

Greenham & Crookham Common Commission Meeting

**Minutes of Thursday 5th February 2026: 7pm
West Berkshire Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury RG14 5LD
in the Roger Croft Room**

Commissioners Present

Sharon Bovingdon (Local Access Forum), Judith Curson (Commoner), Derek Cutt (Commoner), Sue Ellis (WBHF & Chairman), Tom Hayward (BBOWT), Paul Hendry (WBDC), Roger Hunneman (NTC), Ken Neal (Commoner, Vice Chair) – Remote attendance, John Parker (Conservation Volunteers), Simon Pike (TTC), Steve Proud (BBOWT) – Remote attendance, Claudia Sievers (Commoner) – Remote attendance
Secretary: Jon Davey

Agenda

1. Apologies

Tony Ferguson, James Field, Frank Huxtable, Sally-Ann Jay, Nicole Rorie

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations over and above those registered already

3. Public Session

There were no public present

4. Minutes of the last meeting 7th October 2025 and Matters Arising

Actions:

- Commissioners to provide any comments to Sue Ellis, who will circulate a proposed response by 13th October. Completed
- Tom Hayward will circulate a map of the planned works by end October for the Commission's information. Tom will now send a map of all completed works once they are finished in a few weeks.
- Sue Ellis will invite Ken Neal to the Governance meeting at Estovers on Tuesday 14th October at 1pm to put the graziers pov to the committee, and make a formal decision at that time. Completed. Ken attended and it was agreed 25 cattle could graze on the Common until the end of February.
- It was agreed that the public could have access to the footpaths and all dogs to be kept on leads. Completed
- Sue Ellis is working on this (NB to be completed once the Crookham Pools Common Land is adopted into the Commons). Work in progress.
- Circulate possible dates, check room availability with Paul Hendry. Completed
- Sue Ellis will advise the Control Tower Trust of our views. Completed

The minutes of the meeting held 7th October 2025 were approved.

Commissioners were reminded by the secretary to send comments when the minutes are circulated for comment, so that they can be processed more smoothly in future.

5. Gorse monitoring and removal (TH/SP)

Tom advised they were cutting right back and burning this year, twice as much as last, so that machines can be used to mow in future years. There have been a couple of complaints about the smoke. They do try to work with the wind to minimise effects of smoke. More information can be found, in real time, on the website about the works being conducted. Two/three weeks of work left to do. [Web link needed](#)

6. Cattle on the Commons – numbers in 2026

The aim is to have similar numbers to last year in any given month. The final decision to be made at the Governance meeting.

7. Control Tower Car Park - Locking and Opening the gate

Tom made an appeal on behalf of BBOWT for sources of funding to manage the opening and closing of the gates, which currently cost £5k a year. BBOWT are going to

consult with the Control Tower management team and make a funding request to Greenham Parish Council. WBC are exploring savings within budgets including the BBOWT partnership and this is one way to reduce expenditure. There are some concerns around anti-social behaviour that might occur but they will be running a trial shortly. There are height restriction barriers which will remain locked.

7. Committee reports

Governance Committee Meetings (14th & 23rd October, 2nd December) report (SE)

They are looking at the registration documents and working on an information flyer to better inform residents of their rights. What they can and can't do on the Common land. Concerns over increasing encroachment, especially with gas cylinders for heating homes / businesses being installed. It was suggested that it is likely, a property owner's insurance would only cover them for their property within their curtilage and this should be checked and highlighted, especially with dryer summers to come and the increased risk of explosion.

9. AOB

Regarding Crookham Pools Common Land, as outlined in Section 3(3) of Greenham and Crookham Commons Act 2002 - Paul Hendry is taking his report forward early spring for a decision. It is for WBC to agree that this location can form part of the grazed area of the Common (its an administrative issue – its been grazed for years but the Act requires a formal decision).

The chair advised she is working on getting Crookham Pools recognised officially as part of the Common.

Judy mentioned the tree of hope and what an excellent ceremony this was, bar the weather. Ken commented that they have since discovered it was planted on the old fire station and would need to be moved to allow the tree the best growth potential.

Roger is keen to source funding for a running track for the Newbury parkrun as the grounds at Victoria Park had been damaged by its popularity. The runs have had to be cancelled over the winter to allow the ground to recover.

Ken mentioned that the Beating of the Bounds would likely be on the 18th October 2026, as there could be opportunities the week before to promote at Thatcham Festival.

Tom mentioned a charity fun run at the end February and an assisted dog walking event mid March to encourage responsible dog walking.

10. Next meeting date: Tuesday 12th May

The meeting closed at 8pm