

# The Box Moor Trust

Your land, your heritage, your future

## The future of the Box Moor Trust's community work is at risk

Please read on to find out why

Your views matter



## Proposed deregistration and exchange of common land consultation

**The purpose of this leaflet is to inform local residents about a consultation on an official land exchange process approaching in March 2019, and to provide an overview of what the Box Moor Trust does.**

We need to carry out a local consultation to ask for your views before applying to the National Planning Inspectorate for what is known as a 'deregistration' of small areas of common land. Your views really matter. To demonstrate a fair and independent assessment of the feedback, we have employed specialist consultants.

**The financial sustainability of the Trust's work and services in the future will depend on the results.** It is very important that we get your feedback and you can do this online at [www.boxmoortrust.org.uk](http://www.boxmoortrust.org.uk). If you can't get online, you can provide feedback by filling out a paper form and sending it directly to our independent consultants via a pre-paid envelope.

This leaflet, a list of questions and answers and a survey form are being distributed at Hemel Hempstead and Bovingdon libraries, Marlowes Information Centre, Apsley Community Centre and St. Mary's Church. They are also available at the Box Moor Trust Office. A public notice has been placed in the Gazette. After this consultation there will also be the opportunity to make a 'representation' in February, either in support or against, to the Secretary of State. Details will be available in the Gazette, on the website and in the Trust office in a few weeks' time.



## The History of Box Moor Trust

**The Box Moor Trust is one of the oldest charities in the country and can be dated back to 1574, when Queen Elizabeth I presented the Earl of Leicester with a gift of land in the county of Hertfordshire. This gift included some pastures in Hemel Hempstead totalling 25 acres, which were then sold to three local men for £75, which was probably raised by a secret public subscription.**

In 1594, ownership was passed to 67 named locals, or Feoffes, to protect it for the local people for fishing, grazing and basket making for all time. The protected lands were gradually increased to 159 acres and in due course it became necessary to secure this arrangement by an Act of Parliament in 1809 which gave powers to 12 elected Trustees on behalf of all the residents in Hemel Hempstead and Bovingdon. That remains the case today where the lands have increased to 493 acres and the number of residents (beneficiaries) has risen from a few hundred in the early days to around 100,000 today.

Prior to the first Local Councils and Public Utilities in the late nineteenth century, the Trustees were deeply involved in law and order and the general wellbeing of residents. In the past, historic income from the sale of land for the canal and then the railway was used to provide for many local causes, including helping the poor prior to the introduction of the welfare state. The Trust also contributed to the building of Boxmoor Hall, The Old Town Hall and, a little later, the Memorial Hall in Bovingdon.



# Proposed deregistration and exchange of common land

Box Moor Trust land is much loved by local people. It is a place for people to walk their dogs, a haven for wildlife and a joy for photographers. It also has a series of hidden gems for nature lovers. There is a certain charm about the place; even on a rainy day the sight of Belted Galloways, Norfolk Horn sheep and horses grazing on the Moors lifts the spirits.

Fast changing circumstances have brought a significant risk to our regular income stream. For the Trust to continue protecting the land and offering services to the growing community, it is essential that it seeks new ways to fund itself sustainably. Consequently, the Trust proposes to deregister a small part of its common land for future development. In exchange it will offer an alternate plot as protected common land. At the same time, the Trust proposes four other transfers which are merely to enable the Trust to better manage these areas for the benefit of the public. The details of deregistration and exchange of common land are set out below.

Name of common land	No. plots	Size (acres)
<b>Proposed deregistered Land</b>		
Two Waters East, Apsley	1	1.5
Apsley Triangle and Two Waters Halt	3	1.18
Box Hill, Boxmoor	1	11.35
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.03</b>	
<b>In exchange for</b>		
Dellfield Wildflower Meadow, Boxmoor		<b>16 acres</b>

## Deregistration and its impacts at a glance

- **Only 1.5 acres of land**, Two Waters East, will be lost from public access. However, the exchange process will increase common land overall by 1.97 acres.
- Apsley Triangle and Two Waters Halt will be improved and transformed into a safe and attractive place to relax and enjoy.
- The Trust will **increase** the length of public footpaths including access to Dellfield, and working towards access to the Durrants wildlife area.
- Further lambing events and better farming educational activities will be offered to the public.
- **Development on Two Waters East will help secure the Trust's future and its role to serve the local community. In short, this 1.5 acres will help protect the remaining 490 acres.**

## Your Questions

A list of possible questions and answers will be supplied separately.



### Dellfield ①

In exchange for deregistration of the five parcels of land mentioned above, Dellfield (16 acres) will then have permanent public access rights and receive long term protection as common land ensuring that rare flora and fauna continue to thrive. Dellfield is part of the large Westbrook Hay Estate purchased by the Trust in 2003. Careful management has produced special wildflower meadow. It is felt that common land status will provide better protection in the long run.



### Box Hill, Boxmoor ②

Situated to the rear of Snooks End on London Road, Box Hill is a highly sensitive, prime lambing area in spring as well as a calving area at other times. The Trust would like to deregister Box Hill to use it mainly for lambing activities, including our ever popular lambing event which is free to attend. Outside of lambing season, Box Hill would be used for enhancing farming educational purposes and serve as a secure area for storing agricultural equipment.

Historically, Box Hill was given in exchange for the compulsory purchase of land for the bypass (A41), thereby assuming Common Land Status. The area is not popular with walkers because the estate manager's house and lambing barns were built at the road entrance to Box Hill. We have had incidents where lambs have been killed by dogs. If Box Hill is successful in its application for deregistration, access will still be available to the public, but dogs would need to be excluded for significant periods.

There is growing enthusiasm in the UK to bring families closer to farming and raising awareness on farming itself. The Trust has run very successful lambing events in the past and would like to build on these. Having Box Hill deregistered will allow the Trust to organise more and better events as well as educational activities. In addition, the Trust is keen to centralise its agricultural activity at Box Hill to minimise fuel usage and increase security. Adaptations would be constantly difficult as common land.



### Two Waters East, Apsley ③

A large proportion of the Trust's revenue has come from a 35 year lease with a national DIY retailer who occupies the land at Boxmoor Wharf. However, with the popularity of online shopping, there is real possibility that this retailer may not renew its lease with the Trust in 2020. This leaves much uncertainty about future income levels and our ability to continue with grants, education and community events.

In the past, there have been no opportunities to ensure a wider range of regular income. Recently Dacorum Borough Council's Two Waters Masterplan gave us a possible lifeline. The approved Masterplan suggests potential development at Two Waters East.

Two Waters East is a 1.5 acre field which was cut off from the Moors when the A41 bypass was built. Since then it has not been viable for grazing, recreation or relaxation. This is the ONLY part of our Moors or other green space that can be developed in the foreseeable future.

### Apsley Triangle and Two Waters Halt ④

We are also keen to make improvements in the much neglected area known as Apsley Triangle and Two Waters Halt (totalling 1.25 acres and comprising three small plots). In brief, we'd like to clean up the area and provide a safe, attractive riverside space for people to relax. This will include rustic fencing and seating. We also wish to work with the Borough Council to provide a link from here to the waterways around Durrants Lake with footbridges and a footpath. This will lead to the new footpath under the A14 to give a safe walk from Durrants Hill Road right through to the Moors.

These three plots are remnants from the original Moors that formed the Common. In the 20th Century successive changes in roads and more recently the positioning of a bus stop, isolated these plots. The whole area would benefit from careful planning to address the neglect that it has had over the years. The prime objective would simply be to provide better facilities for local people. Common Land Status for these areas is no longer appropriate and would cause difficulty with any alterations.

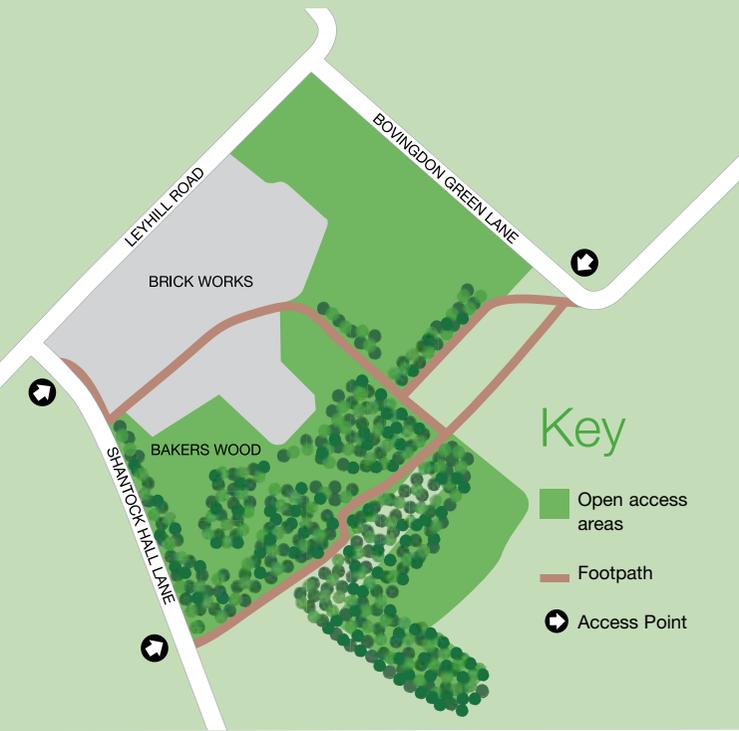
## The Trust Today

**Now a self-supporting charity, the Box Moor Trust manages nearly 500 acres of grazing and amenity land on behalf of the local community.**

Predominantly open access, the land is free to visit and explore. It includes woodlands, recreation areas, the meadows of the Bulbourne Valley between Bourne End and Two Waters, Roughdown and Sheethanger Commons, Westbrook Hay and Bovingdon Brickworks. In the last 20 years, the Trust has acquired over 240 acres of the area's fast disappearing greenspace to protect it for local people to enjoy and for wildlife to flourish.

Our Trustees are elected every five years and every adult beneficiary in Hemel Hempstead and Bovingdon can vote. The Trust is supported by a team of highly committed employees and a large number of valued volunteers who all work hard to ensure that we meet our core objectives.

### Bovingdon Brickworks



## What Does The Trust Do?

**As a registered charity, the team at the Box Moor Trust is proud of the many roles that the Trust plays in the local community. The Trust's large rural and recreational landscape on the doorstep, along with its many connections with the community, mean that we have something to offer virtually every family in Hemel Hempstead and Bovingdon. Here is a brief overview of the work that we do:**

- **Land management** – The estate team takes care of the many diverse, wildlife friendly, habitats within the Trust's ownership, including woodland, chalk meadows and amenity land. Some of the land holds scarce and endangered species of flora and fauna which is managed appropriately. Recent work on the Bulbourne has produced exciting benefits. Managing and protecting this land for successive generations over the centuries is our prime objective.
- **Grazing** – True to its origins of protecting grazing rights, the Trust continues to provide pasture for local graziers. Its own rare breed Belted Galloway cattle and flock of Norfolk Horn sheep are used to improve the pastures.
- **Sport** – Boxmoor Cricket Club, Hemel Hempstead Town Cricket Club and Hemel Hempstead (Camelot) Rugby Union Football Club all have licences to play on our land and we try hard to help them grow their sports for the benefit of local people.
- **Education** – We offer a variety of fantastic courses for schools, youth groups and adult learners which primarily take place in our special countryside. We foster strong relationships with schools within our locality and ensure that the sessions we provide link in with the National Curriculum.
- **Forest Schools** – Forest Schools have become an increasingly popular initiative, using the natural resources of the woodland to stimulate creative learning. Our qualified team of Forest School leaders run regular sessions for local schools throughout the academic year.

- **Box Moor Rangers** – Made up of three groups: Minis (3-7 year olds), Juniors (8-11 year olds) and Youth Conservation (11 years and up). Designed for children with an interest in wildlife and nature, groups meet once a month. We also run a popular monthly Nature Tots group (18 months up to 4 year olds).
- **Grants** – For many years the Trust has set aside a grant fund of up to £30,000 a year for not-for-profit organisations located within its Area of Benefit. Grants have been awarded for the provision of equipment purchases or other capital projects.
- **Community Events** – The Trust loves to bring the community together and we do this by hosting a variety of events and festivals throughout the year. Our education team also runs activity fun days for families during the school holidays.
- **Walks** – We have several walk leaflets available covering a variety of different routes. Also the Trust organises seasonal guided walks which are well worth looking out for.
- **Talks** – We also give regular talks at our Trust Centre, covering many different elements of the Trust's work such as its history, wildlife and nature, and estate management.

**For further information about any of the above please go to: [www.boxmoortrust.org.uk](http://www.boxmoortrust.org.uk) or call 01442 263300**



**The Box Moor Trust Centre**  
London Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1 2RE  
**Tel:** 01442 253300 **Email:** [admin@boxmoortrust.org.uk](mailto:admin@boxmoortrust.org.uk)  
Registered Charity No 206142

**[www.boxmoortrust.org.uk](http://www.boxmoortrust.org.uk)**

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