

Friends of Palewell Common

Minutes of Committee meeting held at 19.00 on 17 September 2025 at 22 Stonehill Road

Present: Andy Sutch (Chair), Jessica Rettie, Michael French, Rikki Marks, Bernard Adams, Ollie Carter, Sarah Carter

1. Apologies and Minutes of last meeting – No apologies and minutes approved. Welcome to Ollie.

2. GoApe Proposal

No change. Nothing additional heard on this.

3. Queries raised by members

- a. Dog exercise area. Response: Dogs are welcome on the common off lead and we are not aware of any other requests for this from other members or users of the common.
- b. Bird feeding on the common. Response: Not deemed a big problem at this time but if it becomes an issue then consider signage.

4. Membership updates

New members since the AGM (50+) bring the total number of members to over 150.

The question was raised as to how we now maintain their interest, particularly local people on immediate roads around the common. Key to this is engagement via the website and events plus information on the common itself. All topics were covered in more detail.

5. Finance

The bank balance as it stands is £3,915.

Jess now set up as a signatory however this should be tested. Once tested, other old signatories can be removed.

Ideas for spending funds were discussed. The top priority was deemed to be shade for the playground, however it was felt that this should be funded by the Council.

Another possible item to purchase would be a portable cricket screen. Andy mentioned these would be around £900.

Action: Jess to sign cheque and see if it is processed without issue

Action: Jess to compare membership list to donations received into the bank account.

Action: Andy to email the Council about getting shade installed in the playground.

Action: The address for delivery of statements should be changed

This resolution should provide the necessary authority to make the changes at the Bank.

5. Website and email address

The website was determined to be a top priority. The last quote to fix this was around £500, which the committee agreed should be approved.

Ollie offered to assist with maintaining the website once it was fixed.

Sarah highlighted that the current email provider did not allow any helpful functionality to be able to manage contact lists or opt out messages etc. It was agreed that a new email address could be used and published on the website.

The website should include details on how to book an event on the common.

Ollie noted that there should be signs on the noticeboard areas on the common and possibly on the gate to the dog free area and in the cafe. In order to access the noticeboards a key is required which was believed could be with David.

Action: Jess to reach out to contact again who can update the website.

Action: Ollie to draft signs

Action: Rikki to see if David has the key

6. Events

25 people had signed up for the litter pick on 21 September. It was agreed that the Friends would support with £50 towards teas and coffees for volunteers.

A Halloween event on 18 October (before half term) was agreed. Format as per prior years will be a pumpkin hunt with sweets and oranges as prizes. It was agreed that a face painter would be hired also at a cost of approximately £200.

Action: Jess to book the face painter and buy sweets. The committee will organise other areas of the event via email

Action: Sarah to send a save the date to the membership for the Halloween event.

Action: To ask the East Sheen Village team to produce a flier.

7. Parks policy

Andy updated on the latest insights into Parks Policy relevant to future events held on the Common. As of now if someone applies to hold an event then the event is first approved by the council and then the friends for comment. Andy fed back that if the Friends groups requested the event in the first instance this should be taken as approved. A limit of 50 attending an event is being considered, above which the current process will apply. Andy fed back that this should apply to adults only.

A question arose in relation to the use of temporary shelters e.g. gazebos at events and whether this was permitted.

It was noted that there are not that many events that actually take place on the common outside of sports.

8. Sports

Boule - Bernard reported that boule was currently going well, however more may be needed in the future to encourage more use.

Tennis - Andy reported that the number of booked lessons had dropped although court use remained strong. The solar panel on the gate should be installed before Christmas.

Cricket - Andy reported the date for the installation of the synthetic wicket should be January 2026.

Golf - there was no update, despite chasing, on the future of golf.

9. Conservation

Andy highlighted that questions remained over who was going to be maintaining the woodland and conservation work moving forward. No other significant updates at this time.

10. East Sheen Village group

Andy and Jess met with representatives from the East Sheen Village business community group to discuss their future plans and to build a relationship between both the group and the Friends. More to follow on their plans once preliminary discussions with the council have taken place.

8. Any other business .

The Committee thought it a good idea to look into producing a little token to hand to new members in the form of a postcard with a picture of the common and a pin badge.

9. Date of next meeting

19 November 2025.

10. The meeting concluded at 20.30