

BLAXHALL COMMONS and OPEN SPACES CHARITABLE TRUST

Minutes of the Trustees' meeting

Saturday 22 August 2026 at 4:00 pm

Vine Cottage

Attendance: Rosy Thornton – Trustee (chairing)
Karen Baker – PC-nominated Trustee
Toby Bushill – Trustee and Hon Treasurer (attending online)
Eve Rossor – Trustee and Hon Secretary
Michelle Flowers – Trustee
Joy Shaw – Blaxhall Tree Warden and temporary PC-nominated Trustee

Apologies: Andrew Derrick – Trustee

1. *Minutes of meeting of 13 June 2026:*

These were agreed as correct and will be placed on the website.

2. *Matters arising:*

There were no matters arising not on the agenda.

3. *Finance update:*

Toby had circulated the current financial statement, which shows no significant change.

4. *Sizewell C Community Fund grant application:*

As discussed at earlier meetings, it was agreed that a bid would be put together for various improvements at Stone Common, seeking funding for:

- Track repair/improvement
- Bench
- Bird hide
- Bat boxes
- Goat hurdles

Consideration was also given to including the cost of removal of the asbestos Nissen huts. (It was noted that the inspection by an asbestos firm had confirmed that as far as

could be seen the material was intact, so not a particular risk at present; however, removal would become necessary at some point.)

It was felt that all these possibilities should be discussed with the Sizewell C Community Fund contact, to ascertain which might be favourably regarded. It was agreed that we should meet with the Sizewell C Community Fund contact as soon as possible to discuss the bid.

Actions: Eve to contact Sizewell C Community Fund ASAP and let Trustees know of possible times to meet. Eve to get the costs from Kerway re the track repair/improvement. Karen to talk to Sue Waring about the source of her bench. Toby to start putting together a draft grant application.

5. Allotments 26 and 27:

On 6 July 2026 Jerry Annis of A&B Surveys (recommended to BCOST by Claire Wilson of Pulham & Co), had attended to locate and demarcate the boundary line between Cherry Tree Cottage and BCOST's allotment land. Eve and Andrew were present and observing as were Malcolm and Suzy Pearce. A letter had subsequently been sent to the Pearces attaching the surveyor's plan with measurements and requesting that the Pearces sign a boundary agreement letter. Malcolm Pearce had replied to indicate that he was not prepared to sign off on the boundary which had been located and marked by the surveyor, and requesting a meeting.

Rosy and Andrew had met with the Pearces on site on 12 August 2026. At the meeting Malcolm accepted the boundary as marked by the surveyor apart from a section on the southwest side, where he claims that the true boundary is around 2 metres further from the house. He confirmed that he will not sign the boundary agreement. He indicated that will not be getting another survey, but will be consulting a solicitor. His claim appears to be that the Land Registry plan (from which all parties have been working at every meeting to date, and on which the allotment plan appended to each year's licence agreement is based) is incorrect.

Rosy reaffirmed that the Trustees' fiduciary duty is to secure the Trust property, and that having taken expert professional advice from a surveyor, the Trustees were bound to follow that advice (in the absence of other, exceptional circumstances making it in the Trust's interests to depart from that advice).

It was noted that BCOST wrote to the Pearces on 31 August 2025, giving them a year's notice that their allotment licence would not be renewed from 1 September 2026 if the boundary had not been agreed by that date. The Trustees confirmed the decision that the licence for allotments 26 and 27 should not be renewed, so that the Pearces' permission to use the allotments will terminate on 31 August 2026. After discussion, it

was agreed to give them a two-month period of grace during which the allotments will not be relicensed to anyone else. This period, the Trustees decided, should be sufficient to allow the Pearces to remove any personal property from the allotments and to obtain legal advice regarding the boundary.

Action: The Trust will write again to the Pearces, formally confirming the Trustees' decision that, unless and until the boundary is agreed, we will not be renewing the Pearces' allotment licence as of 1 September 2026, but that allotments 26 and 27 will not be relicensed to any other person or persons for a period of two months – i.e. not before 1 November 2026. Rosy to draft a letter for Eve to send to the Pearces on behalf of the Trustees.

6. Renewal of allotment licences:

Toby to print these out in duplicate for Eve to sign and distribute, for licensees to sign and return one copy.

7. Stone Common update:

A well-attended work party had been held on 26 July, focussing on ragwort control on the public access land.

Joy and Darcy have agreed that they will share the grazing of the public access land and are helpfully coordinating to facilitate this.

Joy reported that most of the hedging is in reasonable condition in spite of the drought; the fruit trees have helpfully been watered by Stone Common residents. However, the fruit trees at the playing field have suffered and some may need replacing.

It was agreed that work parties this autumn and winter will focus on the maintenance of the trees and hedges, and the clearing of bracken and remaining wire in order to make the public access area usable.

Dates were agreed for Stone Common work parties as follows:

13 September 2:00pm

11 October 2:00pm

8 November 2:00pm (followed by bonfire at 5:00pm)

6 December 2:00pm

and possibly Monday 28 December 2:00pm

8. *Jasper's Pightle update:*

Ben from SWT had been unable to access the Pightle in order to cut the bracken, due to forestry activities nearby. Rosy had spoken to Ben and to Jamie Bell from Forestry England: Ben will contact Forestry England directly to arrange access.

It was agreed that work parties this autumn and winter will focus on bracken raking (once it has been cut) and clearing the hedge of bracken.

Dates were agreed for Jasper's Pightle work parties as follows:

27 September 2:00pm

25 October 2:00pm

22 November 2:00pm

9. *Bonfire party:*

It was agreed that this should be held on Sunday 8 November, starting at 5:00pm.

10. *Wassailing:*

This was arranged for Sunday 10 January, with a Stone Common work party beforehand (from 2:00pm) to build the bonfire. The Wassail event will start at the playing fields at 4:30pm (to coincide with the end of the board games afternoon in the village hall) and then process to Stone Common where there will be refreshments and a smallish bonfire.

11. *Autumn Litter Pick:*

It was agreed that this will be held from Saturday 24 October to Sunday 1 November. Picker, bags and a list of roads will be by left the back door of Vine Cottage as usual.

12. *AOB:*

It was noted that BCOST had a display at the Blaxhall Festival in June, and at the fete on 15 August. At the fete the BCOST display boards were accompanied in the gazebo by a display from Barn Owl Support Suffolk (BOSS). We received just over £5 in donations in our collecting box at the fete.

Date of next meeting: Saturday 10 October, 4:00pm at Vine Cottage