

# Chorleywood Parish Council: Open Spaces Committee -

Notes by GH (in attendance as a member of the public)  
of matters relevant to Chorleywood Common  
raised at the meeting on 8 March 2016

**Agenda** at <http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk/pdf/agendas/CWPC-Open-Spaces-Agenda-2016-03-08.pdf>

**Supporting papers** at <http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk/pdf/agendas/CWPC-Open-Spaces-Agenda-Committee-Reports-2016-03-08.pdf>

**Matters arising** from Minutes of meeting on 12 January.

Following previous incursions by travellers, the locks have been changed on the barrier at the Cricket Club permissive parking area; there was shortly to be a meeting with the solicitors who would act for this and other Parish Councils, as needed, in relation to travellers. The pond works had been undertaken; the new tee markers on the Golf Course were still awaited. The two new Rough Terrain Vehicles had arrived and were having trackers fitted to them. Cllr Edwards was investigating the possibility of new signage for the horse track; the Country Landowners Association would be able to advise, but the British Horse Association had indicated that they did not wish to do so, pending advice on the status of the horse track.

**Financial:** the cost of cut-and-lift was higher than projected because of the amount of grass that had grown; payment was per bale removed. There had also been a problem, now resolved, with the cattle's collars at the time of the Spring grazing period.

**Open Spaces Officers' Report:** three quotations had been received for necessary tree works and surveys identified in the Report, all from reputable contractors; the Committee decided to accept the cheapest.

The parking enforcement contract at the Memorial Hall and Shepherd's Bridge would shortly be due for renewal, and the Committee decided to continue it at the cost quoted (£1,550 + VAT), and to ask the Golf Club to contribute as before. The contract now includes the area by the Old Shepherd pub: residents in that area, who are entitled to easements, will be given 'passes' exempting them from having to display tickets.

*[The Report contains considerable detail of the management of the Common and of the plant species identified; the following seems of particular interest.]* A number of orchids, probably Bee Orchids, have been identified in Larks Meadow and on the chalk slope between Larks Meadow and the Railway Field. However 12 of them were killed at the end of February by trampling by horses being ridden off the horse track, an activity which, if continued, could imperil the species on the Common: the police have been informed and a press release sent to the Watford Observer. *[Note: a horse rider has suggested that the Council's photo at <http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk/pdf/Press-Release-Damage-Caused-to-Rare-Orchids-on-Chorleywood-Common-8thMar16.pdf>*

*shows the hoofprint of a cow, not a horse: anyone who looks at that picture will be able to form an opinion on this issue.]* It was also considered that the British Horse Society and Natural England should be consulted.

Part of the tree works adjacent to the railway line and near the badger sett have been left over for completion after the badgers have finished breeding.

‘Park run’ will not now happen on the Common: it proved not to be practicable to lay out an acceptable route consistently with Stewardship and other constraints. Cllr Green expressed relief that there would not be any need for increased maintenance of areas used for running.

Quotations had been received for replacing the barriers at the Cricket Club and Lorry parking areas, with posts set in metal sleeves as a precaution against rot, and with the padlocks protected against bolt cutters; each barrier will be fabricated off-site and installation will take less than a day. The Committee decided to accept the cheaper quotation.

**Four Year Vision:** following discussion, it was concluded that the security of the Common, the surfaces of the parking areas, signage and the proposed Nature Trail were all important. As to security at the entrance to Christ Church, there appeared to be a problem with the width, and the consequent weight, of any barrier; it was decided to ask the contractors for the other barriers for thoughts on how that might be dealt with. In relation to the parking area surfaces, the Clerk had found details of a company which scrapes and breaks up the top 4 inches, mixes it with a natural cement (made of lime and shell), spreads and compacts it and floods it with water, which causes it to set hard: it was decided to investigate further and to ask the Open Spaces Society if such treatment might be appropriate. *[Note: would a section 38 application be required: ‘surfacing’?]* The Clerk’s preliminary investigation of the possible Nature Trail should continue; Community Infrastructure Levy funds would be allocated to this project.

**Website:** Cllr White summarised her thoughts on the Parish Council website generally: she indicated that navigation about the site could be improved and information made more accessible. Specifically in connection with Open Spaces Committee’s remit, she thought that the Common could be better promoted, and publicity given to the awards it has received. The Clerk indicated that there is scope for educating the community about the Common; possibilities would include a ‘Children’s page’, a ‘Ranger’s blog’ and greater use of the fixed point photography.

**Public Spaces Protection Order** proposed to be made by TRDC. The District Council had made an Order, to be effective from 1 April 2016, making it an offence, among other things, for someone in control of a dog not to pick up after it; not to put the dog on a lead if required to do so by an authorised officer; or to have control of more than four dogs at a time. The agreement of Chorleywood Parish Council was required if the Order was to extend to the Council’s land, in particular the Common. GH had indicated *[by email to the Clerk and to the Chairs of the Council and of Open Spaces]* that FoCC were in principle in favour of bringing dogs under control in these ways, but that there might be technical difficulties with the precise wording of the Order as reproduced in

the Agenda papers. Cllr Trevett explained that the District Council's solicitor had advised that the Order was satisfactory, and the Committee decided to recommend to Full Council that it should be adopted, and to ask the Clerk to write to the District Council's solicitor to explain the concerns that had been raised. In order to implement the Order, it was also recommended that the Rangers and the Clerk should be trained as Authorised Officers to issue fixed penalty notices under the Order (and that the Rangers should receive a salary increment accordingly). It was considered that when the Order came into force, enforcement should be polite but firm, and initially any breaches should be dealt with by warnings rather than penalties. *[Note: (1) Full Council on 19 April resolved to adopt the Order in relation to the Common, Grovewood and the Allotments, and (2) the Order as made by TRDC is on that Council's website, and is in terms which deal with the possible technical difficulties GH had raised in relation to the version included in the Open Spaces Committee's Agenda papers.]*

**GH**  
*(with apologies for delay)*