

**The Friends of Littleheath Woods
Minutes of the Committee Meeting of 25th February 2026 at 42 Farley
Road**

- 1) **Welcome and Apologies**
Present: Ian Leggatt (IL), Jeff Bayton (JB), Brian Flynn (BF), Chris Hyde (CH), Shirley Shepherd (SS), Peter Underwood (PU)
Apologies: Sean Walsh (SW)
- 2) **Minutes of the Meeting of 11th December 2025 and informal meeting of 3rd February 2026**
 - a) The draft Minutes were agreed.
- 3) **Treasurer's Report and Finances**
 - a) CH reported that:
 - The current bank balance stood at £4,873;
 - Product from recent coppicing had been sold to the 'Wilderness' project and she hoped for further sales;
 - Action in relation to the seasoning, moisture testing, storage and sale of recent product was in hand. **ACTION BF & CH**
- 4) **Website**
 - a) IL and SS to continue collaborating on locating and publishing photographs of Working Group members past and present, including the original Committee. **ACTION IL & SS**
- 5) **Surveys**
 - a) IL had now completed the "Qualtrics Survey" and circulated the details to Committee members.
- 6) **Woodland Walks**
 - a) Noted that the Spring Walk had been set for 18th April 2026 to coincide with the National "Day of Action" and a "Fungus Foray" could be arranged for the Autumn;
 - b) CH advised that a pre-Christmas "Winter" Walk would be feasible but would depend upon ground and weather conditions;
 - c) The further option of a "Summer Walk" identifying trees deemed to be 'significant' to Littleheath by virtue of their size, age or unusual characteristics was discussed. PU offered to identify suitable specimens for discussion at the June meeting.
ACTION SS, PU & CH
- 7) **Working Party Items**
 - a) Noted that refurbishment of a second strimmer/brush cutter, including purchase of a suitable blade, would be held over until the summer and costs would be charged to FOLW funds.
ACTION BF
 - b) With reference to enhancing BF's chainsaw training at Kingswood Training Centre, it was Noted that this was the subject of a grant bid but would be funded by FOLW if the bid failed.

- c) CH reported that she now held a complete set of keys for the 3 vehicular access gates to the Woods. IL advised that the Edgecombe Gate lock had been damaged and reported to the Council, but that he would check to see if the lock was now fully functioning.

8) Developments in Littleheath Woods

- a) Regarding the Vanguard Way, tree felling has been undertaken along the new Ride. FOLW Working Parties are clearing and disposing of the remaining brash;
- b) With regard to the Planning Application at 32 Littleheath Road, IL reported no specific condition preventing access to the property (for the movement of men, machines or material) via Littleheath Woods had been included in the Application. He would continue to monitor the commencement of works to check whether access is being made via the Woods. **ACTION IL**

9) “Green Spaces” Grants

- a) IL reported that a bid for seats had been presented as previously reported, supported by written statements of perceived and reported need from officers and users of the SRA and the Vanguard Way Association. as well as regular dog walkers. The written application had emphasised the involvement of local volunteers (TCV and FoLW) in the exercise.
- b) The major bid (for £2,500) had provided for 7 new benches as previously described. A second, separate, bid, had also been made for BF’s Chainsaw training, the booking for which needed to be completed by 17th March and for which equipment would need to be assembled. BF would review the requirements and sources, which could include kit owned by FOLW and/or provided by Cyril Watmore, or Brian Stone, could be borrowed from TCV;
ACTION BF & PU
- c) **Noted**, that, in the event of the bids being modified or rejected. FOLW funds could provide for the training costs and for selected bench replacement to be undertaken in due course;
- d) Members understood that the successful awards would be announced by the end of February and allocations made by the end of March, to coincide with the fiscal year.

10) Relocation of FOLW Tool Store and Log Depository

- a) IL reported that he had accepted SW's resignation from the Committee and would report it to the AGM with his thanks for SW's past services.
- b) It was Noted that suggestions made at the informal meeting of 3rd February regarding alternative storage spaces had not been successful; however, bagged logs can be stored on a member's drive. It was Noted that the pallets would be taken to the coppicing produce storage area to raise the produce off the ground; the overhead cover could be made available to cover the bagged logs.
- c) It was further Noted that CH had compiled a detailed listing of the contents of the shed, as well as some materials stored outside. Agreed that she would circulate this list and request Committee colleagues to identify:
- i. Items which should be retained but could be stored outside (e.g. deer netting) and so kept by FOLW members;
 - ii. Items which should be discarded as of no further use to anyone, being unsafe or broken;
 - iii. Equipment which could be sold or given away to commercial users (e.g. chainsaws in need of repair);
 - iv. Items which could be donated to other groups, including TCV, with the proviso that they could be borrowed back if needed;
 - v. Equipment in regular, but seasonal use, which could be relocated to Friends and retrieved when required;
 - vi. Equipment in regular use, which would need to be stored locally and could include wheelbarrows.

In doing so, CH would specifically seek advice from Cyril Watmore on items relating to building or tree felling equipment. The initial analysis would be circulated to Committee members and shown to members of the Working Group for further advice.

- d) It was Noted that, where FOLW supporters undertook to store equipment owned by FOLW, it remained under cover by Zurich Insurance provided that, in the event of loss, evidence could be shown of such loss being "by forced or violent entry" to their property, but they would be advised to discuss the insurance position with their own domestic insurers as regards cover for such damage.

- e) It was considered that the shed itself was not amenable to be moved again and would be abandoned once emptied. The timescale for emptying it was assessed as 3 months. **ACTION: CH and assistance as required.**

11) Preparations for Annual General Meeting: 29th April 2026

- a) The Chair invited all those Committee members in attendance to mail him their confirmation of their intention to stand for continuation of their Management Committee membership for a further year. **ACTION ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS**
- b) Were this to be the case, and following Sean Walsh' standing down from Committee membership, there would be a vacancy for at least 1 and up to 3 Committee members.
- c) With regard to the practicalities:
- The Garden Room at St John's church should be booked for the evening of 29th April; **ACTION CH**
 - The Chairman would post a notice in the April "Gazette", to be provided to Editor Chris Jones by 20th March, and prepare the annual Chairman's Report: **ACTION IL**

12) Renovation of the "Selsdon Triangle"

- a) PU commended those members of FOLW who had top-dressed the Triangle in the Autumn and advised that he had posted a photograph of the crocuses currently blooming there!

13) Date of Next Ordinary Meeting

10th June 2026. The Meeting closed at 9.05pm. Members thanked SS for her hospitality.