

# THE FRIENDS OF LITTLEHEATH WOODS



## Invitation To 2026 AGM and Chairs Report for 25/26

Dear Friend, Our AGM this year will be held at St Johns Church, Upper Selsdon Road, in their Garden Room on Wednesday 29th April 2026 commencing at 7:30pm. The Agenda is on page 2. Item 4 on the Agenda, Chairs Report, is below:

### 1 Work Party Activity

Our work party volunteers, ably led by Chris, continue to be out in (almost) all weathers although since the last AGM we have had work parties cancelled due to rain, snow and excessive temperatures. Volunteer numbers remain healthy but many of us are noticing that we cannot do quite as much or as fast as we used to. New volunteers are always welcome so perhaps you would consider joining us one morning to experience some fresh air, socialise with like minded people and maintain fitness whilst making a positive difference to Littleheath Woods. Looking through the Workparty Diary I see that the main issues that we dealt with were:

Bramble clearance to create a better environment for our bluebell stands, cutting back encroachment on the fields, maintaining overgrown vegetation along the paths, creating habitat piles from the numerous tree falls which occurred throughout the year, coppicing our hazel coups and creating dead hedges. Holly control continues to be a continuous task: When the deciduous trees are bare of leaves one cannot but help notice how aggressive the spread of Holly can be. When its long wispy lower branches touches the ground it will swiftly take root and spread.

### 2 Looking forward:

Unfortunately our Grant Application to Croydon Council to fund the replacement of seats in the woods which are past their useful life was unsuccessful but with financial assistance from Selsdon Residents Association and seat sponsors we are looking forward to working with The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) in the near future to carry out this work. The Councils forestry contractors have felled trees to create our second Ride, this one along The Vanguard Way. We have much brash and debris to clear up.

Croydon Council remain in financial difficulties and we are most pleased that the Parks Department have sourced Council funds to reimburse our insurance premium costs. With 3 trained Chainsaw operatives on our team our premiums are higher than most groups but we suggest that we are good value for money. Despite a healthy but prudent bank balance we are still reliant on membership subscriptions, donations and Easyfundraising. John Gallagher and Sean Walsh have unfortunately decided to stand down from the Committee. Sean has provided many years of valuable support, and we thank him for his time and efforts. The resignations means that we carry three vacancies. If you are interested in joining the Committee and would like to know more please feel free to contact me for a chat and any further information you may need.

### 3 Subscriptions, Fundraising and Social Media

At our AGM we will be proposing to keep our household membership at £5. If you wish to renew your membership for the year 26 / 27 you can complete the form attached and deliver to either Chris at 51 Foxearth, Ian at 53 Queenhill or Shirley at 42 Farley Road. We would prefer to receive your Standing Order (SO) form which would be a one time subscription for a continuing annual payment or subscribe via online banking. Our banking details are on the SO form. You can keep up to date with us via our website ([www.folw.co.uk](http://www.folw.co.uk)) and our Facebook page (Friends of Littleheath Woods)

Kind Regards, Ian Leggatt. Chair, Friends of Littleheath Woods

**THE FRIENDS OF LITTLEHEATH WOODS**  
**Agenda for Annual General Meeting.**  
**St John the Divine Church, Garden Room, Upper Selsdon Road,**  
**Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2026 @ 7:30pm.**

1. Welcome and Apologies for absence.
2. Adoption of last AGM Minutes.
3. Matters arising
4. Chairman's Report.
5. Treasurers Report.
6. Election of Committee.
7. Agreement of Annual Subscription for Membership.
8. Any other business.
9. Close

Minutes of the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of  
**THE FRIENDS OF LITTLEHEATH WOODS**

St John's Church, Selsdon, Garden Room Suite  
Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 at 8.00pm

**Those Present:**

Jeff & Valerie Bayton, Sheila Childs, Brian Flynn, Peter Hall, Chris & Adrian Hyde, Ian & Kathy Leggatt, Ewald Schroder, Shirley Shepherd, Linda Sinclair, Graham Meadows, Richard Morley-Smith, Brian Stone, Chris Struthers, Martin Taylor, Peter Underwood, Councillor Robert Ward, Stephen Wright.

**Apologies for Absence:**

Lucinda Offer, Alice Owusu-Evans (Croydon Council), Keith Sinclair, Sean Walsh, Cyril Watmore, Mickey Wheeler.

**Item 1: Welcome**

Chairman Ian Leggatt thanked all those present for coming, reminding them that this was the Friends' 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary but only its 28<sup>th</sup> AGM, as a result of the intervention of Covid.

**Item 2: Minutes of the AGM of 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024**

The adoption of the Minutes of the 2024 AGM was proposed by Martin Taylor, seconded by Adrian Hyde and agreed by general vote.

**Item 3: Matters Arising**

- .The proposed article for the "Inside Croydon" magazine under preparation by Peter Underwood would now include a celebration of the Friends' 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary;
- .Noted that the condition of woodland paths was a regular item for review by the Committee and Working Party activity but it remained a current policy not to introduce tarmac or paving. Charcoal had been laid where the accumulation of surface water was a particular occurrence;
- .Although surveys of flora and fungi continued, no formal provision had been made for ground-based fauna; candidates with relevant expertise would be welcomed. Data on the presence of birds is being collected during 2025.
- .The latest iteration of the "5 Year Management Plan" to 2028 was approved by the relevant Croydon Council staff (who have been subject to recent changes of personnel) at the beginning of 2025.

**Item 4: Chairman's Report**

The Chairman drew attention to his 2024/25 Newsletter which accompanied the invitation to the AGM. While it was proposed to maintain the household membership at £5, he encouraged benefactors to use "**Easyfundraising**" to support the Friends with donations.

**Item 5: Treasurer's Report**

Chris Hyde distributed copies of the "End of Year Summary" of the Accounts for 2024/25 (which had been confirmed by Reviewer Marc Stas) and showed a bank balance carried forward of £4,211, down by £890 from the 2023/24 value. She advised that:

- a) Subscriptions remained at a similar level to the previous year;
- b) Annual donations from product sales have reduced between years (from £900 to £500) as log stocks have been exhausted;
- c) Donations via **EasyFundraising** remain a useful option to be encouraged;
- d) Equipment and training expenses relate to the acquisition of another battery-operated chain saw and training for its operator;
- e) Some replacement of tools will be necessary in 2025;
- f) The Committee wished to thank the Reviewer for his confirmation of the Accounts.

The report was proposed by Kathy Leggatt, seconded by Peter Underwood and accepted by general vote.

#### **Item 6: Constitution and Election of Committee Members**

- a) The Chairman reported that long-standing member Brian Stone would be standing down from the Committee (and also the Working Party) after this meeting and recorded his thanks for his long service. Since joining the Working Party membership in February 1999, Brian has instigated and led the installation of most of the bench seating in the Woods, became the first certified chainsaw operator and managed the programme of converting fallen trees into logs for sale – a valuable source of income to the Friends. He was also the instructor for the safe use of tools.
- b) The remaining members of the Committee were all willing to continue as follows:
- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Chairman – Ian Leggatt  | Member – Brian Flynn      |
| Treasurer – Chris Hyde  | Member – John Gallagher   |
| Secretary – Jeff Bayton | Member – Shirley Shepherd |
|                         | Member – Peter Underwood  |
|                         | Member – Sean Walsh       |

It was suggested to re-elect the current Committee *en bloc*; this was proposed by Richard Morley-Smith, seconded by Adrian Hyde and accepted by general vote.

- c) The Friends' Constitution provides for 3 officers and **6** members, while co-option for specific tasks is also possible. Interested parties should contact the Chairman in the first instance.
- d) As an instance of the impact of Littleheath Woods on the local community, the Chairman mentioned some dates, including:

Year 1493 – first documented mention of “Littleheath Woods”  
Year 1932 – first declared an “Open Space” by Croydon Borough  
Year 1996 – First FoLW “Working Party” activity.

It is likely that the FoLW is the oldest “Friends” Group in the Borough. Prior to November 1996, Working Parties were held in the Woods on Sundays, but were organised and run by BCTV, as they had both the tools and the experience. Ian Leggatt, Martin Taylor and Graham Meadows were early members of that group. The first Working Party organised by FoLW was a mid-week event in November 1996, consisting of 5 people (again including Ian Leggatt and, subsequently, Martin Taylor and Graham Meadows) and led by Patricia Croke, the prime motivator and organiser for the next 20 years. The current Working Party is 15 strong, managed by Chris Hyde, to whom the Committee is very grateful! Between 1996 and 2024 there have been over 1,400 Working Parties, including 50 different members, spending over 40,000 person hours on site.

#### **Item 7: Annual Subscription**

The Treasurer reported an increase in the number of subscriptions being paid by Standing Order, simplifying the administration. Retention of the current rate of £5 per household per annum for 2025/26 was proposed by Kathy Leggatt, seconded by Jeff Bayton and accepted by general vote.

#### **Item 8: Reporting of Environmental Damage**

A Councillor being present at the meeting, advice was sought from the floor for the appropriate methodology to report local environmental problems, with the specific

example of damage to a tree at 22 Rylandes Road, apparently caused by the movement of a skip. Robert Ward spoke to confirm that the mapping of “green space” in Croydon Borough was continuing, including the up-dating of tree locations. In such instances, a report should be filed on the “Love Clean Streets” website for follow up action: an acknowledgement of the report should be received within a fortnight. Such notifications (which could include fly-tipping and animal carcasses requiring removal) would allow the proper processes to be activated, and monitored by Councillors.

**Item 9: Close of Meeting**

The Chairman thanked all those present for their attendance and directed their attention to the available refreshments. The business meeting closed at 8.40pm.

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Please don't forget to add **Easyfundraising** to your computer toolbar to automatically raise funds when you do any online shopping with participating retailers. Create your account at <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk> and nominate “Friends of Littleheath Woods” as your chosen beneficiary.