

Yateley Common Management Committee Notes

Wednesday 3rd July 2024 – 7.00pm Oak Room, Yateley Town Council

Present: Cllr Bob Harward (Chair YTC.) Nicki Paton (HCC) Jean Cheadle (HCC) Mark Crisp (RSPB) Cllr Tim Davies (HCC) Maureen Daws (Admin Officer YTC)	In Attendance: 4members of the public Chris Gazzard (Manager BAL) and 1 team member Apologies: David Boddy (HIWWT) Cllr Pam Phelps-Jones (YTC) Cllr Adrian Collett (HCC)
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1.	Apologies & Welcome - Apologies received from David Boddy, Cllr Collett and Cllr Phelps-Jones - Those present were welcomed by Cllr Bob Harward and the meeting was opened at 7.05pm (to allow people to park as car park was busy)
2.	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest
3.	Notes from previous meeting were accepted as correct Matters Arising:- none Updates – Blackbushe Airport Chris Gazzard had sent a report prior to the meeting, but re-iterated that the application to deregister the common land had now gone back to the Planning Inspectorate and that he is waiting for a date for either a hearing or a public enquiry . From looking at other similar cases, he expects this to be around Jan 2025.
4.	Questions from Local Residents Question – Who will look after the land included in the Cottage Farm Land swap? Chris Gazzard said that the boundary will need to be clarified as there is a gap between fencing and trees, but then if the land is owned by BAL, they will be responsible, and if owned by HCC, then the rangers will be responsible. Nicky confirmed that are no maintenance plans at the moment, other than to clear access points to join areas together, possibly some scrub removal will be needed. Question – Ditch clearance around The Flats was queried. Nicky confirmed that the area was looked at regularly and kept clear of vegetation. Question – Motorbikes on common. It was again confirmed that any incidences should be reported directly to the police. Question – Welsh Drive, access across British Car Auctions site. Chris Gazzard confirmed that Hampshire are trying to arrange a meeting with BAL and BCA, but that BCA have not yet provided any available dates. <i>Is it a criminal offence to close a Right of Way?</i> Gov.uk website says it is a criminal offence.
5.	Site Managers report - The report had been sent out prior to the meeting, so Nicki Paton briefly highlighted a few items - Rights of way diversion routes are being opened up. A little bit of cutting away still to be done and some bollards and way markers to be put in at bridleway crossing points. This should all be completed by the end of July. - Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) The next meeting report is likely to give more information. Bracken management – The herbicide previously used is no longer available so Rangers are looking at other methods to control the bracken. - Archaeology – Flooding by Globe Farm Lane, the pipe gets blocked, which is not HCC responsibility, but the rangers are trying to hold the water back in the area to rewet the land, rather than flooding through the pipe.

	• Cllr Davies asked about using ground penetrating radar to help track old workings in the area. Nicki advised that there are old records available that show where most of the works are situated.
6.	HIWWT report • The report had been circulated prior to the meeting. There was a brief discussion about scrub clearance and maintenance of the area , suggestion of cattle grazing, but concern about associated fencing issues.
7.	RSPB Felling Proposal Report • This report had also been circulated prior to the meeting. Mark reported that information sessions will be held to explain the reasons for felling the trees, along with timescales. The main aim is to open up the area to encourage the heather, but any trees of ecological importance will be left. • Some scrubby trees will be left at the edge to join areas together. Gorse will be left. • Work on the firebreak has been started. • Volunteers will carry out Orchid and Butterly audits. • Cllr Davies asked if the felled trees are sold for timber. Mark confirmed that this income is helpful against the charge for removing any brush from site. Some small chipping piles are left at the edges for bugs etc. • There was mention that pigs might eat bracken rhizomes. Cllr Davies asked if smooth snakes have been seen in the area. Neither the RSPB or Rangers have seen any.
8.	Any Other Business • Cllr Davies asked if the next agenda could include an item on SIMS metals. Cllr Harward advised that Hart District Council will be arranging a meeting of the Blackbushe Metals Consultative Committee. • Can a day time winter walk be arranged before the next meeting? Nicki suggested including the old runways areas with Mark.
9.	Next Meeting Date: Wednesday 6th November 2024 at the Oak Room, Yateley Town Council Wednesday 5th March 2025 Wednesday 2nd July 2025

The meeting closed at 20.10hrs