

MITCHAM COMMON MANAGEMENT PLAN

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



**Mitcham
Common
Conservators**



1. Aims and Targets

- 1.1 The objective of the management plan is to enhance and maintain the Common's biodiversity, provide a recreation resource for local people and fulfil the Conservators' legal obligations required under the Metropolitan Common Act.
- 1.2 This will be achieved by the following aims:
 1. *Conserving and enhancing the Common's important features, especially priority habitats, thereby sustaining its biodiversity.*
 2. *Managing and preserving the Common as a safe open space for local people to enjoy. Facilitate community engagement and public understanding of the management objectives and constraints.*
 3. *Preventing encroachment and resisting any development which adversely affects the Common.*
 4. *Consolidate existing and explore alternative sources of revenue to fund the implementation of the management plan.*
- 1.3 The Plan confirms that progress towards achieving the aims will be reported annually.
- 1.4 This report will comment on Management Plan Key Tasks agreed at the 2025 March Board meeting and other Management Plan Targets that have been realised in the 2025 financial year.

Work Programme 2025		
Aim	Management Plan Key Tasks 2025	Actions
Biological:	Prepare quarterly work schedules detailing habitat maintenance	Publish spring, summer, autumn and
All habitat types	to be undertaken over respective seasons in	winter on website
	accordance with prescriptions in the management plan	
Summary Comments: Work schedules published and implemented (See Appendix 1). Further details in Habitat Management section of report		
Biological:	Draft a costed Bramble management strategy for	Explore options with consultant/specialist contractor
Acid Grassland & Heathland	implementation during the lifetime of this plan on	
	acid grassland/ heathland habitats	
Summary Comments: Contractor appointed and various management options implemented. Impact on bramble stands will be monitored.		
People:	Continue to review and update the Mitcham Common Website	Website review group.
Engagement &	Produce video highlighting one part of the Common: One Island	Funding from Mitcham Common Education
Communication	Pond Sub-Site	Trust agreed
Summary Comments: Route agreed but suitable drone footage not yet captured. Education Trust funding transferred to MCC		
People:	Wandle Vista interpretation panel	Engage with Friends of Mitcham Common
Safe & Welcoming		Capital growth proposal
Summary Comments: Friends have requested the project be deferred. Re-visit in future years?		
People:	Replace byelaw signage	Engage designer. Capital growth proposal.
Safe & Welcoming		Signage likely to be completed in 2026
Summary Comments: Consultation with Friends and Board Members. Signage agreed. Production and installation in 2026		

People:	Improvements to Fairsite entrance points: footpath and access	Re-surface footpath. Barrier security.
Safe & Welcoming	Barrier security	Capital growth proposal.
Summary Comments: Footpath re-surfacing completed. After discussion with contractor, the decision was taken not to upgrade barrier security because existing arrangement was deemed appropriate and secure		
People:	Upgrade Bidders Pond Sub-Site footpath network	Re-surface footpath.
Safe & Welcoming	Path from BP garage to Galpins Road	Capital growth proposal
Summary Comments: Footpath re-surfacing completed.		
People:	Prepare quarterly work schedules detailing maintenance of	Publish spring, summer, autumn and
Safe & Welcoming	footpaths, roadside boundary, countryside furniture, amenity	winter on website
	grass and litter collection	
Summary Comments: Work schedules published and implemented (See Appendix 1).		
People:	Consider options for improving access to the Bidder Memorial and	Discuss project with Friends of Mitcham
Community Involvement	interpretation panel	Common
Summary Comments: Friends are keen to pursue this project but currently do not have the volunteer capacity. However they will look to take project forward in future years.		
People:	Support up to 250 hours of volunteer involvement in the	Facilitate, monitor and record requests
Community Involvement	maintenance of the Common	for support
Summary Comments: To date this financial year 169.5 hours of support has been provided to volunteers. Further details in Volunteer Involvement section		
Realise the income	Actively promote and advertise specifically allocated land	Engage with potential organisers
potential of the Common:	parcels for small-scale commercial music festivals,	
	commercial, corporate and private events and activities	
Summary Comments: No requests for commercial activities in 2025.		
Realising the income	New Countryside Stewardship Agreement – SFI signed. Consider	Ongoing discussions with RPA

potential of the Common	options for including additional land parcel into future SFI	
Summary Comments: RPA has advised that other parcels of the Common may be eligible for inclusion in SFI, but they will first require mapping and possibly re-designation before being habitat condition surveyed		
People:	Exercise route similar to the Mitcham Mile'. Now superseded by	Continue discussion with Merton Sports Team
Recreational Targets	Parkrun proposal	
Summary Comments: An outline proposal was considered by MCC in liaison with Friends of Mitcham Common. No firm decision on whether a Parkrun would be suitable on the Common. A number of issues remain unresolved.		

2. Habitat Management

The priority habitats on the Common are Heathland and Acid Grassland. Being rarer habitats, especially in the London context, these form the emphasis of the conservation effort. There are also significant tracts of Neutral Grassland receiving habitat maintenance.

Acid Grassland

- Suitable areas have been selected for acid grassland restoration.
- These areas are on subsites: 7. Islands, Gunsite, Golf course and Mill House, where parcels have been identified as meeting criteria for restoration.
- This re-establishment involves a variety of processes depending on the specific site including:
 - large scale clearance of encroaching scrub using mechanical plant (flails, toppers)
 - contractors/volunteers clearing encroaching scrub
 - spraying out small scale scrub encroachment
 - spraying out regeneration of scrub from previously cleared areas



Contractors working in acid grassland on 7 islands site

Heathland

- Small scale heathland restoration projects are ongoing.
- Heathland restoration is mainly on the Golf course and Mill House sites.
- Due to the more sensitive nature of these areas, scrub removal mainly involves:
 - the use of hand tools to cut out the scrub and treating remaining stumps against regeneration
 - pulling bramble
 - occasionally flailing to combat the leading edges of encroaching scrub.



Volunteers clearing scrub from sensitive habitat

Neutral Grassland

- There are large tracts of flower rich neutral grassland on the Common.
- Mainly located on sub-sites 7. Islands, Mill House, Bidders and 1. Island.
- They are maintained by:
 - Spraying/pulling out unwanted invasive plants
 - Use of mechanical plant (topper/flail) to cut existing grass parcels and scrub within them
 - Haymaking



Flailing scrub encroaching neutral grassland

Arthurs Pond

- In November 2024, the Conservators held a consultation which sought the views of the public on a proposal to reduce the area of scrub that had developed on the edge of the pond facing out towards the Common.
- There was overwhelming support for opening-up this side of the pond and over the next 12-18 months work would be undertaken to achieve this aim
- Project was completed in January 2026



Arthurs Pond: late January 2026. TW incident on 3 February filled the pond!

3. Volunteer Involvement

- Volunteers have always played a major contribution towards the upkeep of the Common.
- Volunteers, led by the Friends of Mitcham Common (F of MC) have undertaken several important Citizen Science projects such as a hedgehog and reptile surveys. These have been supported by Mitcham Common Education trust.
- Volunteers from F of MC continue with essential litter picking efforts.

- Volunteers form the basis of an acid grassland work group where they remove encroaching scrub to allow the grassland to regenerate.



Scrub cleared by volunteers

- With numerous visitors using the Common, they act as the eyes and ears, reporting issues such as motorbikes, antisocial behaviour, interesting animals and fly tipping.
- At the time of writing volunteer contributions for 2025 include:
 - 15 litter picking sessions
 - acid grassland work group – 152 person hours



Volunteers litter picking

4. Footpath Upgrading: BP Garage to Galpins Road

4.1 The complete length (350m) of this footpath has been resurfaced. This now links with the footpath that runs parallel to Commonside East which was re-surfaced last year.



Installation of new footpath from Galpins Road to BP garage

5. Targets Achieved

- 5.1 In addition to the Key Tasks discussed in the previous sections of this report, there are a range of other Targets listed in the Management Plan. The following section highlights how a number of them have been realised during the 2025 financial year.

Safe and Welcoming Targets

- Ongoing liaison with local police and Safer Merton regarding illegal motorbike activity, especially on the Gunsite Sub-Site. This included an Environmental Visual Audit Police Report
- Continuing Website review
- Discuss with Merton and subsequent consultation with Friends of Mitcham Common regarding a proposal to create a Pocket Park on the parcel of land adjacent to Drake Road
- Enhancements to Mill Green entrance points opposite Wolseley Road



Mill Green entrance scrub clearance enhancements

Recreational Targets

- Cross-country runs were held by Surrey League, London University and a local school
- Agreement was reached with *The Gentle Way* for a Forest School to be held on the Common; session started in mid-February 2026. The agreement will be reviewed in 12 months.
- Mitcham Golf Club 3-yearly licence fee reviewed



Surrey League x-country run

Local Development Targets

- Negotiations continue with Merton and Sutton regarding the re-design of Goat Road/London Road highway junction

Protection of the Common

- Ongoing issues with Thames Water and SES regarding leaks on their water assets
- Spring 2025: TW finally repaired a main by Beehive Bridge which had been leaking for several months
- Over the past 12 months, three leaks recorded on an SES asset (?) running between Redhouse Road and Brookmead Road: footpath flooded on each occasion
- 3 February 2026: TW 24 inch main running over the Fairsite burst and flooded some ?? ha of the Common
- New entrance treatment to access points to Gunsite Sub-Site



New bund at Gunsite entrance

- Reduce width of overwide entrance points to the Common to protect from vehicular incursions



TW on Fairsite 6 February 2026

Appendix 1: 2025 Quarterly Work Schedules

MITCHAM COMMON WORK PROGRAMME APRIL - MAY 2025

MAINTENANCE OF FOOTPATHS, ROADSIDE BOUNDARIES, COUNTRYSIDE FURNITURE, AMENITY GRASS AND LITTER COLLECTION		
Task	Description of work task: Footpaths, Roadside Boundaries, Countryside Furniture, Amenity Grass	Date
1.	Cut/ flail footpaths shown on attached map. Strim vegetation at entrance points, litter-bins, seats and signage	May
2.	Flail roadside verges and U1 parcel	May
3.	Amenity grass cutting: Mill House Environs	April (monthly)
4.	Remedial work relating to SGN project: Brookmead Road-Fairsite, including replacement footpath and interpretation panels	Spring
5.	Clean information panels	As required
6.	Install benches	Spring
7.	Replace litter-bins, as required	Spring
Task	Description of work task: Litter Collection	Date
1.	See attached schedule	Spring
2.	Litter bins: depending on location, some will be emptied weekly and others less frequently.	April-May
HABITAT MAINTENANCE		
Task	Description of work task	Date
1.	Bramble control, various locations	Spring
2.	Arthurs Pond: Further Blackthorn reduction	Spring
3.	Gunsite Sub-Site: winter scrub clearance aftercare works	Spring
4.	Seven Islands Pond Sub-Site: winter scrub clearance aftercare work	Spring
ARBORICULTURAL WORK		
Task	Description of work task	Date
1.	No planned works	

**MITCHAM COMMON WORK PROGRAMME
JUNE - SEPTEMBER 2025**

MAINTENANCE OF FOOTPATHS, ROADSIDE BOUNDARIES, COUNTRYSIDE FURNITURE, AMENITY GRASS AND LITTER COLLECTION		
Task	Description of work task: Footpaths, Roadside Boundaries, Countryside Furniture, Amenity Grass	Date
1.	Cut/ flail footpaths shown on attached map. Strim vegetation at entrance points, litter-bins, seats and signage.	Later Summer
2.	Flail U1 parcel and edge of Bidders Pond. Flail Fairsite.	Late Summer Late Summer
3.	Cut and clear vegetation in vicinity of Bidder memorial.	Late Summer
4.	Ecology Centre Environs: Amenity grass cutting.	Monthly
5.	Footpath resurfacing works (see map)	Summer
6.	Gunsite: Re-profile bund by entrance point	Summer
7.	Clean information panels.	As required
Task	Description of work task: Litter Collection	Date
1.	See attached schedule	Summer
2.	Litter bins: depending on location, some will be emptied weekly and others less frequently.	Summer
HABITAT MAINTENANCE (REFER TO SUB-SITES MAP)		
Task	Description of work task	Date
1.	All Sub-Sites: Control invasive species, including bramble. Treatment of scrub re-growth	Summer
2.	Remove ragwort from meadowland Hay cut meadowland: N4, N5, R8.	Mid-July onwards
3.	Seven Islands Pond Sub-Site: R1, R2, R3, T1, T2, cut and clear selected areas of acid grassland and wet grassland. U1/S1 scallops cut and clear	September onwards
4.	Golf Course Sub-Site: R9, R10, R11, R13 cut and clear selected areas of acid grassland. R10: cut and clear linear section of ditch. T4 & T5: cut and clear grassland.	September onwards
5.	Bidders Sub-Site: R6, T3 cut and clear selected areas of grassland.	August onwards
6.	Gunsite Sub-Site: R12 cut and clear selected areas of acid grassland and neutral grassland.	September onwards
7.	Bidders Sub-Site: Reduce tree growth on edge of Arthurs Pond	August onwards
8.	Mill House Sub-Site: R5 & S4/R5 cut and clear selected areas of acid and neutral grassland	August onwards
ARBORICULTURAL WORK (REFER TO LOCATION MAPS & WORK SPECIFICATION)		
Task	Description of work task	Date
1.	Tree Works: Details TBC	Late Summer

**MITCHAM COMMON WORK PROGRAMME
OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2025**

MAINTENANCE OF FOOTPATHS, ROADSIDE BOUNDARIES, COUNTRYSIDE FURNITURE, AMENITY GRASS AND LITTER COLLECTION		
Task	Description of work task: Footpaths, Roadside Boundaries, Countryside Furniture, Amenity Grass	Date
1.	Flail woody vegetation on selected roadside verges: Commonsides East (The Meadows to Watneys Rd) Watneys Rd, Carshalton Rd (Gunsite), Cedars Ave, Croydon Rd (Bidder Memorial), Fairsite verge (both sides of bund). Beddington Lane (Golf Course).	Autumn
2.	Install bund by junction Croydon Rd/ Beddington Lane	Autumn
3.	Clean information panels.	As required
Task	Description of work task: Litter Collection	Date
1.	See attached schedule	Autumn
2.	Litter bins: depending on location, some will be emptied weekly and others less frequently.	Autumn
HABITAT MAINTENANCE (REFER TO SUB-SITES MAP)		
Task	Description of work task	Date
1.	All Sub-Sites: Monitor and control invasive species, including bramble and Crassula (in ponds).	Autumn
2.	All Sub-Sites: Re-flail bramble stands (same areas as 2025).	Autumn
3.	Bidders Sub-Site: Flail pond margins.	Autumn
4.	One Island Pond Sub-Site: Flail N6	Autumn
5.	Gunsite Sub-Site: Flail selected areas of R12	Autumn
6.	Seven Islands Pond Sub-Site: Flail N3, U9. Small scale selective scrub control R1, R2, R3, N2.	Autumn
7.	Mill House Sub-Site: Flail R8 margins, N7, N9. Small scale selective scrub control H1, R5, R8.	Autumn
ARBORICULTURAL WORK		
Task	Description of work task	Date
1.	Minor works along Croydon Rd	Autumn

**MITCHAM COMMON WORK PROGRAMME
JANUARY- MARCH 2026**

MAINTENANCE OF FOOTPATHS, ROADSIDE BOUNDARIES, COUNTRYSIDE FURNITURE, AMENITY GRASS AND LITTER COLLECTION		
Task	Description of work task: Footpaths, Roadside Boundaries, Countryside Furniture, Amenity Grass	Date
1.	Benches safety inspection	Winter
2.	Mill Green: clear overgrown footpath, replace signage and tidy entrance points.	Late Winter/early Spring
3.	Clean information panels.	As required
Task	Description of work task: Litter Collection	Date
1.	See attached schedule	Winter
2.	Litter bins: depending on location, some will be emptied weekly and others less frequently. Replace damaged bins.	Winter
HABITAT MAINTENANCE (REFER TO SUB-SITES MAP)		
Task	Description of work task	Date
1.	Bidders Sub-Site: Arthurs Pond Project further blackthorn clearance. Selected scrub clearance R6/U3	Winter
2.	One Island Pond Sub-Site: Selected coppicing N6 self-sown trees	Winter
3.	Gunsite Sub-Site: R12 selective scrub clearance	Winter
4.	Seven Islands Pond Sub-Site: R1,R2,N2 selective scrub clearance	Winter
ARBORICULTURAL WORK (REFER TO LOCATION MAPS & WORK SPECIFICATION)		
Task	Description of work task	Date
1.	Work Schedule will be posted in January	

