

Nomansland Common Joint Management Committee**Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday 14 April, 19.30h, No 4**

Held at the Memorial Hall, Wheathampstead

Present	Councillors	John Newton-Davies	Chairman
		David Johnston	
		Gill Clark	Vice Chairman
		Claudio Duran	
		Sandra Wood	
	Officers	Nick Sherriff	Parks & Green Spaces Officer
		Charlotte Hawkins	Countryside Ranger
	Administrator	Julia Warren	Clerk to Wheathampstead Parish Council
		Press	0
		Public	4

71-16 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Judy Shardlow.

72-16 Specific Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Councillor Newton-Davies declared an interest as a member of Heartwood Forest, Councillor Johnston as member of the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and that he was acquainted with Mr Stocker (Minute 76-16).

73-16 Minutes of Committee meeting of 14 January 2016

The Chairman proposed and it was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2016 be approved.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2016 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

74-16 Parks & Open Spaces Officer's Progress Report

Nick Sherriff reported that officers had been informed that on a number of occasions horses had been galloping across the southern meadow. This had also caused damage to the flying strip. Officers have contacted the local stables. The British Horse Society representative was asked to make riders aware of the flying strip not least as aircraft may startle horses.

In respect of continuing hedge line restoration work: the brash from the hedge line and dell area had been chipped and a further 100m. will be undertaken next winter. Stump grinding will be carried out

over the summer.

SADC officers appointed a local tree contractor to carry out 3 days of dead wood removal on trees overhanging the main footpaths, making safe the group of leaning cherries, and also spent time in the sycamore coppice area, creating eco-piles and opening up the width of informal paths

The date of the annual inspection of Bricket Wood Common by the Bricket Wood Management Committee was confirmed as Tuesday 28 June, 18.30h to start from the Parish Centre car park. Nomansland Management Committee members were invited to attend and see grazing in action. A bluebell walk was scheduled for 24 April.

New byelaw signs were scheduled for installation by the end of April, and parking officers had recently installed a car park sign at Ferrers Lane car park. The request that this include Wheathampstead and Sandridge Parish Council crests was made; and also, if so minded, that of the Althorp Estate.

Officers had instructed a contractor to repair the pothole on the tarmac at the entrance of the Ferrers Lane car park.

It was reported that officers would shortly be sending out a specification for works for the creation of a formalised car park adjacent to West End Farm. The local farmer had been contacted regarding their needs and access arrangements by SADC officers and by the Chairman and Clerk to Wheathampstead Parish Council. A Secretary of State application would have to be made as there will be a hard surface and fencing element to the project.

In relation to winter forestry work officers would be contacting stakeholders of the Common and also specialised forestry contractors to consult on and organise the work that would be carried out this winter in line with the Forestry Commission felling licence.

Officers had been contacted by local residents regarding two people camping in the dell area of the common, the police had been made aware and SADC officers had visited the site on a number of occasions in order to tell the people that camping is prohibited on the Common. (They had not made contact at time of writing)

Resolved To note the report

75-16

Countryside Ranger Progress Report

It was reported that John O'Conner had cut the eco tones per the biennial programme. The Ranger was attempting to contain birch and elder invasion in the rabbit exclusion area. Brash cutting had flushed out over a hundred rabbits over a couple of days.

Two incidents of fly tipping had been reported, and a dog and child incident swiftly managed by the police.

A guided walk of the common was planned for 5 June, old photos of the area were requested to help advertise and inform it.

A new bolt was required for the bollard at West End Farm which was reported as stiffly embedded into its socket.

Resolved **To note the report.**

76-16 **Items raised by Committee Members**

Evidencing the Puddingstone

Further to Minute 55-15 and 69-16 The Chairman proposed, and wording for the bench and puddingstone were agreed and would be circulated. It was further agreed that the Cricket Club be asked to keep the grass cut around the puddingstone, bench and marker.

Nomansland Nature Quest

It was reported that Beech Hyde (Wheathampstead) and three Schools in Sandridge Parish had booked to participate in the Nomansland Nature Quest in June. Further approaches to be made to St Helens and Wheatfields Junior schools.

Upgrade of Links of Footpaths 32 and 48a

It was noted that Wheathampstead Parish Council had applied for P3 funding for a feasibility study to link the footpaths over Nomansland. The resultant report would be brought to the Nomansland Joint Committee in due course.

Amwell permissive bridleway

It was reported that the current owners of Amwell Farm were seeking permission to install a permissive bridleway and upgrade the footpath on their land. The concerns of local residents were circulated and noted. Herts County Council Rights of Way department was supportive of the idea as was the local access forum. It was noted that a number of people would address the Parish Council on this matter on 28 April.

Ragwort

It was noted that ragwort was poisonous if ingested by horses. In 2015 the ranger had secured the assistance of the probation services to pull this invasive weed. It needed to be removed prior to seeding. The hope was that the horse riding community would assist.

Resolved **1 That the Cricket Club be asked to maintain the grass around the semi-circular teak bench and puddingstone.**
2 To approve the wording for the bench and puddingstone.
3 To note the enthusiasm for Nomansland Nature Quest and encourage further schools' involvement.
4 To note the application for funding of a feasibility study to link footpaths 32 and 48a. To note the request for a permissive

