

The
Blaxhall Commons & Open Spaces
Charitable Trust



Open Public Meeting – Your Views Matter – Summary

5th March 2016 – Blaxhall Village Hall

Questions

- Q1 - What do you value most about the Commons and Open Spaces in Blaxhall?
- Q2 - What changes have you seen observed on the Commons and Open Spaces in Blaxhall in the last 5-10 years?
 - Improvements
 - Concerns
- Q3 - How would you like to see the Commons and Open Spaces in Blaxhall be managed in the future?
- Q4 - What are your initial thoughts about the idea of a Charitable Trust?
 - Advantages
 - Concerns

Basic Statistics

- Open Meeting Attendees – 55 people
- Question 1 – 48 responses
- Question 2
 - Improvements – 18 responses
 - Concerns – 30 responses
- Question 3 – 43 responses
- Question 4
 - Advantages – 26 responses
 - Concerns – 22 responses
- People Registered – 31, E-mail updates - 22
- Interested in Membership - 10

Q1 - What do you value most about the Commons and Open Spaces in Blaxhall?

- Open and accessible to all
- Walk around freely - no closed off areas
- Use for leisure – dog walking, blackberrying, kids playing
- Use for enjoying wildlife – birds, butterflies, insects, trees, flowers
- Natural and undeveloped – not over manicured
- Sense of continuity, sense of history, sense of peace
- Cannot be built upon
- Part of the character of Blaxhall

Q2 - What changes have you seen observed on the Commons and Open Spaces in Blaxhall in the last 5-10 years?

• Improvements

- The great common is well maintained
- Clearance of scrub on great common
- Working parties looking after big common
- Blocking vehicle access

• Concerns

- Private acquisitions – limiting access, illegal digging
- Encroachment – car parking
- Loss of wildlife habitat
- Areas becoming overgrown
- Threat of development on commons or open spaces

Q3 - How would you like to see the Commons and Open Spaces in Blaxhall be managed in the future?

- Own commons for benefit of all
- Maintain open access for people
- Light touch – sympathetic management – not too tidy
- Encourage wildlife and biodiversity – Gorse & Nightingales
- Improved signage on big common
- Involve community in decisions – future generations – young people
- SWT work on big common considered effective
- Balance of heathland versus trees
- Balance of open access versus wildlife

Q4 - What are your initial thoughts about the idea of a Charitable Trust?

• Advantages

- Trust seems like a good idea
- Provides a focus on the commons
- Allows commons to be managed for benefit of Blaxhall
- Potential to buy the commons
- Protect commons for future generations

• Concerns

- Ability to see it through
- Gaining and keeping the backing of the village
- What happens when current trustees resign
- Relationships between Trust and Parish Council
- Funding