

Chairman's Report.

Welcome everybody so good to see so many people here.

My name is John king I am the current chairman of the Conservators and Therfield Regulation Trust. This has been an interesting year, we have had the result of the enquiry into the deregistration of the Briary lane site. We are naturally disappointed with the result but are moving forward in our management of the Heath and Greens.

We are putting together an action plan so that over the next months we can engage with the public and a level of transparency in to our activities. We will be consulting with the public as to how they perceive the heath should be managed.

We have had ongoing discussions with our tenants about rent and new leases, ongoing discussions with Natural England of producing a management plan for the next decade.

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There is an ever greater strain on the heath and its infrastructure. the wear on the grass the amount of dog faeces is becoming an ever-growing issue. The increased use of the car parks and subsequent wear is a large and looming cost that will have to be funded in the near future.

I know that one of the questions that you want an answer to is the Gladmans planning application on Heath Farm.

As you know the initial planning application has been refused. They entered into negotiations with us about the access along Briary Lane but have now stopped.

If we receive a formal offer we must consider it as is our legal responsibility being trustees of a charity.

The Volunteers.

We have long wanted to have conservation volunteers working on the Heath. With Cynthia Combe we have someone with the drive and knowledge to organize and guide them. They have already done valuable work in the more sensitive area of the Heath where the use of machines is not practical.

We are very concerned that the grazier has not found it practical to graze the Heath in 2018. We are in almost constant discussion with Natural England on this point. As I think most of you are aware grazing by sheep is vital to the unique flora and fauna that Therfield Heath is famous for.

The relationship with the sports clubs who use the Heath and the Recreation ground in Therfield are important to us and we hope continues to be strong. We have every intention of continuing our charitable aims towards sport.

We must also continue with the conservation work needed to keep the heath in good order. It is a very fine balance that we

try to strike between the sporting interests of a large number of people who use the heath and the requirements of the land itself. There are also all those people who just come to enjoy the heath for walks with and without their dogs plus the people are concerned and interested in all the flora and fauna on the Heath.

One of the problems we have faced this year is a large number of requests under the Environmental Impact Regulations. These made accusations of financial mismanagement which as trustees of the charity we had to take very seriously. Also we were questioned about the legality of the relationship between The Conservators of Therfield Heath and Greens And the Trustees of the Therfield Regulation Trust. Answering these allegations has taken a considerable amount of time by our clerk and by the individual trustees. They have also cost is legal fees of ?? In 2018 and already in 2019 we have invoices totalling?? These are sums which should have been spent on maintenance of the Heath and improvement facilities for all those who use the Heath. To date, The Information Commissioner who is responsible for The Environmental Impact Regulations and the Charity Commissioners have not required Conservators or Trustees to take any action

We are planning an evening open meeting in Royston Town Hall in April there we will ask all the bodies with an interest in the Heath and Greens to make a report and take questions. The Conservators will also report and lay out their thoughts for the future. They will listen to the public and endeavour to answer any questions.

Every one of the conservators that sits on this committee does it because they love the heath and the decisions that they take are done with the best intentions. May I take this opportunity to thank all of them publicly for their dedication, hard work over the last year and commitment to the organisation.

Once again may I thank so many of you for turning up. We are hoping that this interest and engagement with the conservators can continue to flourish. I hope that this can be maintained in the months/years to come and we can move forwards together and build a better environment for everyone.