

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MITCHAM COMMON CONSERVATORS
(A Statutory Corporation constituted by the Metropolitan Commons
(Mitcham) Supplemental Act 1891)

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25th September 2024 AT 7: 00PM

Present:

Mr. J. Cheetham
Ms. A. Fairweather
Cllr J. Gould
Cllr M. Griffiths
Cllr J. Henry
Cllr. D. Tchil
Cllr M. Whelton, Chair

In Attendance:

Mr. M. Boyle – Manager of Mitcham Common
Mr P. Moorhouse - Warden of Mitcham Common
Ms. L. Parry - Minute taker
Ms. M. Nunzet - representing the Friends of Mitcham Common

Absent:

Cllr R. Clifton
Ms. A. Dines
Cllr D. Johnson
Cllr. M. Johnson
Mr. N. Jones
Cllr. F. Zaman

THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

1. Appointment of Conservators

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:00pm and welcomed everyone. The following appointments were confirmed.

London Borough of Sutton: Councillors Richard Clifton and Dave Tchil, Ms Alison Dines and Mr Norman Jones appointed until July 2025.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr R. Clifton, Ms. A. Dines, Cllr. D. Johnson, Mr. N. Jones , Mr R. Auld and Mr A. Kauffman.

3. Declarations of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

4 Minutes of the last Meeting Held on 10th July 2024

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate account and were duly signed and dated by the Chair.

5. Matters Arising

7. Review of Golf Club Licence (*this matter wasn't discussed in confidential part of last meeting*).

8. No progress

9. SGN Licence has been signed. SGN came on site 19.8.24. The fee for 10 week occupation has been paid.

Footpath re-surfacing at various locations on the Common, has been completed, totalling approximately 400m.

6. Investment Portfolio Valuation (enclosed for Members) - Report from Mr Richard Auld

The portfolio was noted and included for information. Mr Auld had provided some recommendations for new investment proposals as outlined in his email of 12th September:

- 1) Following redemption of Royal Sun Alliance shares a new investment of the funds in to the Natwest 9% preference shares
- 2) Sale of Prudential shares and with the proceeds purchase of Lancashire holdings

Conservators noted that there was a full rationale for the recommendation included in Mr Auld's email.

RESOLVED: Manager authorised to contact Mr Auld and request that the proposals are now actioned.

Members of the Investment Group agreed that they would like to set up a meeting with Mr Auld sometime before the end of November if possible, in order to discuss options for divesting from some holdings which may not be in keeping with Conservators' ethical principles.

RESOLVED: Manager to liaise with Mr Auld and members of the Investment Group in order to try and set up a suitable date for a meeting. Update at the next meeting of the Conservators in January.

7. Administration and Management Report - Verbal report from the Manager

The Manager had addressed current issues under matters arising, and there were no further matters to report at this meeting.

8. Income and Expenditure (Until end of August 2024)

The Manager said that there were no issues to flag up under expenditure. Conservators were asked to note that due to the facilities licence for SGN the income of £60,000 was a lot more than anticipated at the time the budget was set.

Q: Do we need to identify any further areas for expenditure this year taking into account this additional income?

A: This financial year we do not have the capacity to add any other areas of work, noting that there is a full capital expenditure programme already mapped out.

9. Friends of Mitcham Common -To report on recent activities and to raise any relevant Matters

Melanie Nunzet was welcomed to the table and she presented some questions and comments on behalf of the Friends:

1) **Replacement bench** - the Friends would like to know about the replacement bench for the OPM tree that they have funded and whether there is a date for the installation.

The Manager said that Friends of MC had kindly donated £800 to fund a replacement bench on the Common. However, they did not specify that the donation was to be used to replace the bench under the OPM tree. The donations page on the website will remain 'open' until the end of the calendar year. The Board will decide at the January 2025 meeting which benches will be replaced.

2) **Bidder memorial** - the Friends have been told by the Manager that there may be a possibility of improving access to the Bidder Memorial and that this could be

added to a future work programme. We confirm that we would be interested in this.

It has been mentioned previously that the inscription is difficult to read and could be renewed. The Friends might be happy to fund this if it is affordable.

The Manager said that he will undertake research to find a suitable contractor. With regard to the possibility of path to the Memorial, the Manager said that he would need confirmation that the Friends were in agreement with this request as there was some disparity of opinion on the matter

3) Solar panels on the roof of the Ecology Centre – the Friends refer to this item from the minutes of 7 June 2023:

"Cllr Gould had raised the issue of having solar panels installed on the Ecology Centre roof. The Manager had no idea whether this was feasible on the building and noted that it is owned by Merton Council. Conservators agreed that they were in favour of the idea in principle.

RESOLVED: Manager to contact Merton Facilities team to ask if the building might be suitable for installation of solar panels, costs and arrangements."

The Manager said that Merton's Facilities Team report that the Ecology Centre has low energy usage and because of the trees to the south of the roof and roof lights in the south-west facing roof the number of panels that could be installed would make a scheme unviable.

At the conclusion to discussion of the Friends items, the Chair extended the thanks of Conservators to all Friends for all their work and support of the Common. Conservators had also been very pleased that Friends had attended the recent annual inspection.

10. Wandle Valley Report, Cllr Gould

Cllr Gould said that she had not personally been able to attend the last meeting, but in July a workshop had been held which was attended by lots of high profile organisations, who were looking at the different ideas and potential schemes for development of biodiversity within the Wandle corridor and catchment. At present the key issue is a lack of funding to take forward different projects.

RESOLVED: It was agreed that slides from the workshop will be circulated for Conservators' information and Cllr Gould invited anyone with any questions to contact her.

Update on any further developments to be reported at the next meeting.

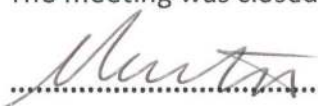
11. Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 8th January 2025

12. Any Other Business

Cllr Henry extended thanks to the Manager and his team for all the work they are doing and in particular for the recent annual inspection which had been highly informative.

It had been noted that the base, depth and height of the scrub around Arthur's Pond could be reduced and there will an agenda item at the January meeting to look at this issue.

The meeting was closed at 19.23

  8/1/2025