

HENFIELD COMMONS JOINT COMMITTEE MINUTES 10/03/2025

Members: Cllrs. Gill Perry (GP) (chair), Roger Noel (RN), Josh Potts (JP), Andrea May (AM)
Tony Baker (TB), Eddie Colgate (EC), John Willis (JW) (non-voting members)

Officers: Pete Crawford (PC), Malin Andersson (MA), Jake Everitt (JE) Neal Matheson (NE)

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS: None

2. APOLOGIES: Pete Crawford

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 10/03/25:
Circulated with these minutes for confirmation.

4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Local Authority devolution. Local Parishes including Henfield are meeting with the Leader and CEO of HDC next week to discuss.

Henfield Nature – a new umbrella partnership that include several local groups working together for nature. Will meet regularly and is advertised locally.

5. MATTERS ARISING

No new voting members put forward from Parish – waiting until after May 25.

6. OPEN FORUM

Martin from cricket club attended to request some trees are cut back on Henfield Common around the Cricket pitch, as they impede use of cricket equipment. NM will look at trees and produce a plan for reducing the trees, as necessary. Ideally these need to be cut back before the cricket season, but contractors will need to check for breeding birds before conducting any works, as we are now in the bird nesting season.

7. TANYARD

Hedges

Hedgelaying completed as planned, new hedging planted near the barn with the help of HCV. Residents of Chestnut End have been complimentary regarding works.

It was noted that complaints had been received by Parish from residents that the works were not satisfactory and that a dead fox had been found. Officers confirmed no poison has been used on site and the brash following hedgelaying and scrub clearance has been removed.

Barn use

HDC property has agreed that the Tanyard barn can be use by the HCV as a tool store if Parish have no objections. Parish holds the key.

Scouts and wildlife improvements

MA and JE suggest the local Scouts apply for a Wilder Horsham grant for hedgelaying and meadow management on their property. GP to speak to David Malkin and Chris Simmonds.

Scouts could help improve the Open Access area of the Tanyard, by helping to build a hibernaculum and bug hotel near the wooded bit at the back.

Management Plan

Kate Ryland to complete a management plan for the Tanyard. Libby Morris has records – MA to contact.

Tanyard gates and access issues

Some of the gates in the Tanyard are at end of life and need replacing.

JW said there is a metal gate behind the barn, which may be of use.

The metal gate into the Tanyard no public access area is broken, but it is an attractive gate. MA to contact blacksmith to see if it can be repaired.

JP to check with Mike Morgan if access is possible for contractor access (tractor/livestock) from Cagefoot Lane. We would like to replace top gate with vehicle access, as the Chestnut End access is only good when dry, which is not very often, and not at the right time of year for tree works etc.

Garden & Arts

Paths to be mowed in preparation for garden and arts event on 7-8 June 2025. Path to middle pond to be added for pond dipping. MA to liaise with Works Officers regarding mowing.

NNIS

Bamboo encroaching on Tanyard from Mr Streets property. HDC to contact Mr Street regarding treating this bamboo. Every time it is cut it send out more shoots and spreads.

Actions:

JP to phone Mr Street regarding the Tanyard, as he had had a call, but message not clear.

MA and HCV to get a copy of the key for the barn.

GP to speak to Scouts regarding Wilder Horsham grant.

MA to contact Libby Morris regarding ecological surveys completed for the Tanyard.

MA to contact blacksmith T Miles & Son for a quote.

JP to check with Mike Morgan regarding contractor access from Cagefoot Lane.

MA to liaise with Works Officers regarding mowing for garden and arts.

HDC to contact Mr Street regarding bamboo issue.

8. HENFIELD COMMON

Ash dieback works.

Major works completed. Timber will be removed and sold by contractor to offset cost of works.

Horse barriers on causeway

No permission for WSCC for the rotten chicane barriers that were removed.

New permission can be sought, but WSCC recommend mobility kissing gates, which are costly and will not look great.

All agreed more thought needed about more suitable barriers. In the meantime, 'no horses' signs to be put up.

Henfield Village Fair

AM invited us to have stalls in the fair to promote our work on the Commons. MA to speak to Jo Nixon.

Cut and collect needs to be completed in first week of September 25, access required to set up from 11 Sep.

Swains Planning application

Nor further information regarding the progress of the application for three properties near Swains.

Circus request for 2026

James Richards Circus has requested to use Henfield Common in July 2026. It was agreed that we do not agree for a circus to use the Common in the middle of July, as we would need to mow the grasslands when they are in full flower. MA to speak to Parish regarding the possibility of the King's field as an alternative location.

Gas pipeline

Legally SGN must apply to the Planning Inspectorate to do works on the Common and get a consent and will have to show they have done appropriate consultation with local stakeholders.

HDC has involved legal regarding the easement.

SGN Land Services should write to each resident individually and contact Parish, so that no one is missed out of the consultation.

Works

Ditching and reedbed works completed.

Leaky dam event held with Wilder Horsham and was a success.

Works officers have cleared holly and coppiced hazel as per management plan.

Parking

Complaint received by Parish regarding inconsiderate parking at access to Henfield Common N. Committee agreed no easy solution. Invite a member of Henfield Common N to discuss potential solutions in next meeting.

Actions

MA to put up 'no horses' signs.

MA to speak to Jo Nixon regarding stall, gazebo, and leaflets for fair.

MA to contact Parish regarding the circus.

GP to invite a Henfield Common N resident to discuss parking.

9. BROADMARE COMMON

Works

Winter willow clearance completed by HDC/HCV. Wildlife surveys next.

Pond house pond Reedmace not managed this year. HDC to investigate getting a contractor to help, as it is a difficult job to complete manually.

Action: MA to look into contractor for reedmace removal at Pond House pond.

10. OREHAM COMMON

Works

MA planning early cut and collect of some areas of meadow with help of HCV.

Next winter – use volunteers to scallops into the scrub and to coppice willow around pond.

11. CORRESPONDENCE: None

12. BUDGET/EXPENDITURE:

Out of the budget of £19,780, £15,236 has been invoiced.

Still expecting to spend money on Tanyard management plan, as well as Tanyard gate and HC tree works. Any outstanding to be used to offset ash die-back works on HC.

AM raised a discrepancy - £500 income for Shalyer's should be £1000?

Action:

JE to confirm correct income amount.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

JW said locals are raising issues with the fence and spreading Bamboo at Batt's Pond.

AM raised a point regarding and local ancient woodland site as part of a local housing development. JE recommended Parish raises this with HDC in meeting next week and it may be worth taking this on for biodiversity net gain.

Actions:

MA to report Batt's Pond issues to Sorin, Parks Manager.

JE to mail Parish Councilors the biodiversity net gains info.

DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS – Mon 2nd June 2025 All meetings to start at 10-00am and take place at the Henfield Club