

EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Monday 28 September 2015 at 6.00 pm

Committee Room 1 - Epsom Town Hall

The members listed below are summoned to attend the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Committee Members

Councillor Liz Frost (Chairman)

Councillor Jean Steer

Hugh Craddock, British Horse Society

Simon Durrant, Epsom Downs Racecourse

Alex Stewart, Epsom Downs Riders Protection Society

Nigel Whybrow, Training Grounds Management Board

Representatives invited to attend

Caroline Baldock, Epsom Equestrian
Conservation Group

Teresa Cass, Woodcote Residents'
Association

Angela Clifford, Epsom Civic Society

Andrew Cooper, Epsom Downs
Racecourse

Bob Eberhard, Epsom and Ewell
Cycle Action Group

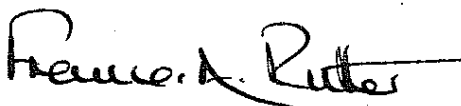
David Lambert, Epsom Downs Model
Aircraft Club

Nick Harrison, Tattenhams Residents'
Association

Mark Harvey, Epsom Golf Club

Conor Morrow, Lower Mole Countryside
Management Service

Yours sincerely



Clerk to the Conservators

For further information, please contact Tim Richardson, 01372 732122 or
trichardson@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 10)

The Committee is asked to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 16 March 2015 (attached) and to authorise the Chairman to sign them.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING (Pages 11 - 12)

The Committee is asked to note the current situation on issues raised previously.

3. REPORT OF THE HEAD DOWNSKEEPER (Pages 13 - 14)

To receive the report of the Head Downskeeper.

4. ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE CONSERVATORS (Pages 15 - 26)

This report provides the Committee with a summary of items of interest considered at the meetings of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators held on 15 April and 17 June 2015, and the Minutes of those meetings.

5. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE DERBY RACE MEETING AND VIEWS ON FENCING ARRANGEMENTS (Pages 27 - 28)

This item invites the Committee to provide its views on the arrangements for the 2015 Derby Race Meeting. It also invites the Committee's views on the fencing extensions granted by the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators for the 2015 Race Season.

6. ISSUES RAISED BY THE HACK RIDERS REPRESENTATIVES

To discuss any issues raised by Hack Riders Representatives, including the following:

- Encroachment of the Golf Course on the hack ride at 15th tee (alongside Grandstand Road adjacent to the Buckles Gap roundabout);
- Scrub encroachment on the Hack Ride at the top of Rifle Butts Alley;
- Hack Sand Track;
- Review of Hack Ride markers;
- Dog control;
- Downskeepers' plans for scrub clearance/flailing this winter.

7. ISSUES RAISED FOR CONSIDERATION

To discuss any issues raised by representatives to the Committee. No items were highlighted prior to publication of this agenda.

8. DATE OF MEETINGS IN 2016

The Committee has previously requested that its future meetings be held in advance of a meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators. It is suggested that the Committee agrees to hold its meetings in 2016 on two of the following dates:

Tuesday 8 or Wednesday 9 March 2016 at 18.00 hours

Monday 26 or Tuesday 27 September 2016 at 18.00 hours

Note: The dates for meetings of the Conservators for 2016 have not yet been set, but it is anticipated that they will be in January, April, June and October.

9. ITEMS FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE CONSERVATORS

To identify any items which the Committee wishes to be brought to the attention of the Conservators at their next meeting, and nominate a spokesperson to present them if appropriate.

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**Minutes of the Meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee
held on 16 March 2015**

PRESENT-

Councillors Jean Smith (Chairman) (Epsom and Ewell Borough Council); Councillor Clive Smitheram (Epsom and Ewell Borough Council); Mr Andrew Cooper (Epsom Downs Racecourse); Mr Nigel Whybrow (Training Grounds Management Board); Mrs Angela Clifford (Epsom Civic Society); Mr Hugh Craddock (British Horse Society); Mr Alex Stewart (Epsom Downs Riders Protection Society) (Items 12 d) - 19); Mr Roger Marples (Epsom Downs Model Aircraft Club); Mr Bob Eberhard (Epsom and Ewell Cycle Action Group); Mr Mark Harvey (Epsom Golf Club) (Items 11 – 18 d)); Mr Richard Balsdon (College Ward Residents' Association); Mr Conor Morrow (Lower Mole Countryside Management Service); Mrs Teresa Cass (Woodcote Residents Association).

Apologies for absence: Mr Simon Dow (Training Grounds Management Board); Mr Simon Durrant (Epsom Downs Racecourse); Mr Bob Harding (Head Downskeeper).

Officers present: Frances Rutter (Clerk to the Conservators), Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Officer), Samantha Whitehead (Streetcare Manager) and Simon Young (Head of Legal and Democratic Services).

- 11 MINUTES. The Minutes of the Meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on 29 September 2014 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

- 12 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING AND OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST. The Committee received and noted a report providing updates on matters raised previously. The following items were noted:
 - a) Flooding at the Roundabout outside Epsom Racecourse (Grandstand Road / Tattenham Corner Road). The Committee noted that Surrey County Council Highways Department had completed works to this area, and that flooding had not reoccurred following this.

 - b) Code of Conduct Signs. The Committee noted that all 5 signs were now in location on the Downs.

 - c) Condition of the Hack Sand Track, bottom of Walton Downs. The Committee was informed that Officers of the Council would arrange to meet the Horserace Betting Levy Board regarding this matter, and intended that this meeting would be held before the end of April 2015. Simon Young informed the Committee that the purpose of that meeting would be to identify a pragmatic solution to the issues surrounding the condition and maintenance of the track. The Hack Rider representatives informed the Committee that regular harrowing of the track had not been undertaken in recent months, and requested that this be reinstated. It was noted that Officers would look into this matter.

- d) Car parking for events. The Hack Rider representatives informed the Committee that the grass area adjacent to the Derby Arms Public House was a designated Hack Ride, and requested clarification of the powers used by Epsom Downs Racecourse to utilise it for car parking on non-racing days. It was noted that Officers would look into the legal situation surrounding this practice, and present a report to the next meeting.
- 13 REPORT OF THE HEAD DOWNSKEEPER. The Committee received and noted the report of the Head Downskeeper. The Epsom Civic Society representative informed the Committee that flytipping had occurred on Ebbisham Lane to the South of the Downs. Officers would look into this matter to identify whether the Downskeepers were able to assist with its removal. If it was a matter for Reigate and Banstead Council or Surrey County Council, the matter would be passed to the relevant authority.
- 14 ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE CONSERVATORS. The Committee received a report providing a summary of items of interest considered at meetings of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators held on 13 October 2014 and 21 January 2015. The following item was noted:
- a) Surface of Walton Road – installation of speed hump. The cycling group representative expressed concern that the Training Grounds Management Board (TGMB) had not sought the Conservators approval prior to undertaking works to install the hump. The TGMB representative informed the Committee that this was not a situation which would occur again in the future. It was noted that there was a requirement under the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 to undertake works to the surface of Walton Road in this area to the “reasonable satisfaction” of Surrey County Council (SCC) (the Highway Authority). Officers would confirm that SCC was satisfied with the works.
- 15 REVISION OF THE EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLAN. The Committee received a report providing an updated draft Habitat Management Plan for Epsom & Walton Downs 2015-2020, for comment prior to its submission to the Conservators for approval. The following matters were considered:
- a) Positioning of Maps within the document. It was suggested that the maps could be moved to an earlier section of the Plan to aid referencing for readers.
 - b) Integrate with Golf Course Management Plan. It was noted that the Plan was not fully integrated with the Epsom Golf Course Habitat Management Plan. It was suggested that this should be done.
 - c) Reference to impact of horse trampling on sensitive sites. The Committee noted that cattle grazing had a different impact to that of horse trampling/grazing, which could be damaging to sensitive sites such as Juniper Hill.
 - d) Integration with management of Woodland Trust Langley Vale Centenary Wood site. It was noted that the Plan did not reference the Woodland Trust’s Langley Vale Centenary Wood site, which would be adjacent to the Southern part of the Walton Downs.
 - e) Fixed point photography. The Committee enquired whether a schedule of fixed point photography was in place for the Downs, and noted that Officers would look into this matter.

- f) Loss of Small Blue Butterfly from Juniper Hill. The Committee noted that scrub encroachment had contributed to the loss of the Small Blue Butterfly from Juniper Hill, and expressed that this was a matter which the Conservators may wish to consider addressing. The Lower Mole Countryside Management Service Representative informed the Committee that additional soil scrapes were being undertaken on the Downs and sown with locally collected Kidney Vetch seed to provide further habitat for the Butterfly. It was also noted that Officers were considering the re-introduction of grazing on the site.

Officers requested that if representatives to the Committee had any further comments following the meeting, that these be provided to Samantha Whitehead.

- 16 DOG CONTROL. The Committee received a report presenting proposals intended to address issues of Dog Control on the Downs. The Committee noted that this focussed upon a polite request to dog walkers using the Downs to keep their dog(s) on leads prior to noon, daily, and utilise designated lead-free areas during the afternoon if they wished to release their dog(s) from the lead. It was not proposed to introduce further legal restrictions to control dog walking on the Downs, as it was felt that improved communication and education would be more successful. The Clerk informed the Committee that officers continued to work with Surrey Police on the issue of dog control. The following matters were considered:

- a) Views of Hack Rider Representatives. The Hack Rider Representatives welcomed the measures proposed within the report. The Representatives expressed concerns that the proposals appeared to focus on Race Horse Training use of the Downs as their priority, and that there was a risk that restricting lead-free access during mornings could result in an increased number of dogs being walked during the afternoon, and therefore an increase in issues for Hack Riders. Following a question regarding the number of dog related incidents experienced by hack riders on the Downs under current arrangements, it was noted that the British Horse Society website maintained a register of such incidents, which might provide useful information.
- b) Incidents involving model aircraft. The EDMAC Representative informed the Committee that there had been two recent incidents of dogs trampling model aircraft on the Downs.

- 17 ISSUES RAISED BY THE HACK RIDER REPRESENTATIVES. The following items were raised by the Hack Rider Representatives:

- a) Drainage works to the Old London Road crossing of the Racecourse. The Epsom Downs Racecourse Representative informed the Committee that the drainage works incorporated a large soakaway within its specification, and would reduce erosion of Bridleway 127 currently being created by surface-water run-off.
- b) Conservators' consideration of racing season fencing extensions. The Hack Riders representatives expressed concern that the report presented to the meeting of the Conservators on 21 January 2015 regarding racing season fencing extensions did not reference discussion held at the meeting of the Committee held on 12 June 2010. At that meeting, some members of the Committee had expressed concern at the fencing extensions granted by the Conservators for the 2010 race season.

Officers informed the Committee that the report referenced the Committee's original consideration of the matter, in 2002 in addition to detailed reference to the relevant legislation and Byelaws which enabled the Conservators to grant an extension to the fencing period if they wished to do so. It was noted that in future years if a fencing extension was requested by the Racecourse, the report presented to the Conservators would include reference to the 12 June 2010 meeting of the Consultative Committee. An item requesting the views of the Consultative Committee with regard to fencing extensions would be presented to the Committee's next meeting.

- c) Signposting for Hatched Area. The Committee noted that signposts for the 'Hatched Area' at the foot of Walton Downs to state whether it was open or closed for hack riding had not yet been put in place by the Training Grounds Management Board (TGMB). The TGMB Representative informed the Committee that these would be put in place shortly.
- d) Management of Hack Rides and Areas. The following items were considered;
 - i. Horse Ride on south side of Downs House enclosure. It was noted that vegetation had now been cut back.
 - ii. Hack Ride markers on Epsom Golf Course. It was noted that a programme of renewing markers and posts was underway.
 - iii. Sand Track west of Nohome Farm. The Hack Rider representatives expressed concern that this track was boggy and being damaged through use by motor vehicles. It was noted that officers would look into this matter.
 - iv. Maintenance of triangular Hack Area East of Downs House. It was noted that Officers were looking into the possibility of procuring machinery which would enable grass to be cut and collected, in line with the Habitat Management Plan.
- e) Scrub clearance on Hack Area crossing top of Rifle Butts Alley. The Hack Rider Representatives requested that scrub clearance be undertaken on the Hack Area at the top of Rifle Butts Alley, to improve drying of wet areas and access to alternative routes.
- f) Post Derby Downs clean-up. The Hack Riders Representatives expressed concern at the level of glass left on the Downs following the Derby every year and expressed that they felt that further efforts should be made by Epsom Downs Racecourse to remove it.
- g) Access to Tattenham Corner Road traffic crossing for pedestrians walking from Tattenham Corner Station. The Hack Rider Representatives expressed that access arrangements for pedestrians walking from Tattenham Corner Station to the road crossing on Tattenham Corner Road found it very difficult to do so, as there was no footway on the eastern side of the road's surface. This was even more difficult for wheelchair users. It was noted that this was a Surrey County Council issue, but that it had previously been discussed by the Conservators and Consultative Committee. It was noted that Officers would look into the matter.

- 18 ISSUES RAISED FOR CONSIDERATION. The following items were raised by Representatives to the Committee:

- a) Cars offered for sale on the Downs. The Committee was informed concerns had been expressed that cars stored near Clear Height Stables were being offered for sale on Downs land. It was noted that Officers would look into this matter.
 - b) Epsom Golf Club – new path from 11th Green to 12th Tee. The Committee considered a proposal from Epsom Golf Club for a new path on the Golf Course between the 11th Green and 12th Tee, and noted that it would be presented to the next meeting of the Conservators. No comments were made upon the proposal.
 - c) Epsom Golf Club – enlargement of 1st Tee and vegetation clearance. The Epsom Golf Club Representative informed the Committee that Epsom Golf Club intended to submit a proposal for works to the 1st Tee area of the Golf Course to the next meeting of the Conservators. These works would be in line with those proposed during the Committee's Downs Tour on 1 September 2014. No comments were made upon the proposal.
 - d) Downs House. It was noted that Epsom Downs Racecourse had reported that it had now progressed outstanding matters relating to the sale of Downs House, and that the exchange of contracts would hopefully take place soon. It was noted that Barn Owls had previously nested at the site, and that Officers would look into whether this was still occurring.
 - e) Traffic lights at Langley Vale for cross over to 30 Acres and Ermyn Lodge. It was noted that traffic lights were the responsibility of Surrey County Council, but that the traffic plan for the Woodland Trust Centenary Wood might involve works in this area.
 - f) Broken gate at top of Chalk Lane. The Committee noted that repairs to this gate were the responsibility of Surrey County Council. The British Horse Society Representative expressed the view that the condition of the gate was a matter which the Conservators should address, but it was noted that it was outside the boundary of the Downs as defined by the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984, and therefore not the responsibility of the Conservators to maintain. It was noted that Officers would raise the issue with the Surrey County Councillor for that Division.
 - g) Timing of the Running of the Derby race meeting. The Committee was informed that the race card for the 2015 derby festival (both 5th and 6th June) would start and finish 20-30 minutes later than in previous years. The Oaks and Derby races would be run at 4.30 on the respective day.
 - h) Byelaw Boards. It was noted that the number and location of Byelaw Information Boards would be considered by the Conservators at a future meeting as an element of signs audit undertaken by Downskeepers.
- 19 THANKS FROM THE CHAIRMAN. The Chairman informed the Committee that it would be her last meeting as a member of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee, as she would not be standing as a candidate at the upcoming Borough Council elections. The Chairman expressed her thanks to the Committee, and informed the meeting that her time as its Chairman had been both interesting and stimulating.

The meeting began at 18.00 hours and ended at 19.36 hours.

JEAN SMITH
Chairman

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MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING

<u>Report of the:</u>	Clerk to the Conservators
<u>Contact:</u>	Tim Richardson
<u>Annexes/Appendices (attached):</u>	None
<u>Other available papers (not attached):</u>	Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 16 March 2015

REPORT SUMMARY

The Committee is asked to note the current situation on the following issues raised previously.

1 Car parking for events – Minute 12 d)

- 1.1 At the last meeting, it was noted that Officers would look into the legal situation surrounding the utilisation of the area adjacent to the Derby Arms Public House for car-parking on non-racing days. A verbal report will be provided at the meeting.

2 Dog Control – Minute 16

- 2.1 The Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators have given detailed consideration to the issue of Dog Control at their meetings in April and June 2015. The Conservators are scheduled to receive a further report on the matter at their next meeting, on 7 October 2015.

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REPORT OF THE HEAD DOWNSKEEPER

<u>Report of the:</u>	Head Downskeeper
<u>Contact:</u>	Robert Harding
<u>Annexes/Appendices (attached):</u>	None
<u>Other available papers (not attached):</u>	N/A

REPORT SUMMARY

To receive the report of the Head Downskeeper.

1 Events

- 1.1 The 2015 Cancer Research UK Race for Life took place on the 28 June. The event was well supported and despite a spell of rain coinciding with the start of the race, the ladies carried on regardless and it is hoped achieved their targets.
- 1.2 The Epsom Trainers Open Day this year took place entirely on the August Bank Holiday Monday. A number of the Yards opened their doors to the public, together with the usual array of entertainment throughout the day. Unfortunately the poor weather impacted on attendance, it is hoped those who braved the elements appreciated the efforts made by the organisers.
- 1.3 Other events included the ever popular Omni Terrier Derby, The Annual EDMAC Cloud Tramp, The Round the Borough Walk and the final Pigeon Liberation of the year.

2 Racing Programme

- 2.1 This years' racing programme is due to conclude on Sunday 27 September. The live music night featuring Madness (9 July) saw a large crowd gathered on the Hill, causing some issues for the Downskeepers. Attendance on The Hill on August Bank Holiday Monday was unfortunately limited due to the previously reported poor weather. The rest of the season passed without any notable incidents.

3 Personnel

- 3.1 Downkeeper John Whinder unexpectedly tendered his resignation in July and I am pleased to welcome Adam Young as his replacement. Adam brings a great diversity of experience to the role, including placements with the National Trust, Surrey and Hampshire Wildlife Trusts and the Peoples Trust for Endangered Species.

ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE CONSERVATORS

<u>Report of the:</u>	Clerk to the Conservators
<u>Contact:</u>	Tim Richardson
<u>Annexes/Appendices (attached):</u>	<u>Annexe 1</u> - Minutes of the meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators held on 15 April 2015 <u>Annexe 2</u> - Minutes of the meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators held on and 17 June 2015.
<u>Other available papers (not attached):</u>	None

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides the Committee with a summary of items of interest considered at the meetings of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators held on 15 April and 17 June 2015, and the Minutes of those meetings.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of any items of interest considered by the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators at their meetings of 15 April and 17 June 2015. The Minutes of those meetings are attached at the Annexe to this report for information.

2 Hatched area, foot of Walton Downs – Minutes Nos. 42 a) and 4 a)

- 2.1 The Conservators noted that the TGMB continued to consider the area as unsuitable for hack riding after midday.

3 Events on the Downs – Minute No. 46

- 3.1 The Conservators approved and noted the events listed.

4 Epsom and Walton Downs Habitat Management Plan 2015-2020 – Minute No. 47

- 4.1 The Conservators approved the final version of the Plan.

5 Minutes of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee – Minute No. 49

5.1 The Conservators received and noted the Minutes of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on 16 March 2015.

6 Access to Tattenham Corner Road crossing for pedestrians walking from Tattenham Corner Station – Minute No. 49

6.1 It was agreed that Officers would look into this matter.

7 Dog Control – Minutes Nos. 50 and 5 f)

7.1 The Conservators gave lengthy consideration to the issue of dog control at their meetings in April and June. It was agreed that a further report would be presented at the Conservators' meeting in October 2015.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators
held on 15 April 2015**

PRESENT-

Councillor Jean Smith (Chairman); Mr Andrew Cooper (Vice Chairman) (Epsom Downs Racecourse); Councillors Paul Dallen, Liz Frost (Items 43 b) - 52), Chris Long and Jan Mason; Messrs Simon Durrant and Nigel Whybrow (Epsom Downs Racecourse).

In attendance: Mr Conor Morrow (Lower Mole Countryside Management Service)

Officers present: Frances Rutter (Clerk to the Conservators), Bob Harding (Head Downskeeper), Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Officer) and Sam Whitehead (Streetcare Manager).

Absent: Councillor Ben Cahill-Sawford, Mr Simon Dow (Horserace Betting Levy Board).

- 38** **PRESENTATION TO THE CHAIRMAN.** The Vice Chairman informed the meeting that he was aware that this would be the Chairman's last meeting of the Conservators following 16 years of service. The Vice Chairman expressed the thanks and gratitude of all Members of the Conservators to the Chairman for her work on their behalf over that time, and for her wise council and stewardship during her tenure as the Chairman. The Conservators presented the Chairman with a card and a print of Brett Lohn's painting entitled 'Final Furlong' with their thanks.
- 39** **THANKS TO MEMBERS AND OFFICERS.** The Chairman expressed her sincere thanks to all Members of the Conservators and their Officers: The Clerk, The Treasurer, Downs Manager, Streetcare Manager, Head Downskeeper and Democratic Services Officer as well as Conor Morrow of Lower Mole for their unfailing support throughout her years serving as the Chairman.
- 40** **MINUTES.** The Minutes of the Meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators held on 21 January 2015 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
- 41** **BEST WISHES TO DOWNS MANAGER.** The Conservators were informed that the Downs Manager was currently on sickness leave and sent their best wishes to her for a speedy and successful recovery.
- 42** **ITEMS OF INTEREST DISCUSSED BY THE TRAINING GROUNDS MANAGEMENT BOARD (TGMB).** The following items of interest had been discussed at the last meeting of the Training Grounds Management Board:
- a) Hatched area at the foot of Walton Downs. The Board had considered that it had no reason to change its current stance with regard to the Hatched Area, and reconfirmed that it could not authorise the use of the Hatched Area for hack riding.

- b) Epsom Downs Training Grounds leaflet. A copy of an Epsom Downs Training Grounds information leaflet produced by Jockey Club Estates was circulated to the Conservators.

43 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST.

- a) Hack Sand Track, foot of Walton Downs. The Conservators were informed that the Council's Legal Department had arranged a meeting to be held with the Horserace Betting Levy Board at the end of May 2015.
- b) Downs House. The Clerk informed the Conservators that matters for action by the Council and Jockey Club had now been resolved. There were outstanding matters for the attention of the purchaser which required resolution before the sale of the property could proceed further.
- c) Flooding at the roundabout outside Epsom Racecourse (Grandstand Road / Tattenham Corner Road). The Conservators were informed that Surrey County Council was undertaking further work to the drainage system in this area, but there was uncertainty over the exact duration of the works. The works were being undertaken with sensitivity to the requirements of Racehorse Trainers, and causing little disruption to their activities.
- d) Epsom Golf Club unauthorised development and other matters. The Conservators noted that these issues were being pursued by the Council's Legal Department.
- e) Old London Road crossing of the Racecourse – drainage works. The Vice Chairman informed the Conservators that the Racecourse would undertake its drainage improvement works during 2015, but not prior to the Derby festival. However, works by Surrey County Council to flush-through and clean the existing soakaways in the area would be undertaken in May, prior to the Derby.
- f) Proposed tree works to be carried out by Epsom Golf Club. The Conservators noted that approval had been granted to the works in line with the recommendations of the Borough Council's Tree Officer.
- g) Downskeepers' Hut Insurance arrangements. Following an enquiry at the last meeting, the Conservators received a written briefing note from the Treasurer relating to the insurance arrangements for the Downskeepers' Hut. The Downkeepers' Hut was covered under the Council's insurance policy and the cost of the insurance was included within the Conservators' "insurance recharges" budget. The briefing note informed the Conservators that over the past few years the way insurance had been accounted for had changed and that the budget monitoring statement would be amended to reflect this. In future the redundant insurance code would be removed.

44 REPORT OF THE HEAD DOWNSKEEPER. The Conservators received and noted the report of the Head Downskeeper, including updates on Events, Fox attacks, Fly tipping and the Winter Work Programme. The following item was discussed:

Bridleway 127. The Conservators noted that it was hoped that works to improve water drainage near the Old London Road Crossing of the Racecourse would also improve the condition of Bridleway 127, as surface water run-off would be reduced.

- 45** CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2014/15. The Conservators received and noted the Chairman's report of the 2014/15 financial year.

- 46** PROPOSED EVENTS ON THE DOWNS. The Conservators received a report presenting applications for events on the Downs during 2015 and 2016.

Officers informed the Conservators that in addition to the events listed in the annexe to the report, a small number of racing pigeon releases would be taking place in the Grandstand Road car park during 2015. These would take place at daybreak, and had been held on the Downs for a number of years.

It was noted that the Omni Terrier Derby (30 August 2015) was scheduled to take place on the day prior to this year's Trainers Open Day, as it would otherwise clash with the Bank Holiday Race meeting.

Following consideration of the report, the Conservators agreed:

- To approve the EDMAC Cloud Tramp event on Saturday 1 August 2015.
- To approve the Omni Terrier Derby event on Sunday 30 August 2015.
- To approve the Cross Country Surrey League Race on Saturday 7 November 2015.
- To approve the Tadworth Athletic Club 'Tadworth10' event on Sunday 3 January 2016.

The Conservators noted the Calendar of Events for 2015/16 and the fees and charges to be applied to each event.

The Conservators noted that the Fees and Charges for events had last been reviewed in January 2014, and requested that this be done annually at the January meeting in future.

- 47** EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLAN 2015-2020. The Conservators received a report requesting their approval to the final version of the Habitat Management Plan for Epsom & Walton Downs 2015-2020.

The Conservators were informed that comments made by the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee at its last meeting had been integrated into the Plan where possible. Information provided by Angela Clifford (representative of the Epsom Civic Society to the Committee) and her husband regarding bird species observed on the Downs over a period of many years would also be included as an annexe to the Plan.

The Conservators noted that once the Epsom Golf Course Habitat Management Plan had been reviewed (scheduled for the end of 2015), this would be integrated with the Epsom and Walton Downs Habitat Management Plan to produce a single document.

Officers recognised the importance of working in partnership with the Woodland Trust, due to the proximity of its neighbouring Centenary Wood site. It was intended to build stronger communications and share information with the Trust, especially with regard to habitat management and maintenance plans.

Following consideration, the Conservators approved the final version of the Epsom and Walton Downs Habitat Management Plan 2015-2020 and agreed the Management Recommendations set out for the next 5 years.

The Conservators expressed their thanks to the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee for its comments on the draft Plan.

- 48** PROPOSED WORKS TO BE CARRIED OUT BY EPSOM GOLF CLUB. The Conservators received a report presenting proposals from Epsom Golf Club to carry out works to the Golf Course. These included vegetation clearance, tee extension and creation of a new path for the 1st hole, and creation of a new path between the 11th Green and 12th Tee.

The following matters were considered:

- Comments of the Borough Council's Tree Officer. The Conservators were informed that the Council's Tree Officer would undertake a site visit and provide recommendations for consideration by the Clerk and Chairman.
- Seeding of grass areas – proposal 1. Conor Morrow advised the Conservators that it would be more beneficial to the habitat and ecology of the site if some areas adjacent to the woodland edge were not seeded with a grass mix. Mr Morrow informed the Conservators that if existing grasses in the area were encouraged to colonise such spaces, it may result in a more diverse and interesting habitat.
- Material and location of path – proposal 1. The Conservators considered that prior to full approval being granted to the proposed works, a confirmed location/route for the new path and details of the materials to be used should be presented to a future meeting.
- Material of path – proposal 2. The Conservators requested further information regarding the 'red path top material' listed within the proposal, and considered that this should be presented to a future meeting prior to full approval being granted to the proposed works.

Following consideration, the Conservators agreed in principle to the works detailed in the proposals submitted by Epsom Golf Club, but requested that further information be provided to a future meeting prior to full approval. The additional information required related to the location and material of new paths included within proposal 1 and proposal 2.

- 49** EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE. The Conservators received a report presenting the Minutes of the meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on 16 March 2015.

The following matters were considered:

- Post Derby Downs clean-up. The concerns raised by Hack Rider Representatives were noted. Simon Durrant expressed that the clean-up of the Downs following the Derby was a large scale and difficult operation, but informed the meeting that Epsom Downs Racecourse understood the concerns expressed. The Racecourse would seek to improve upon last year's clean-up operation.

- Broken Gate at top of Chalk Lane. It was noted that this was a matter for Surrey County Council's consideration, and had been referred to it.
- Signposting of Hatched Area. It was noted that 4 signs had been produced by the TGMB and were now ready to be put in place on the Downs.
- Access to Tattenham Corner Road crossing for pedestrians walking from Tattenham Corner Station. The Conservators noted that this issue had been previously considered several years ago, but that it had not been possible to find a satisfactory solution at that time. It was agreed that the Streetcare Manager would look into the matter and liaise with the Vice Chairman to identify potential ways forward.

50 DOG CONTROL. The Conservators received a report proposing a 12 month trial of a policy to ask Downs users that they keep dogs on a lead whilst visiting.

The Conservators were informed that a Working Group had been formed to consider the issue of dog control in relation to the whole Borough, but had identified specific proposals to address the issues experienced on the Downs.

It was proposed to request dog walkers to keep their dogs on a lead at all times whilst visiting the Downs for a trial period of 12 months. This was intended as a polite request, rather than a legal requirement. The Conservators were informed that whilst there was legislation which would enable stronger legal restrictions on dog walking on the Downs to be introduced, the enforcement of such powers would be difficult and very costly to implement. The Working Group had considered that a polite request accompanied by a high level of communication and education would be more successful in addressing the issues experienced.

The Working Group had also discussed alternative proposals, such as the introduction of specific 'lead-free' areas on the Downs, but considered that these would be likely to be confusing and inconvenient for dog walkers, leading to a dilution of the key request that dogs be kept on a lead.

It was noted that if approved, significant Officer time would be required to successfully launch and communicate the request to Downs users, but that through strong partnership working with the Jockey Club and Racehorse Trainers this would be managed. The Conservators also noted that continued partnership working would be key to the success of the proposal, and that it would require sustained commitment from all parties.

The Conservators noted that it was intended to highlight the issue of dog control on the Downs at a public Awareness-Day event similar to that held successfully for (and at) Nonsuch Park in previous years. It was proposed to link this to the annual Trainers' Open Day. It was also intended to work closely with the Council's and Jockey Club's communications teams, to maximise awareness of the issue. Possibilities such as appointing local 'dog walking champions' and providing information via local radio would also be investigated.

Following consideration, the Conservators approved the proposal to request dog walkers visiting the Downs to keep their dogs on a lead at all times whilst on the Downs. It was agreed that this would be trialled for a period of twelve months.

The Conservators expressed their thanks to the Downs Manager and Streetcare Manager for all their work with regard to this matter.

- 51** PROPOSALS FROM EPSOM DOWNS MODEL AIRCRAFT CLUB. The Conservators received a report presenting two proposals from Epsom Downs Model Aircraft Club (EDMAC) regarding the use of 'Multi Rotor' model aircraft and the use of cameras on model aircraft.

The Conservators considered the proposals, and noted that in the view of the Council's Solicitor there was no legal reason to object. Following this consideration, the Conservators agreed:

- That 'Multi Rotor' model aircraft be included in the types of model aircraft (Helicopters and Fixed Wing) permitted to be flown on Epsom Downs, as detailed in Proposal 1, Annexe 1 of the report.
- That permission be granted for model aircraft fitted with stills or video cameras to be flown and operated on the Downs, as detailed in Proposal 2, Annexe 1 to the report.

- 52** OUTSTANDING REFERENCES. The Conservators received and noted the position of their outstanding references to officers.

The meeting began at 18.00 hours and ended at 19.02 hours.

JEAN SMITH
Chairman

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators
held on 17 June 2015**

PRESENT-

Councillor Liz Frost (Chairman); Mr Andrew Cooper (Vice Chairman) (Epsom Downs Racecourse); Councillors Rekha Bansil, Lucie Dallen (Item 1 only), Robert Foote, Jan Mason and Clive Woodbridge; Messrs Simon Durrant and Nigel Whybrow (Epsom Downs Racecourse); Mr Simon Dow (Horserace Betting Levy Board).

In attendance: Mr Conor Morrow (Lower Mole Countryside Management Service)

Officers present: Frances Rutter (Clerk to the Conservators), Kathryn Beldon (Treasurer to the Conservators), Sam Beak (Downs Manager), Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Officer), Sam Whitehead (Streetcare Manager) and Simon Young (Head of Legal and Democratic Services).

- 1 CHAIRMAN. It was resolved that Councillor Liz Frost be appointed Chairman of the Conservators to hold office until the first meeting of the Conservators held after the Annual Meeting of the Borough Council in May 2016.
- 2 VICE-CHAIRMAN. It was resolved that Mr Andrew Cooper be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Conservators to hold office until the first meeting of the Conservators held after the Annual Meeting of the Borough Council in May 2016.
- 3 MINUTES. The Minutes of the Meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators held on 15 April 2015 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
- 4 ITEMS OF INTEREST DISCUSSED BY THE TRAINING GROUNDS MANAGEMENT BOARD (TGMB). The following items of interest had been discussed at the last meeting of the Training Grounds Management Board:
 - a) Hatched area at the foot of Walton Downs. The Board had considered that it had no reason to change its current stance with regard to the Hatched Area, and reconfirmed that it could not authorise the use of the Hatched Area for hack riding.
- 5 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST.
 - a) Hack Sand Track, foot of Walton Downs. The Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services informed the Conservators that the Horserace Betting Levy Board had informed the Council that it did not accept responsibility for the maintenance of the Track. The previously considered view of the Conservators was that it was not their responsibility, due to an undertaking made to the House of Commons Committee by the Horserace Betting Levy Board during the passing of

the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984. It was agreed that a full report regarding the matter would be presented to the next meeting of the Conservators, in October 2015.

- b) Downs House. The Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services informed the Conservators that the relevant documents had been issued to all parties and that it was hoped that the exchange of contracts would be completed soon.
- c) Epsom Golf Club unauthorised development and other matters. The Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services informed the Conservators that these matters would be pursued with the Golf Course and that a report would be presented to the next meeting if they had not been resolved by that time.
- d) Proposed Tee extension, vegetation clearance and path creation works to 1st hole and path creation between 11th and 12th holes of Epsom Golf Course. The Conservators noted that the Council's Tree Officer had not objected to the proposed vegetation and tree clearance, but that the Golf Club were required to obtain a Forestry Commission licence for the works. A further report would be presented to the next meeting of the Conservators once full details of the proposed works (including path locations and materials) had been submitted by the Golf Club.
- e) Access to the Tattenham Corner Road crossing for pedestrians walking from Tattenham Corner Station. It was noted that the Streetcare Manager would look into this matter.
- f) Dog Control on the Downs. The Streetcare Manager informed the Conservators that Stephen Jenkinson, a consultant on dog control issues had been contacted for his views on the measures proposed and agreed at the last meeting of the Conservators. Mr Jenkinson had informed Officers that if off-the-lead access to dog walkers was to be restricted on the Downs, the provision of an alternative area for lead-free access should also be considered. It was noted that this would be difficult to achieve on the Downs, due to the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984's restrictions on fencing, and the sensitivity of Gallops areas. The use of the Warren Recreation ground for lead-free access had been considered, but it was felt that due to difficulties in access (in particular for vehicles) this was unlikely to be successful. The possibility of encouraging dog walkers to visit the neighbouring Woodland Trust Centenary Wood site in future if they wished to have lead-free access had also been considered, and Officers would contact the Trust to discuss this. A potential alternative was a restriction on off-the-lead dog walking only prior to noon daily, but it was noted that Hack Riders would be using the Downs during the afternoon. The Streetcare Manager would arrange a meeting with the Hack Rider Representatives to the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee to discuss this issue.

It was noted that Officers were in contact with a representative of a local dog-walking Facebook group and would liaise with them in future, to assist in communicating messages to the public.

Simon Dow informed the meeting that dog control on the Downs, and lack of enforcement of the byelaw relating to it, was a significant concern to Racehorse Trainers. The Conservators discussed the difficulties in taking enforcement action, and in particular with regard to providing the manpower resource to do so. It was noted that a provision for such a resource was not contained within the 2015-16 budget, and would need to be funded separately. The potential for a short-term targeted period of enforcement activity, rather than a long-term dedicated officer was also discussed by the Conservators, and it was noted that it might be possible to

work in partnership with a neighbouring Local Authority to hire an enforcement Officer for such an activity.

Simon Dow also informed the meeting that the behaviour and confidence of Racehorses in the presence of dogs could be markedly different to that of other horses. This could lead to difficulties with dog walkers who had previously experienced interaction with hack rides, but not Racehorses. It was noted that Simon Dow would be invited to attend future meetings regarding the matter of dog control.

Following consideration of the matter, the Conservators agreed that a report detailing the options available with regard to dog control on the Downs would be presented to the next meeting. This report would include cost implications of each option.

- 6** FINAL ACCOUNTS 2014/15. The Conservators received a report providing the final accounts for the financial year 2014/15. A copy of Annexe 3 to the report (which had previously been marked as 'to follow') has been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Conservators were informed that expenditure exceeded income by £14,601, leading to a reduction in the working balance of the same amount. Gross expenditure for the year had been £1,316 above the original budget, with the main additional expenditure being contributions to the pension fund and installation of a lightning rod on the Downskeepers' Hut. A working balance of £64,853 had been carried forward to the 2015/16 financial year.

Following this, the Conservators:

- agreed the final accounts for 2014/15 subject to external audit;
- accepted the Statement of Accounts and the Annual Governance Statement as set out in sections 1 and 2 of Annexe 3 to the report;
- confirmed that the arrangements for internal audit as set out in the report were effective for auditing purposes;
- authorised the Chairman and Clerk to sign the Statement of Assurance on their behalf.

- 7** REPORT OF THE HEAD DOWNSKEEPER. The Conservators received and noted the report of the Head Downskeeper, including updates on events, Derby clean-up and staff training. It was noted that there was a typographical error in the report, and that it should have stated that the Derby Gypsy Caravan site opened one day early, on 28 May 2015.

The following items were discussed:

- a) Antisocial behaviour in Beech Wood by members of the Traveller community during the Derby period. The Conservators were informed that the Beech Wood had again been used as a toilet during the Derby period by some members of the traveller community. The Streetcare Manager had spoken to the Gypsy and Traveller Site Manager with regard to this issue when it became apparent. The Conservators were informed that most caravans using the site provided toilet facilities, but despite this, the problem had still occurred.

Concerns were expressed by Members of the Conservators that the condition of the woods following these incidents was the worst that it had been for many years. The Conservators considered that the fencing provided for the area by the Site Manager was insufficient to deter such behaviour occurring in the woods, and agreed that this should be reviewed prior to next year's Derby Festival. The possibility of requiring metal fencing for the site in future was raised.

The Conservators also noted that the fee for using the Gypsy and Traveller site had not increased for a number of years, and agreed that this should be reviewed.

It was agreed that a report would be presented to a future meeting of the Conservators regarding these matters, and that the views of the Derby Gypsy Site Manager and Council's Gypsy Liaison Officer would be included within it.

- b) Derby clean-up. The Streetcare Manager informed the Conservators that the post Derby clean-up had not been as efficient as in previous years. Simon Durrant informed the meeting that Epsom Downs Racecourse acknowledged the issues which had been experienced this year, and that it would be discussing these with the contractor which it used for the clean-up. The Racecourse had been disappointed with the latter-stages of the clean-up, and in particular with issues encountered by skips not being emptied during windy periods.

- 8 ISSUES ARISING FROM THE DERBY RACE MEETING. Simon Durrant provided the meeting with a verbal report on issues arising from the Derby race meeting. The Conservators were informed that Epsom Downs Racecourse viewed the Derby Festival as having been very successful, and that most arrangements had gone very well.

Note: further matters relating to the Derby Race Festival 2015 are detailed in Minute number 7 above.

- 9 OUTSTANDING REFERENCES. The Conservators received and noted the position of their outstanding references to officers. It was agreed that the reference from 19 January 2012 relating to the control of the rabbit population on the hatched area at the foot of Walton Downs would be removed from the outstanding references.

- 10 DATE OF DOWNS TOUR. The Conservators agreed that Officers would identify suitable dates for a tour of the Downs, and confirm the arrangements following the meeting.

The meeting began at 18.00 hours and ended at 19.30 hours.

LIZ FROST
Chairman

**ISSUES ARISING FROM THE 2015 DERBY RACE MEETING, AND VIEWS ON
FENCING ARRANGEMENTS**

<u>Report of the:</u>	Clerk to the Conservators
<u>Contact:</u>	Tim Richardson
<u>Annexes/Appendices (attached):</u>	None
<u>Other available papers (not attached):</u>	Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 16 March 2015

REPORT SUMMARY

This item invites the Committee to provide its views on the arrangements for the 2015 Derby Race Meeting. It also invites the Committee's views on the fencing extensions granted by the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators for the 2015 Race Season.

1 Issues arising from the 2015 Derby Race Meeting

- 1.1 The Committee is invited to provide its views on the arrangements for the 2015 Ladies Day and Derby Race Meetings.

2 Views on Racecourse fencing extensions

- 2.1 At its last meeting, the Committee discussed the extensions granted to Epsom Downs Racecourse for fencing over the 2015 Race Season, and agreed that an item requesting its views on the extensions would be provided at this meeting. The Committee is invited to provide its views on the extensions granted by the Conservators, which are detailed below.
- 2.2 For the 2015 Race Season, the Conservators granted permission to the following extensions over the period permitted by the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 (The Act):

- 2.2.1 A 4-day extension to the set-up period for steel security fencing and turnstile blocks for the Upper Tattenham and Lonsdale Enclosures. This covered the period Monday 18 May – Thursday 22 May 2015.
- 2.2.2 A 1-day extension to the fencing period for steel security fencing and turnstile blocks for the Lonsdale Enclosure. This covered Wednesday 17 June 2015.
- 2.2.3 A 7-day extension to the fencing period for steel security fencing and turnstile blocks for the Lonsdale Enclosure. This covered the period Monday 10 August – Sunday 16 August 2015.
- 2.3 The Act (Paragraph (4) (d) (i) of section 17) permits the Racecourse to erect fencing for the Upper Tattenham Enclosure, Lonsdale Enclosure (and other enclosures) 14 days prior to each race event, and requires its removal within 10 days after each race event, unless there is an overlap with the preparatory period for the next event. Fencing erected for the Enclosures outside these periods requires the consent of the Conservators under Byelaw 2 (i) (a).