

Kiosks on the Heath

Q: Where is this happening?

Near the pumping station – on the edge of the heath that is near Stake Piece Road.

What3words : clouds.cement.sushi or grumbles.guess.highways.

OS ref : TL 35180 40378

Q: What is this all about?

In summary Affinity Water have made an application (called a 's38 application' because that is the clause in the Common Land Act 2006 which they are using). Affinity Water are asking for permission to built two kiosk buildings – each one is about 16.3m³ with a footprint of 2.7m x 2.1m each. We do not think that this is the right sort of application to make. We think additional unsecured buildings positioned over the current boreholes will attract further graffiti and antisocial behaviour.

Q: Is there an alternative?

Yes there is. Affinity Water have even suggested it and each time we have actively supported it! It's called a s16 land swap. This is a sensible and low-cost solution. Using s16 would allow Affinity Water to fence off this area so that :

- the plant and machinery there is safe;
- their workers can undertaker maintenance tasks safely;
- the land and the waterworks within can be protected now and in the future.

We think that they are using s38 because it is a little cheaper. But Affinity Water is the largest only water supplier in the UK. We think the Heath deserves better than this.

Q: What is a s16 land swap?

In summary a s16 land swap 'swaps' can turn a small part of the heath into 'not common land' as long as the same amount of land – or more - is 'swapped' or given back and the new land become replacement common land. That way the Heath is always the same size (or bigger) as when it was legally created in 1888. A s16 land swap would still be looked at by the government's independent Planning Inspector (who is different from the local planning authority). You can find out more about this on the government's website

[Application form to deregister common land or village greens - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/forms/application-form-to-deregister-common-land-or-village-greens)

Q: Has this been done before?

Yes – you will have read this in the Crow. In the 1970's when the A505 needed to be made dual carriage way this could only happen by taking a slim sliver of common land in order that the A505 second lane could be built. At the same time a larger crescent shape of land was returned to the Heath and this land is common land.

Q: What about my water?

We all want a top-quality water supply. The Conservators believe Affinity Water should create a secure compound using a s16 land swap. Affinity Water agree this is best for the Heath but their cheaper section 38 application is just concrete and kiosks - no landscaping, no compound, no cleaning of graffiti, nothing to benefit the Heath. Affinity Water are a large utility company with funds to spend. In November 2020 Affinity Water announced it was spending **£53 million** on environment projects.

Q: What are the Conservators doing?

The Conservators, and the landholding trust, are objecting. You can read more about this here. We hope you join us and tell the Planning Inspectorate that the Heath must be protected for future generations. The Heath should not be spoilt by Affinity Water concrete and kiosks.

We don't think this is right for the Heath; we don't think it solves Affinity Water's problems now or in the future. They need to realise that this brings problems for them ; for your Heath; and importantly for you too as people who care about the Heath.

We drink and use the local water so like you we want the best for us and our families.. Only a s16 land swap will bring the long-term secure water station that we need and deserve. There is an alternative. Let's make sure we get the right result.

Help us protect your Heath : Write an email or write a letter but the deadline is 7 October 2021.