Conservator David Hatcher and the Clerk met with Kevin Morgan from SARG to inspect pond works at Burgh Heath and reptile monitoring on Banstead Heath. 20 new refugia will be placed on the Heath this year and three volunteers recruited to survey the site to help inform future management.

A meeting has been scheduled with Butterfly Conservation to establish a new butterfly transect on Banstead Heath and source a representative who can join the proposed advisory group. We have connected with the BTO Breeding Bird surveying team regarding the breeding bird survey which has been operating on Banstead Heath since 1995, a full set of biological data has been collected.

ASB on Banstead Downs continues to be a problem on the Back from the Brink Plantlife site and we are clearing rubbish and camps from the site on a weekly basis. Clerk has written to Natural England and Plantlife to express our concern regarding the irreparable damage to the site and is in regular communication with the Police.

Grazing and the Downlands Trust – We have been in touch with the Downlands Trust regarding reintroducing grazing on Banstead Downs and Park Downs this winter. The Downlands Trust are currently involved with the lambing season but will meet in person to discuss requirements and possible options.

Clerk would like to reinstate the Conservator walks on the commons during the summer months to address management concerns and identify winter work programme. Staff will be invited to attend. Unanimously agreed.

Action: Clerk to organise Conservator site walks

Cllr. Peter Harp raised the concern that BCC should employ an archaeological watching brief when carrying out any excavations on the Commons. Concern was noted by the Clerk and it was confirmed that no new excavations had taken place during this years' winter work programme.

Please see accompanying photos.

5. Matters arising

1. Encroachments, concerns & legislative duties



The Green, Tadworth. RBBC sent work out to tender and contractors have been selected. RBBC senior surveyor carried out a site inspection on 29 March. Conservators have raised their concerns to RBBC in writing (9/3, 25/3) regarding the layby and resident parking. No response from RBBC has been received to date.

Chips Folly boundary concern. Inspection was carried out 5/2. Our examination found no evidence of the “boundary and ditch rule” assertion. At some point, the area in front of Chips Folly has been levelled to turn it over to car parking. In the circumstance, there is no good reason whatsoever for the fence to be moved from its present location. The inspection also revealed the fact that an area of the common has been cleared to the side of Chips Folly and we have written to the property owner to insist that the area be allowed to naturally “rewild” itself. The inspection did bring to light the extension that has been added to Chips Folly along the flank that abuts the common. It appears that this may have been constructed upon the common and we have requested the fullest possible information as to the plans and drawings, the date that the same was constructed, and whether building regulation consent and/or planning consent was obtained in respect of the structure.

When examining the land adjacent to Chips Folly, we also examined the recently erected fencing of the property to the rear for which it is suggested that consent was provided by the former clerk to the Conservators, John Milner. Having examined the records of our proceedings, it appears the proposal that consent should be given for the re-siting of this fence was never raised with the Conservators and would not have been forthcoming had it been. The Conservators consider the extension of this fencing to be inappropriate.

Reigate & Banstead Borough Council Licence between Tadworth Cricket Club (TCC), Chinthurst School and BCC drafted and shared with BCC on 16/3. Awaiting discussion meeting with RBBC before sharing the licence with TCC and Chinthurst. Discussions are being facilitated by RBBC Senior Asset Manager Jo Stillwell.

ASB (Anti Social Behaviour) on the Commons continues to be a problem on Burgh Heath and Banstead Downs. A Section 59 was issued to persons on Burgh Heath on 7/2 – vehicle can be seized on subsequent visit. Police were authorised vehicular access to Banstead Downs on 26/2, and their presence was promoted on social media.

Discussion: Cllr. Nick Harrison suggested BCC request to join RBBC Joint Action Group (JAG) which is facilitated by the RBBC Joint Enforcement Team (JET).

Action: Clerk to connect with Mark Wilson from the Joint Enforcement Team and ask to be invited to JAG meetings.

Flytipping, litter and green waste. Letter drop regarding fly tipping has been carried out at Hatch Gardens, Commonfield Road, Court Hill and High Field.

Meeting was held with Julie Evans, Head of Reducing Reoffending, and John Fraser A.U.M. Industries & Business and Community Engagement Manager at HMP on 30/3 regarding the litter issue along High Down Lane. Discussion around road ownership was raised. The prison doesn't have resources to manage litter issues along the road and felt that much of it was a result of casual parking rather than visitors to the prison.

Commercial Dog Walkers and Byelaws. We have received complaints regarding commercial dog walkers operating on Banstead Heath. Meeting with RBBC dog warden was held on 6/4.



Clerk has been in touch with the warden at Horsell Common Preservation Society and Ministry of Defence to discuss licencing and introduction of new byelaws. The Conservators agreed that introducing a licence or new byelaw should be explored further.

Action: Clerk to explore further with RBBC and other relevant bodies and report back at next Quarterly Meeting.

2. Public engagement & volunteering

Guided Walks. Five walks have been advertised, one is fully booked, the others have limited space left.

Presentations given to Walton on the Hill and District History Group 2/3 and Kingswood Resident Association 29/3.

Articles have been submitted to Banstead RA, Village Voice & TWRA Newsletters.

Social media. Facebook has 1,152 followers. 179 followers on Twitter

Volunteering. We have a Duke of Edinburgh Award student surveying ponds on Banstead Heath.

Surrey Hills AONB. (Area of Natural Beauty) David Hatcher introduced Christa Emmett from Surrey Hills AONB. Christa manages projects and volunteering for Surrey Hills and is keen to support volunteering activities on Banstead Commons. Surrey Hills AONB can provide staff (and perhaps get access to tools) to help support organised activities.

Common Therapy – due to the pressures facing Conservator organisations across the region, a network has been established to facilitate conversations between similar bodies in the South East. Those taking part at present Wimbledon & Putney, Tunbridge Wells & Rusthall, Ashdown Forest and Banstead Commons. It was noted that Wimbledon & Putney Conservators and Tunbridge Wells & Rusthall Conservators both enjoy the benefit of a precept and a productive working relationship with the local council and council officers.

3. Finance

Pfizer Clerk met with Roos Bruggink, Corporate Responsibility & Philanthropy Manager at Pfizer, on 1/4. Roos is looking to develop corporate volunteering with a focus on the environment across the whole business. Although corporate responsibility budget is low Roos will put BCC forward as a beneficiary for the staff Joy Fest and would like to explore corporate volunteering opportunities once restrictions have been lifted. Also interested in learning more about Adopt-an-Acre and will raise the possibility of a donation with colleagues. Roos will be back in touch later this year when restrictions are relaxed.

Walton Heath Golf Course – a donation of £500 was received for the damage caused to the common during the installation of their water irrigation system.

Kingswood Resident Association – David Floyd has introduced BCC to Inspired Villages and we are hoping to develop a corporate partnership.

CIL Funding application NE61 and NW108. Funding for the new tractor was received 7/3. Tractor is on order and joint promotion of the funding will take place and once the tractor has been delivered we will arrange a photo opportunity on the Common. In the meantime, the small tractor has been sold.



Discussion: The Conservators expressed their thanks and appreciation to Cllr. Mark Brunt and the local ward Councillors for their support to the application.

Discussions with RBBC. Our grant was approved at £85,500 for the FY 2022/23. Although future funding and our working relationship are not secure, BCC has a dialogue with Leader of the Council Cllr. Mark Brunt and a more transparent and productive approach is expected. The Council is formalising funding agreement which may be in the form of a Service Level Agreement or Funding Grant. Next meeting with RBBC is being held at the Town Hall on 27 April.

Business Rates. We have been in touch with RBBC regarding the introduction of Business Rates for the FY 2021/22 (£3742.50). To date BCC has never been charged Business Rates and this expenditure was not budgeted for. Our depot is used to house agricultural plant machinery and equipment used to manage 550 hectares of Council-owned land. The vehicles stored in the building are classified for agricultural use and are exempt from tax. Clerk has started the process for a check case with regards to the classification of the rateable value. This concern will be raised at our meeting with the council on 27 April.

Discussion: The Conservators and meeting attendees were surprised at RBBCs decision to introduce Business Rates (£3742.50 FY 2021/22, £3742.50 FY 2022/23) and are hoping that discussions on 27 April will address the concern.

Budget Financial Year 2022/2023. Our budget for the FY has been approved although it is noted that the Conservators are operating at reduced staff levels.

Any Other Business

Cllr. Nick Harrison: Asked if the minutes of Quarterly Meetings and the report could be shared with ward councillors, the suggestion was welcomed by the Conservators.

Cllr. Rachel Turner: Suggested increasing public profile, ie. public engagements, liaising with Residents Associations and other interested bodies.

Action: Clerk to circulate Quarterly Meeting minutes and accompanying picture report to ward and county councillors and also local Residents Associations.

Meeting closed at 11.10am

Dates of 2022 meetings to be held at the Banstead Centre

16 July, 2022; 15 October, 2022



**Meeting 596 of the BANSTEAD COMMONS CONSERVATORS
held at The Banstead Centre on Saturday 16 July, 2022**

MINUTES – Part 1

Present:	Mr. V Broad, Chairman	Mr. D Atkins
	Mr. N Cull	Mrs. L Shea, Clerk
	Mr. J Mill	Cllr. N Moses
	Mr. N Mollett	Cllr. P Harp
	Mr. D Hatcher	

Apologies:

Public Cllr. Nick Harrison

Gallery: Cllr. Jill Bray
Cllr. Rachel Turner (via Zoom)
Jane Davies, Banstead Heath Consultative Group
Catalina Vassallo-Bonner, Banstead Federation
Gillian Hein, Tadworth & Walton Resident Association
Ian Mockford, Tattenham Corner & Preston RA
Andrew McManus, local resident
Sarah Brough, local resident

1. Apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Minutes of last meeting held on 9 April confirmed as correct. No matters arising

3. Quarterly report

Summer is the season for mowing paths, firebreaks and strimming to help contain walkers to the pathways and preserve flora and fauna. The time consuming task of bracken clearing has commenced in the various compartments on Banstead Heath.

There are a few areas of Japanese Knotweed on the Commons, the team has mapped the clumps and will instruct a contractor to apply treatment in September. Another invasive species, Canadian Goldenrod, is being hand pulled on Banstead Downs – optimum months to pull the plant are between May and August. Thanks were given to local resident John Buckland who has been hand pulling the plants.

Security across all four sites was strengthened in time for Epsom Derby and throughout the month of June.

Tree pests and diseases continue to require resources of the team and a meeting was held with David Watts who is the Countryside and Woodlands Officer at RBBC in May regarding Ash die back works at Withybed Corner and Burgh Heath. BCC has requested an agreement from RBBC to outline responsibilities.



Two contractors have quoted for the removal of oak processionary moth nests on Banstead Downs, only infested trees along busy walkways will be addressed. Work will be coordinated by Conservators and funded by RBBC. Total eradication of the pest in the core distribution zone is no longer considered possible.

Conservation Grazing is to be resumed on Park Downs this winter using sheep supplied by Downlands Trust. The stock fencing will be additionally protected by low voltage electric wire.

A meeting was held with Christa Emmett who is the Project Volunteer Coordinator at Surrey Hills Society regarding corporate volunteering on Banstead Heath for Winter 2022. This project would be dependent on sponsorship.

Following an accident on the Commons, a complaint was received from a member of the public regarding the difficulty of access by emergency service. There was no complaint from the emergency services who had expeditiously obtained the appropriate vehicle. The meeting confirmed there should not be a general distribution of keys for barriers.

A general update was given on wildlife monitoring and this quarter's notable species - Early Gentian, Kidney Vetch and Small Blue Butterfly, Glow Worms, Man Orchid.

Our Keeper Tim left after ten years of service. Thanks and appreciation were given by the Conservators.

The Conservators are currently recruiting for a Senior Ranger.

4. Matters arising

1. Encroachments, concerns & legislative duties

The Green, Tadworth. The problem of the surfacing and parking at track on The Green continues. The resurfacing work has commenced with material approved by BCC but as this area of land is always controversial and in contention due to the illegal parking it has been suggested the land be de-registered and returned to RBBC in a land exchange with land provided adjacent to Park Downs. Item has been raised with the legal team at the Council.

RBBC Licence between Tadworth Cricket Club, Chinthurst School and Banstead Commons

Conservators. To ensure third parties using the Cricket Pitch are compliant and aware of the restrictions in place operating on common land and comply with the regulations, as legal landowners RBBC has drawn up a licence between Tadworth Cricket Club (TCC), Chinthurst School and BCC which was issued in April. The licence has not been implemented this year, Tadworth Cricket Club are seeking legal advice.

The Rascal Club and The Millfield. The Clerk confirmed the owner of Millfield (the house) applied for a change of use for buildings within the premises which was granted by RBBC. BCC was not consulted by RBBC on the planning application.

The sole access point to the commercial enterprise, The Rascal Club, is being advertised as via Banstead Heath. BCC wrote to The Rascal Club to confirm that authorisation is required to gain commercial access to the property. The Rascal Club has submitted a formal request for access which was denied by the Conservators due to the impact increased use will have on the Commons and its wildlife.



The Conservators believe unauthorised access is encroachment and are establishing a legal position. This item will be discussed further in part 2 of today's meeting due to legal concerns.

It was generally confirmed by the attendees in the public gallery that there had not been any access from Millfield (the house) to Mill Field in over 20 years.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee. BCC has been invited to make a presentation to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 17 October. The Overview & Scrutiny committee is made up of 15 politically proportionate Councillors and is entitled to scrutinise both the work of the Executive and anything else of public interest in the borough. The objective of the meeting is to understand what the Conservators do, their services and what their issues are, finances will not be specifically addressed.

Vic Broad: welcomed the invitation and noted that considering the small funding provided by RBBC, BCC look after just under 50% of the green spaces in the borough, enhance and protect landscapes, and provide astounding value for money.

Funding meetings with RBBC, 27 April and 11 July. John Mill provided an overview of the meetings with the Council, 27 April and 11 July. The overriding concern is the decreasing level of funding provided by the RBBC to carry out the management of Banstead Commons. BCC believes there is an improved understanding of the role of BCC and are hoping this will filter down through the Council teams. The Conservators have put forward a Heads of Terms as a unique document to address the development of a new funding agreement. Discussions with the Council continue.

Gillian Hein asked when will financing be discussed.

BCC has developed a draft a three-year budget and at the last meeting with RBBC. At the meeting on 11 June, Cllr. Brunt noted that it may be worth developing a longer-term projection.

In response to Gillian's question, **Nick Harrison** confirmed that draft budgets are prepared in November, viewed again in December with final numbers agreed in January. Nick asked if we have management agreements regarding the programme of work on each area of land. BCC has prescriptions from Natural England and work to an annual work programme for each site. BCC is submitting a CIL bid to develop 10 year management plans for Banstead Commons.

Andrew McManus asked if the funding will be sufficient to achieve/maintain the favourable status on each of the sites. Park Downs has been given favourable status.

5. Any other business

LS confirmed a creeping fire started by burning litter was reported on 13/07 and extinguished by Surrey Fire Brigade.

No other matters arising the Chairman closed the meeting.

Meeting closed at 10:35am

Dates of 2022 meetings to be held at the Banstead Centre on 15 October, 2022



**Meeting 597 of the BANSTEAD COMMONS CONSERVATORS
held at The Banstead Centre on Saturday 15 October, 2022**

MINUTES – Part 1

Present: Mr. V Broad, Chairman
Mr. J Mill
Mr. D Hatcher
Cllr. N Moses
Cllr. P Harp
Mrs. L Shea, Clerk

Apologies: Mr. N Mollett, Mr. D Atkins, Mr. N Cull

Public Cllr. Nick Harrison

Gallery: Cllr. Jill Bray
Cllr. Rachel Turner
Jane Davies, Banstead Heath Consultative Group
Catalina Vassallo-Bonner, Banstead Federation
Gillian Hein, Tadworth & Walton Resident Association
Ian Mockford, Tattenham Corner & Preston RA

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Mr. N Mollett, Mr. D Atkins, Mr. N Cull

2. Minutes of last meeting

Minutes of last meeting held on 16 July were confirmed as correct. No matters arising

3. Quarterly report

- Firebreaks on all sites have been cut throughout the summer months.
- The team has continued to manage bracken and bramble on Banstead Heath and Burgh Heath.
- Fencing for the first sheep enclosure was installed and fifteen sheep, a mixed wether flock of Herdwicks and Beulah Speckled Face, have been introduced onto Park Downs.
- Eight Volunteer Livestock Monitors have been recruited and inducted to monitor the sheep daily.
- The chalk downland areas on Banstead Downs are being managed mechanically.
- Glyphosate was applied to the patches of Japanese Knotweed found on the Commons on 27/09.
- Clearance of several rough sleepers/camps on Banstead Downs.
- Signage. Fire warning signs went up on Banstead Heath and Police warning signage prohibiting motorised vehicles on Banstead Downs and Burgh Heath.
- The new tractor was delivered and we have also purchased a late model Mitsubishi L200 (using the proceeds of the sale of the Defender).
- Thank yous to be given this quarter to local volunteers, Amy Fair and John Buckland.
- Treemasters kindly cleared a fallen tree along one of our boundaries free of charge.

Unfortunately, we weren't successful in recruiting for a new Senior Ranger. We are currently advertising for the roles of Keeper and Senior Ranger. Interview date planned for 17/11.



4. Matters arising

The Rascal Club and The Millfield. Legal advice has been obtained. It is our view that the commercial access to and from The Rascal Club across Banstead Heath is considered encroachment and in breach of current legislation to protect Banstead Commons. There is adequate access into the property and two existing Public Rights Of Way (PROW) into Millfield. The BCC has prepared a response to send to the proprietor of the Millfield property KT20 7TD.

Jill Bray queried if the RBBC Legal Team has acknowledged the issue. The BCC is waiting for a response from the RBBC Legal Team.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The date for our presentation to the Overview & Scrutiny committee has been moved to Wednesday 9 November. Chairman Vic Broad and Clerk Lucy Shea will be delivering the presentation.

Burgh Heath BMX Track. Daniel Balcombe from RBBC has asked if the Council can install an access gate by Memory Cottages and manage the ride that leads from the access point by the cottages to the BMX track so that emergency services can access in the event of an emergency. Request was approved by the Conservators on the proviso that the access point and ride are not widened.

New tractor. A ceremony to mark the arrival of the new tractor and the financial contribution from the CIL Local Fund was held on Banstead Heath on Friday 14 October. The event was supported by Cllr Richard Biggs, Executive Member for Planning Policy and Place Delivery, who gave a short speech during the ceremony.

Guided Walks & public engagement

Six guided walks have been held this year, attracting over 80 participants.

Social media. Facebook has 1.2K followers, 214 followers on Twitter and 83 followers on Instagram.

The BCC is collaborating with **Surrey Hill Society** to introduce practical conservation volunteering tasks on Banstead Commons. Leatherhead Youth Project will be working with us on 26 October to 'pop' Silver Birch from a glade on Banstead Heath.

Funding update

Funding application has been submitted to the **Community Foundation** to help cover the cost of guided walks and practical volunteering on Banstead Commons.

Lower Mole application made and application refused due to the Commons being outside the catchment area. It was suggested we apply to the Downlands Trust.

CIL Local Fund the bid made on 05 September 2022 for £35,326.80 to develop Site Management Plans has been successful. Local councillors supported the bid at meetings held on 05 October and 10 October.

Discussions with RBBC regarding next year's grant are ongoing.



5. Any other business

Request was received from a resident in Ruffetts Way to remove the Cherry Laurel from the rear of their boundary at their expense. Request was approved by the Conservators.

No other matters arising the Chairman closed the meeting.

Jill Bray asked if the BCC would like to sponsor and lay a memorial wreath for Remembrance Sunday. Request supported by the Conservators.

Jane Davis queried if there were any solutions to the concerns of motorised vehicles illegally driving on Banstead Downs.

The concern was acknowledged, currently there are no resources to police the situation.

Actions:

- Clerk to share O&S documents with all borough Councillors.
- Clerk to arrange signage to be developed for the new vehicles.
- Clerk to approve works at Burgh Heath with Daniel Balcombe.

Meeting closed at 10:15am

Dates of 2023 meetings to be held at the Banstead Centre:

- Saturday 21 January, 2023
- Saturday 22 April, 2023
- Saturday 15 July, 2023
- Saturday 21 October, 2023