

AGENDA

Meeting of the Commons Conservators
Thursday 13th July 2023 at 2pm – 4pm
Rackliff Centre, 26 Lower Green Road, Rusthall, TN4 8TE.

Zoom link available on request.

1. DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTEREST
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 APRIL 2023 – attached
4. COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 24 APRIL 2023, 22 MAY 2023 AND 27 JUNE 2023 – attached
5. MATTERS ARISING (IM)
6. RISK MANAGEMENT – Update from Clerk and Ranger
7. CLERK’S REPORT– attached
8. RANGER’S REPORT AND WORK SCHEDULE. – attached
9. FINANCE REPORT (FEEDBACK FROM INTERNAL AUDIT) - attached (ALG)
10. UPDATE FROM THE FRIENDS OF THE COMMONS – attached (CE)
11. MARKETING AND PR REPORT - attached (GS)
12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
 - i) Hospice in the Weald would like to add a bouncy castle to their plans for the 17th September run. Do Conservators approve this request?
13. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

23/00705/FULL | Single storey lower ground floor extension with new steps access | Dingley Dell Langton Road Royal Tunbridge Wells Kent TN4 8XG

Response on behalf of the Commons Conservators: While the Commons Conservators neither object or support the application, they wish to remind the applicant that the land surrounding the boundary wall of the property is part of Rusthall Common, registered Village Green (VG23) and Local Wildlife Site (LW24). As such we have a legal obligation to protect the land and wish to reiterate that no vehicles can park, or tools, machinery or materials can be stored, on the land.

In the last year, there have been significant issues with contractor vehicles parking on Rusthall Common and in unsafe locations at the junction of Rusthall Road and Langton Road, while the current building project at Dingley Dell is under construction (planning application 20/01474/FULL and 20/03543/FULL). Despite the intervention of Conservators' Officers, TWBC Planning Enforcement and the local Kent Police PCSO the situation has continued to cause damage to the land and worrying traffic safety issues. If this application is approved, we urge the applicant to consider a practicable plan for access, parking and storage, potentially utilising their land on the golf course, behind the property, rather than in front of it. We ask that our request is included as an informative.

While we have been informed that this is not a matter for planning legislation, we feel strongly that it is not a matter that should be ignored.

Should the applicant wish to discuss arrangements further they are advised to contact the General Manager of Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons on email, gemma.stapeley@twcommons.org

23/01340/FULL | Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of two storey replacement dwelling | South Lodge Nevill Park Royal Tunbridge Wells Kent TN4 8NW

Response on behalf of the Commons Conservators: While we neither object or support the application, the Commons Conservators wish to remind the applicant that the land on either side of the entrance from Nevill Park off Major York's Road up to the white entrance gate is Tunbridge Wells Common, registered Village Green (VG22), as such no tools, equipment or materials can be stored and no vehicles can park, on the Common.

The Ranger to the Commons Conservators, is a trained ecologist and has a confirmed sighting, with video footage, of a torpid dormouse in the garden boundary of the property directly opposite South Lodge on 26th April 2023. Dormice are a protected species listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Given the uninhabited state of the proposed development it is very likely that the hedgerow boundary, the surrounding vegetation and the existing property itself will have this species nesting and residing within. We would therefore insist that a professional ecologist be on site to respond to any disturbance as demolition occurred. We would also like to request that the applicant provide 10 dormice boxes that can put up on the Common, in the vicinity prior to any works commencing, to aid their transfer to new habitat.

Should the applicant wish to discuss the matter further, the Clerk can be contacted at gemma.stapeley@twcommons.org

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 19 OCTOBER 2023 - Rackliff Centre, Rusthall.

EXEMPT SESSION – Please appoint someone to take minutes.