

BLAXHALL COMMONS and OPEN SPACES CHARITABLE TRUST

MINUTES OF TRUSTEES' MEETING

Saturday 14 June 2025 at 4:00pm

at Waterloo House, Stone Common

Attendance: Andrew Derrick, Trustee (chairing)
Eve Rossor, Trustee and Hon Secretary
Toby Bushill, Trustee and Hon Treasurer
Rosy Thornton, Trustee
Michelle Flowers, Trustee
Joy Shaw, Blaxhall Tree Warden
Darcy Proctor

Apologies: Karen Baker, PC-nominated Trustee
Miranda Barclay

1. *Minutes of the Trustees' meeting of 15 February 2025 and of the AGM of 12 April 2025*

The Minutes of the February meeting were agreed as correct and will be added to the website. The AGM Minutes were approved provisionally, and the draft will be placed on the website.

2. *Matters arising not otherwise on agenda*

February Minutes, item 7: It was reported that the owl box has now been put up at Stone Common and will be monitored.

3. *Finance*

Toby reported that the Trust is maintaining a steady financial state at present, helped by the PC grant of £200.

4. *Fundraising*

Toby raised the issue of Gift Aid, in this situation for purposes of Mark's donation. Rosy noted that during the asbestos fundraising effort, the Trust was registered for Gift Aid for purposes of the Just Giving page. **Action:** Eve to check whether the Trust is still registered for Gift Aid.

Toby reported that his application to East Suffolk Council for funding for sheep hurdles had elicited no response.

It was suggested that the Trust might reconsider applying to the Sizewell C Community Fund. One line to take might be to note the considerable increase in nightingale numbers around Blaxhall, possibly due to habitat removal at Sizewell. The removal of asbestos might be linked to the Trust's work in managing scrubland habitats suitable for nightingales and other species displaced by developments of and in connection with

Sizewell C. It was noted, however, that in order to apply to the Fund the Trust would need to adopt policies on Safeguarding and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Michelle reported that she had looked into fundraising ideas such as mugs, but noted that this is unlikely to be effective, as they are relatively expensive to produce and unlikely to sell except in very small numbers.

It was suggested that a plant stall might be a means, suitable to our environmental purposes, of raising the Trust's profile as well as raising small amounts of money. The stall would need to be close to the home of one or more Trustees, as regular watering would be required. It was agreed that possibility of a plant stall will be discussed at the next Trustees' meeting.

5. Blaxhall Festival and village fete

It was noted that the Blaxhall Festival is to be held at the village hall on the weekend of 28 and 29 June, starting at 2:00pm on the Saturday, and continuing late on Saturday for a barbecue quiz night. It will be open from 10:00am-4:00pm on the Sunday. It was agreed that BCOST will have a display in the marquee if the weather allows it to be erected, or else inside the village hall.

Actions: All to identify photos and text to go on the boards. Darcy may be able to get some materials laminated to allow for repeat use.
Eve to bring the boards to the village hall on the Saturday morning; Rosy and Michelle to help put up the display.
Joy to bring owl pellets for display.
Tables from the village hall can be used for display purposes.
Eve to try to get a blown-up version of an OS map to use to show the location of the commons.

It was agreed that the same display can then be used for the village fete, which will take place on Saturday 9 August.

6. Asbestos:

Eve reported that she had not received any pricing back from the two firms who had visited the site. It was agreed that an expert assessment is required, from an independent source, as to the state of the asbestos and whether removal is necessary.

Actions: Joy to find contact details of a local contractor; Eve to contact the contractor to arrange a survey.

7. Jasper's Pightle

It was agreed that the dates for autumn/winter work parties should be set at the next meeting, when ground nesting birds would have finished raising their broods.

Toby noted that a tree had fallen, blocking the north walk.

Actions: Eve to ask Kevin Ross, Tunstall tree warden, whether he would be able to remove it (and keep the wood). Eve to find a local tree surgeon to conduct a safety survey of the trees on Jasper's Pightle and Stone Common

8. *Stone Common:*

Joy reported that the sheep had been shorn and would return to the churchyard and then Stone Common. She noted that bracken at Stone Common is appreciably less where the sheep have grazed. It was agreed that there should be ongoing grazing to deal with the bracken, while avoiding overgrazing. The aim should be to control bracken and to maintain a patchwork of habitats including some long, tussocky grass (good for voles and therefore for barn owls) and some areas of wildflower development.

A late summer picnic at Stone Common was suggested and will be discussed at the next meeting.

It was noted that it has proven difficult to get the accumulated wire removed from the site. It was agreed to arrange a work party to cut it up, so that it can be transported to the recycling centre. Joy suggested that spare wood could be used to make a 'dead hedge', which would be a good wildlife habitat.

Action: work party dates to be set at the next meeting.

9. *AOB:*

There was no other business.

Date of next meeting: Saturday 16 August, 4:00pm at 2, Ship Cottages