

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 22 November 2016**

Agenda at <http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk/pdf/agendas/CWPC-Open-Spaces-Agenda-2016-11-22.pdf>

Supporting papers at <http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk/pdf/agendas/CWPC-Open-Spaces-Agenda-Committee-Reports-2016-11-22.pdf>

Open Spaces Officers' Report. New, larger, dog bins have been installed at the Memorial Hall and Shepherd's Bridge parking areas: no overflows have been noticed since, and the Ranger has received positive feedback. The Office is obtaining prices for further waste bins and recycling bins. Heavy rain on 15 September put the 'virtual fence' around the grazing area out of action; and part of the cable has also been pulled up and broken: the cattle therefore had to leave on 23 September, earlier than was planned; the grazing area has had a cut-and-lift, as well as other parts of the Common. A blocked drain at Christchurch car park has been cleared. The Ranger has harvested heather seed for seeding further areas in the heathland restoration project. The Officers and Rangers have received the required identity cards and the Public Space Protection Order can be enforced.

Fees for licences to use the Common. There are two regular licensed users of the Common, who are charged £12.25 an hour; the Committee decided to increase that to £12.50 an hour, an increase of approximately 2%. The Ranger commented that most of the commercial dog walkers use the Chorleywood House Estate rather than the Common.

Common winter work 2016-17. The Ranger had identified the work described in the Agenda papers [*copy attached to this note*] to be undertaken over the winter as permitted by the weather and the state of the ground; in particular, the Stewardship Agreement calls for further felling of trees in the May Bushes area (before the birds' nesting season), and the timber and branches may well have to be stacked for a period until the ground is dry enough for the tractor to get in and remove them - it is hoped this will be before the beginning of summer. Jobs identified as possibly suitable for volunteers are coppicing the hazels and other bushes on the bank between Larks Meadow and the lower chalk meadow and using the arisings to dead-hedge the boundary of the Railway Field, [*one session of this work took place on 24 November,*] and removing the fish from Darvells Pond [*this might be better done when the weather is warmer; perhaps it might be combined with a children's Pond Dipping event?*]; there are also fish in Christchurch pond and Top Common Pond South.

Golf Club winter work. The Clerk explained that the Council authorises work on the

Golf Course, but the Golf Club pays for it. The Committee agreed the Club's requests for tree work at the fifth tee, the sixth fairway and the seventh green, to increase the access of light and air and improve visibility. The Club also wished to remove gorse near the ninth tee; after discussion the Committee decided to start by permitting it to be reduced by a third, with a review of the position next year.

Summer Event - Village Day and Commons Day. [*FoCC Committee made written representations to the members of Open Spaces Committee before the meeting.*] Cllr Edwards suggested that having two events was too onerous, and it would be appropriate to include in Village Day the best elements of Commons Day. The Clerk indicated that the staff were already fully occupied on Village Day and it would not be practicable to include a film showing in the evening. After a full discussion, the Committee concluded that it would be desirable, if possible, to include 'country crafts' such as blacksmithing, wood turning, chainsaw carving, and the 'birds of prey' display which was popular at Commons Day; some of those would need payment to attend and a budget of £2500 was suggested; any film show should be a separate event; it would not be practicable to combine a 'fun run' with Village Day; the Dog Show and a Tug of War would be worthwhile attractions and the 'cake off' might also be promoted; the stalls could be zoned into, for example, environmental, local organisations, and food outlets. An attempt could be made to increase the variety of food stalls. Charges for a single pitch should be increased to £35 for businesses and £85 for commercial food operations; charities should remain at £15. The Clerk would investigate the possibility, and cost, of bringing in an outside contractor to organise car parking. The Committee decided to recommend to Full Council the revised plan for Village Day; Cllr Edwards as Chairman of Open Spaces agreed to act as lead liaison councillor; Village Day 2017 will be on **8 July**.

Four Year Vision. Signage and Horse Track: the Clerk reported that she was in correspondence with the solicitor acting for the British Horse Society, and would refer him to the relevant legislation; she had also identified relevant correspondence with Three Rivers at the time of the 1995 revision of the Byelaws. **Permissive Parking Areas:** the present plan is for the access slopes at the Memorial Hall parking area to be repaired when Hertfordshire Highways does work on that section of Common Road, expected to be during the Spring half-term holiday; the Clerk is also still trying to make progress with the contractor whose product is thought to be suitable for the permissive areas. **Nature Trail:** Natural England's Landscape Officer was supportive of the Nature Trail project; the proposal would now be sent to the Planning Inspectorate (with a copy of the Scheme of Regulation for the Common) to find out whether an application under Commons Act 2006 section 38 will be required for any of the elements of the Trail. The Council has received £17,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy money with a further £14,000 to come in April 2017, which will fund a significant part of the project.

GH