

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 17 May 2016**

Agenda at <http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk/pdf/agendas/CWPC-Open-Spaces-Agenda-2016-05-17.pdf>

Supporting papers at <http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk/pdf/agendas/CWPC-Open-Spaces-Agenda-Committee-Reports-2016-05-17.pdf>

Matters arising from Minutes of previous meeting 8 March 2016 - the PSPO: the Clerk reported that TRDC has accepted that the Common will be subject to the Order, but the necessary signs have not yet been received and the fixed penalty notices were initially prepared in the wrong form, so enforcement will start one month from when the correct documentation is in place. The rules will be the same on both sides of the A404.

Open Spaces Officers' Report: *[full text in Agenda papers]*

Request for permission to run fitness classes on the Common (additional to that already existing), 6-7 a.m. on weekdays and 7-8 a.m. at weekends: *request granted* on usual terms as to payment (£12.25 per hour), insurance &c; the proposal is to use part of the cricket outfield, and it was suggested that consideration be given to requiring a deposit or bond against possible damage to the ground. The Cricket Club will be informed as a matter of courtesy, and the Ranger will meet the applicant to point out the area which can be used (and the area of Stewardship land which cannot).

Common Management Plan Review 2017: the Committee *agreed* to ask Countryside Management Service to liaise with the Ranger - the Parish is entitled to 3 days of CMS time without payment and there is £800 available in the budget, and the Clerk advised that this should be enough. One purpose of revising the Management Plan will be to incorporate in one document the various objectives in the existing Plan and the separate Stewardship Agreement; the new Plan will provide a baseline for measuring progress in future years in various aspects of the management of the Common. CMS's advice will be needed in connection with the proposal for a further pond (between Darvells Pond and the bund); and it will be necessary to establish the relative importance of the projects in the Plan.

Parish Paths leaflet: there has been extensive work on the signage of the footpaths in the parish; this is now complete, and an application has been made to the Parish Paths Partnership (Herts CC) for grant funding for a Parish Paths Leaflet - £950 will be available. The Committee *agreed* to convene a meeting with relevant community groups (e.g. FoCC, Friends of Chorleywood House Estate, Friends of Carpenters Wood) with a view to preparing a leaflet (to include text and photographs on places of interest); Cllrs Edwards and Watkins volunteered to join in the process, and CMS will also be consulted.

The office has received reports of a blue coloured bee in the grassland by the Shepherds Bridge parking area; residents are asked to report any further sightings to the office or the Rangers. The Common Ranger and FoCC have also begun recording butterfly sightings.

The silt from dredging Top Common Pond is now dry enough for removal and quotes are being sought; it is hoped that the water in the pond will clear as water plants re-establish themselves. All the other ponds contain some or all of frogspawn, toadspawn, and Great Crested and other newts' eggs [*details on page 4 of the report*].

Planning has started for a Commons Day in early September.

Four Year Vision: (1) the Committee *agreed* to give the **Nature Trail** project high priority. It was noted that Community Infrastructure Levy money can be used for this purpose and the Full Council has already resolved to do so; further money may be available from the funds raised by supermarkets charging 5p per carrier bag. Money will have to be spent on signage (similar to the existing lecterns), chainsaw sculptures and QR codes; other elements of the necessary work will be capable of being done 'in-house'. The officers will put together proposals to be considered at the next meeting; it may be possible to carry out the project in stages, as resources permit, and perhaps to have part of the Trail in place for the Commons Day.

(2) **Common Security:** arrangements are in hand for replacement barriers at the Cricket Club and Lorry parking areas. The proposal for a similar barrier at Christchurch faces difficulty from the width of the access and the resulting weight of the barrier arm, and the need to set it back from the A404 so that large vehicles do not obstruct traffic on the road while waiting for the barrier to be opened to let them in.

(3) **Surfacing parking areas:** the company previously identified [*see previous notes*] will be asked to inspect the parking areas and give an estimate. The system used creates a surface which is hardened rather than eroded by water; it is hoped that it will be possible to look at an example, and if the proposal is adopted, one parking area will be done at a time.

Surveys of plants and animals are an ongoing project. The Common Ranger will speak to Brenda Harold about the possibility of doing a survey of the chalk grassland; the budget includes some money for surveys.

Request from the Beavers to use the Common to do a cycling badge: permission for a similar event had been granted in September 2014. However, the present proposal included a request for the use of the horse track, and the Ranger pointed out that this crosses 'Stewardship' land. Cycling on the Common is allowed only with special permission from the Council, and the Committee considered that allowing the Beavers' request would send mixed messages to them and the rest of the community. After discussion, the Committee *decided* to offer the use of the car park at Christchurch but, with regret, not the Common; the Clerk will send a letter explaining the reasons for the refusal.

GH