



Meeting 609th of the BANSTEAD COMMONS CONSERVATORS
held at
Banstead Community Centre on Saturday 4th October, 2025

MINUTES – Part 1

Present: Mr. V. Broad, Chairman (VB) Mr. B. Steele (BS)
Mr. D. Hatcher (DH) Mr. D Atkins (DA)
Mr. J Mill (JM) Ms. L Shea (LS), Clerk
Cllr. P. Harp (PH) Mrs L. Traynor (LT) – Minute Secretary

Public gallery: Rachel Turner, Charles Harvey, Jane Davis, Barbara Harrington, Marion Smith, Lisa Salmon, Cathy Poole, Ian Mockford, Andrew Gumpert, Teri Gumpert, Fintan O'Toole

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr N. Moses (NM) & Mr E. Isaacs (EI).

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on Saturday 19th July were confirmed as correct, with one minor amendment requested from the public gallery to amend item 8 (John Kerwood) changing 'effluent pipe' to 'discharge pipe'.

No matters arising.

3. Quarterly report

Management overview this quarter includes:

- September welcomed the start of mechanical grassland management on Banstead Commons. Hay baling has been re-introduced to grassland areas of Banstead Heath. If the yield proves sufficient, this will be a long-term project. Mechanical management of cut and collecting and mowing has commenced on all four sites.
- British Feral Goats have been re-introduced at Park Downs. To mark their arrival and thank/recognise the work of our volunteer checkers, we hosted a coffee and cake morning on the site which was attended by 13 volunteers.
- Staff and volunteers have continued to focus on the removal of Cherry Laurel at Withybed Corner — and the results, using combined management techniques, have been remarkable.
- A special thank you goes to our volunteers and John Darter, who generously donated his time and machinery to extract the largest root balls that could not be removed by hand.
- Our volunteer team started work at Priest Mere Pond, where the aim is to gradually reduce canopy cover by around 25–30% each year. Once water levels rise, we plan to carry out some careful dredging of accumulated detritus.



- Bell Pond and Workhouse Pond continue to be closely monitored following the clearance work carried out in September 2024. Thanks were given to Ian Mockford who is capturing fixed-point photographs to record the regeneration process.
- Tree inspections are ongoing, with a particular focus on working alongside RBBC to manage the impacts of Ash Dieback across the Commons.
- The butterfly recording season has now drawn to a close. Thanks given to volunteers who dedicate their time each year to collect this invaluable data for both the national recording scheme and our own records.
- Fly-tipping and litter continues to be a challenge on Banstead Commons. We are very grateful to the many residents who make a real difference by collecting rubbish and a special thank you also goes to the RBBC street cleansing team.
- Green waste dumping along highways and adjacent to property boundaries continues. Dumping green waste is illegal and carries the risk of introducing non-native species such as Cherry Laurel, Bamboo, and Variegated Yellow Archangel.
- We have recently seen an increase in commercial enterprises wishing to advertise on Banstead Commons. Our routine management includes the removal of unauthorised advertising on the Commons.

4. Public engagement and volunteering

4.1. Our Nature Detective Day this year was a huge success. Nine different stall holders and the Mayor of Reigate and Banstead supported the event. Over 120 people attended on the day. Special thank you was given to the volunteers who make the event possible, Peter Taylor Medhurst for supporting us to develop resources and Downlands Trust for their sponsorship. Two guided walks are planned, Fungi Foray and Winter Bird Walk.

4.2 On Tuesday 2 September, the Banstead Commons Conservators hosted a Joint Action Meeting with Surrey Police, Walton Heath Golf Club, Banstead Downs Golf Club, and local residents to address concerns about off-road vehicles on Banstead Commons and the surrounding open areas. Over 100 members of the public attended, along with three borough councillors from RBBC, two Surrey County councillors, and the MP for Sutton.

5. Fundraising and grant applications

Grant applications have been submitted to the following funds this quarter:

CIL Local Fund – Total Application £41,623

SES Water Better Futures Fund – Total Application £4,385

We are researching opportunities with:

[Green Community Grants Programme](#) | [The Wildlife Trusts](#)
[The Big Chalk Nature Recovery Fund](#).

4. Any other business

Fintan O'Toole has written to police commissioner Townsend and is awaiting a further response regarding the situation with off-road bikes on Banstead Downs. The incident of



sheep worrying was tackled by users of Banstead Downs and was a great example of community action and collaborative working.

Actions:

- Amendment to be made to July Quarterly Meeting Minutes (LT).

Meeting closed at 10.00