Meeting of the BANSTEAD COMMONS CONSULTATIVE GROUP held on
Tuesday 13th January 2026 7.30pm – 9pm
at
Banstead Community Centre (SM7 2BQ)

MINUTES

	Item
1.	Apologies for absence Alan Matthews, Wildlife Monitor (AM) Jonathan Cooper, Cycling (JC) John Peacock, Banstead Commons (JP) Gina Kitchener, Equestrian (GK) Ian Mockford (IM)
2.	Welcome and introductions Graham Cotten (GC) Lara Robinson (LR) – Professional Dog Walker Attendees: David Hatcher, Chair (DH) Miriam Maxim, Commoner (MM) Karl Tarratt, Ornithologist (KT) Peter Taylor-Medhurst, Visitor - Banstead Downs (PTM) John Darter, Banstead Heath (JD) Lucy Shea, Clerk and General Manager (LS) Lisa Traynor, Office Manager (LT) Jane Davies (JDv) Thomas Carmona (TC), Reigate and Banstead Borough Council
3.	Minutes of the last BCC Quarterly Meeting (Oct 2026). Rivulosa (not an e at the end) OBrien (change the spelling)
4.	Discussions from around the table Glades JD - Is it possible to create new glades into the area of so-called woodland where it is just dense hawthorn around the pond in the middle of The Gallops? Can we also cut the trees down on the bridleway? LS – we are only allowed to take up to 20% each year and we are continually trying to push back each year. We have cleared a huge amount of birch but we need to get a thinning licence if we take any more than 5 cubic metres.

	Regarding Dead Badgers Pond, when I first joined it was all in shade but we have opened it up and instantly frog spawn appeared. Our difficulty is we are under resourced and then within 6 weeks from now we won't be able to do anything more due to nesting birds. When we get on top of ash dieback we can release more staff time for this type of work. JD – bird life is responding well where Gary has cleared Birds KT – goldcrests and firecrests on BH have done very well. Winter thrushes, redwings and fieldfare too - we have a few flocks flying around. JD has seen the redpolls and MM has seen them on Chapel Road JDav – branches on the bridleway along the bottom of Mill Field need to be removed *Action – LS to liaise with operations* MM – Tea on the Green looks like it will be open and operating later this month. We should monitor parking and rubbish. Bins are on Mill Road and New Road. TC – asking for more bins but street cleansing are resistant. Local Government Reorganisation LS - 2 unitary councils (East and West). Commons are owned by RBBC but although they are our primary funder, they have no obligation to do this. The security of our funding is still unclear. TC – we have elections in May where residents will vote for the councillors and then they will make decision about the new authority. LS – historically whenever we have had problems with funding the voice of the local people has been a huge help to us in sustaining funding. DH – this is why individuals are pushing for a Banstead parish council so that they are more plugged in to the local needs LR – will circulate within dog walker community *Action – LS send the link out* Butterflies AM – feedback from last meeting area on sector 7 – LS confirms it has been taken back. GC – 1976 was first butterfly transect in Surrey. GC – when we cut back need to keep some of the vegetation for the green hairstreaks. A good year, common blue and small heath, chalk hill blue too. Dark green fritillary - the sightings have really improved. Violets are their foodplant. LT - Brimstone was spotted on our winter bird walk. LS – advised GC to feedback to us about suggestions for our land management to encourage butterflies GC – the training circle on Banstead Downs – less flora LS – perhaps we need to take the sward down LS – sheep grazing we are trying to use them to uplift the area where they are on the grassland. Once we achieve the uplift we will look to move them elsewhere. LS – AM has compiled a report for the transect. CHB on BD has increased over the last years JD – do we plant for butterflies? LS – no, we don't need to and on SSSI you absolutely can't. Elm cultivars are the only thing we have planted to encourage white letter hairstreak.

	JD – birds and planting. On Millfield – bird movement is along wildlife corridors across scrub. Is it worth creating scruffy areas in between? LS – we have! KT – as long as there is enough of the area they like they will move. ***Action LT – create a did you know board*** PTM – motorbikes on the Downs increased over Christmas but have reduced again now. Poo bags on the Downs were everywhere! Can we use a programme of signage to outline to riders where they may/may not go? LS – we are clearing the permissive ride ***PTM has produced some signage – LT to action*** PTM – holes in the fence by the railway track. LR – there were some rough sleepers in November near the railway line LS – please encourage the residents to report it Paws on Paths LR – Walks on Park Downs and Banstead Heath. Fly tipping on Park Downs bin bags. Deer population on park downs is booming. KT – it really is important for dogs to keep paws on paths. It is more powerful to come from the dog walker community to spread the word. LR – I am well placed to get messages out there across dog walker community JD – ground nesting bird signage. I'm happy to help put them out. Public engagement programme LT – outlined the guided walks programme agreed with DH. ***Action – LT Butterfly walk GC, DH and AM July date*** Proposed information event where wildlife monitors can share their findings. Group agree – 6-9 with stallholders before presentations from 7.30pm. ***Action – LT check the availability of space and change date / re-send invites for the next consultative group meeting***
5.	Any other business None.

Meeting of the BANSTEAD COMMONS CONSULTATIVE GROUP to be held on
Tuesday 14th April 2026 7.30pm – 9pm
at
Banstead Community Centre (SM7 2BQ)

A G E N D A

	Item	
1.	Apologies for absence John Darter – Arborist (JD) Gina Kitchener – Equestrian (GK) Attendees: David Hatcher, Chair (DH) Miriam Maxim, Commoner (MM) Karl Tarratt, Ornithologist (KT) Peter Taylor-Medhurst, Visitor - Banstead Downs (PTM) Lucy Shea, Clerk and General Manager (LS) Lisa Traynor, Office Manager (LT) Jane Davies, Equestrian (JDv) Graham Cotton, Butterfly monitoring (GC) Alan Matthews, Wildlife Monitor (AM) Mary Matthews, Wildlife Monitor (MMt) Jonathan Cooper, Cycling (JC) Ian Mockford, volunteer and drone pilot (IM) *Note: Lara Robinson – Professional Dog Walker (LR) has left the group* *Thomas Carmona – RBBC Countryside manager has left his role.*	DH
2.	Welcome and introductions Rachel Barnes, Toad Patrol WoTH (RB) Amanda Smith, Volunteer (AS) Damien Midgely, Volunteer (DM)	DH
3.	Minutes of the last BCC Quarterly Meeting (Jan 2026) • No matters arising	DH
4.	Discussions from around the table LS – The first quarter was very wet! Higher number of fallen trees. Habitat management on Banstead Downs – creating succession and improve biodiversity value. Invasive species removal – Cherry laurel at Withybed corner. A significant achievement as we expected this to take approx. 10 years, but we think we will be able to eradicate CL in 3 years within this area! We couldn't have done this without our volunteers and JD volunteering his time, expertise and machinery to remove huge root balls.	DH

	Bridleway 87 and Bridleway 3 have been taken back by flailing and with the removal of small trees. Managing ash dieback – 5 felling licences applied for and approved, and priority given to dead and dangerous trees. We are working with RBBC to tackle ash dieback. Downlands grazing – livestock moved twice. Hay baled Banstead Heath. AS – tent spotted on Banstead Downs. LS – report to enquiries and provide a what3words. PTM – Banstead Downs sheep pen has been erected with incredible speed! Continuing to encourage dog walkers via the WhatsApp group and local community to remove their dog poo. LS – sheep moving on Thursday. Signage for horse riders on the Downs will be going up next week. PTM will be assisting LS with the production of the flipbook version of the annual report. – Thank you Peter. DH – the exhibition board that PTM produced for us was the centre of attention at the Surrey Recorders' meeting! Thank you Peter! MM – pathways being created in area towards lower Kingswood parallel to the A217. Possibly being created by users of the stables? One of them also has a den. ***Action – LS to visit the area and liaise with operations team.*** GC – scrub clearance at the top of the hill? LS – plans to take the whole pocket of scrub out following a meeting with Natural England. Ash trees on the chalk are uprooting even those classed as 2/3 so we had to remove five trees on the opposite side of the A217 where the butterfly transect begins. JDv – There are fewer horses on the Heath than there used to be. The only stables in the area is along Ebbisham Lane otherwise it is likely they are private owners/riders. Information on the history of The Gallops being used by racing trainers. ***Action - LT to email JDv.*** JC – Nature detective day query LS – we have had to postpone NDD this year due to statutory priorities such as the recent large scale compliance review but we hope to reinstate this event next year. MMt – butterfly transect. The elms that we planted (foodplant of white letter hairstreak) are doing well! AM – we have been involved in toad patrol this year with RB. KT – Redpoll spotted and they seemed to be paired up so perhaps they've decided to stay local. Firecrests have done very well this year. LS – stonechats nesting on WHGC RB – Toad Patrol manager – At Mere Pond WoTH every Feb (this year 3 weeks early) they start to migrate, triggered by the rise in temperature. They move en masse across 5 weeks. Toad patrol is registered with Frog Life and we collect data for them. Toads are a priority species due to their rapid decline. Cars are their main threat so we pick up the toads and transport them across the road. Our volunteer number has grown due to increased publicity. 3000 toads and 2000 frogs in 2025. Volunteers work in shifts across the entire night, all the way up until 1am!	

	KT – this has been a huge undertaking from RB this year. LS – this is a great opportunity to engage young people because they can touch the toads. RB – I have delivered talks in local primary schools and the children were fascinated! IM is our Burgh Heath rep along with our drone pilot. Our thanks to him for donning waders and clearing debris from BH pond. LT – web enquiry about the 'Faraway tree' – ***Action - LT to liaise with MM*** Complaint about horse riders not sticking to bridleways on Banstead Heath. ***Action – LS & operations team to improve signage*** Oak processionary Moth ***Action – LT to research the Walton primary school – check their risk assessment includes OPM and children being under the trees.***	
5.	Any other business JDv – bushes along Chapel road in Tadworth have grown a great deal and are rather out of control. ***Action – LS to add this to the list of works for September following bird nesting season.*** Meeting closed 20:44	DH

Meeting of the BANSTEAD COMMONS CONSULTATIVE GROUP to be held on
Tuesday 14th July 2026 7.30pm – 9pm
at
Banstead Community Centre (SM7 2BQ)

MINUTES

	Item	
1.	Apologies for absence Graham Cotten, Butterfly monitoring (GC) Karl Tarratt, Ornithologist (KT) Mary Matthews, Wildlife Monitor (MMt) Attendees: David Hatcher, Chair (DH) Miriam Maxim, Commoner (MM) Peter Taylor-Medhurst, Visitor - Banstead Downs (PTM) Lucy Shea, Clerk and General Manager (LS) Lisa Traynor, BCC Office Manager (LT) Jane Davies, Equestrian (JDv) Alan Matthews, Wildlife Monitor (AM) Jonathan Cooper, Cycling (JC) Ian Mockford, volunteer and drone pilot (IM) John Darter, Arborist (JD) Rachel Barnes, Conservator & Toad Patrol WoTH (RB) Amanda Smith, Volunteer (AS) Absent Damien Midgely, Volunteer (DM) Gina Kitchener – Equestrian (GK)	DH
2.	Welcome and introductions	DH
3.	Minutes of the last BCCG Quarterly Meeting (Apr 2026) Not part of the last QM but some important news to share. RBBC have signed off on a funding agreement for 4 years providing security during the transition period to the unitary council.	DH
4.	Discussions from around the table JD – what are the BCC's provisions for incursions? LS - Bunds are everywhere and all our entrances have chicanes, so access is extremely difficult. We recently replaced a bund on Mill Road that had lapsed. Breeding red kites (2 young) and woodlarks on Banstead Heath. LS – we have ceased all bracken management as a result. But we need to conduct surveys for the areas that are earmarked for bracken management next near if anyone would be keen to help with this?	DH

	Action – members who would be interested to help with this please let LT know. PTM – what are the rules on BBQ's on the commons? DH – it is illegal on the Commons. It is against our byelaws. MM – I have seen individuals turning up on Mill Road with a full-sized Weber BBQ. PTM – we do need signage on Banstead Downs for horse riding. There are some young riders being quite unpleasant when being challenged. *Action – LS to erect signage for the Summer months.* *Action – LS contact SCC to update all our finger posts.* LS – CIL grant has enabled us to install a new office and toilet which is going to make a huge difference to our operations team. We will shortly be recruiting for a new keeper following a retirement within the staff team. AS – I recently noticed young people camping on the Downs. If we see them making a fire, what should we do? LS – call the fire brigade. Especially at this time of year and with the current weather conditions, they will come out. Provide a w3w. AS – off-road bikes have reappeared on the Downs, what do we do? LS – call the police phoning 999. The police need the call stats to be able to allocate resources so always call. It comes under Surrey Police (not the Met). They will attend the scene if they have the resource, but they do have to prioritise. They can also send PCSO's to patrol more regularly. MM – what happens with ownership of the commons when the unitary council becomes active? LS – we will transfer to ESC MM – will they notify the commoners? *Action – LS to check the legal obligation of the council to contact the commoners.* JDv – the bushes in Chapel Road need to be cut back. *Action – LS & BCC operations to cut back* RB – where are we with the toad fencing? LS – we can put temporary fencing up but RB to find out from Surrey Highways what H&S mitigations would be put in place. RB – the toad fencing serves to corral the toads which is helpful for the volunteers who patrol very late at night and in heavy rainfall. LS – we support this and will make sure it happens but perhaps it will only be in sections. JC – worth checking in with WH Primary about tree safety in light of some trees that have come down locally in the high winds and as a result of the dry weather. *Action – LS/LT to follow this up* *Action – LS bike ramps notices/signage for H&S*	
5.	Any other business JDv – Chinthurst school /Tower road junction needs strimming to enhance vision for drivers. LT - Thank you to MM who promoted BCC at her open garden event for the Kingswood Walton & Tadworth Horticultural Society. Not only was she able to fundraise for us at this event but also she took the time to	DH

	promote our work using our information board and by distributing leaflets. Thank you. RB – do we ever put out water for wildlife? No we do not interfere.	

Meeting of the BANSTEAD COMMONS CONSULTATIVE GROUP to be held on
Tuesday 6th Oct 2026 7.30pm – 9pm
at
Banstead Community Centre (SM7 2BQ)

M I N U T E S

	Item	
1.	Apologies for absence Graham Cotten, Butterfly monitoring (GC) David Hatcher, Chair (DH) Ian Mockford, volunteer and drone pilot (IM) Jonathan Cooper, Cycling (JC) Attendees: Miriam Maxim, Commoner (MM) Peter Taylor-Medhurst, Visitor - Banstead Downs (PTM) Lucy Shea, Clerk and General Manager (LS) Lisa Traynor, BCC Office Manager (LT) Karl Tarratt, Ornithologist (KT) Jane Davies, Equestrian (JDv) John Darter, Arborist (JD) Gina Kitchener – Equestrian (GK) Rachel Barnes, Conservator & Toad Patrol WoTH (RB) Amanda Smith, Volunteer (AS) Absent Damien Midgely, Volunteer (DM) Mary Matthews, Wildlife Monitor (MMt) Alan Matthews, Wildlife Monitor (AM)	LS
2.	Welcome We are hoping to connect with Maia Wellbelove – RBBC Countryside Officer (MW)	LS
3.	Minutes of the last BCC Quarterly Meeting (July 2026) Members report that Horse riding signage has helped, particularly on Banstead Downs We have contacted the council to query ESC making contact with Commoners and we are awaiting a response. Cutting back near Chapel Road has happened but more to be done with our volunteer work party in November.	LS
4.	Matters Arising	

	Discussed the removal of silt from Chapel Road Pond – JD offered to bring in machinery to conduct dredging whilst it is dry. *Action: LS to arrange a suitable day with JD to carry out the work* JD – There are around 5 cherry laurels the area of woodland between Chapel Road and hedge corner. LS – the volunteer team are doing so well clearing Withybed corner but we need to concentrate their work in areas where there's lots to do in a small space. The cherry laurel that is spread further apart will be done by the staff team.	
5.	Discussions from around the table LS shared the Quarterly Report from the BCC Quarterly Meeting on 3.10.26 KT – lots of stonechats passing through Surrey. Success with Red Kite nesting on Banstead Heath – we counted 2 chicks. LS managed to take a photo of the parent kites doing a food pass in flight to the fledglings! RB – shared details of the toad fencing that we are planning from Mere pond in Walton-on-the-Hill to support the collection of amphibians during Toad Patrol season. In a 5 week season this year we took 8000 amphibians across the road. The toad patrol fencing is not only about improving success of toad collection, it supports the safety of the volunteers who conduct the patrols. Delivery of 20 pallets of fencing likely to be delivered on Friday 30 October – we will need some help with offloading. Fence installation is scheduled for 6/9/10/11 November - we will also be appealing for volunteers for help with installation. LS - Toads are in rapid decline due to habitat fragmentation so this work is so important. JD – reports GCN in his pond at home. LS shared details about ARC and the importance of recording sightings Report your sightings! | Amphibian and Reptile Conservation JD – raised the presence of ivy on trees. LS – only time we cut ivy is on trees along highways to enable us to do tree inspections. KT – commented that the ivy is vital for birds, particularly in the winter. MM – raised the issue of multiple desire lines appearing on Banstead Heath. LS – we plan to create dead hedges to prevent desire lines from crossing glades, particularly those where we have reptiles.	LS

	PTM – query birch tree and gorse presence around the grazing sheep enclosure on Banstead Downs. LS – The sheep keep a low sward on the chalk grassland but they don't touch the woody scrub so we will be using the machines. On 28 October we will have 'robomower' and Leatherhead Youth Project coming out to help with clearance SB1 application with NE can help us to fund scrub removal.	
6.	Any other business JDv – not directly related to Banstead Commons but the owner of the field in Ebbisham Lane is cutting down huge trees in preparation for planning permission. RB - There is due to be a scoping consultation for residents to share their thoughts very soon. MM – a bumper year for hummingbird hawk moths.	LS

Meeting concluded at 9pm