

## BUMMOOR COPSE

### *At Annual Parish Meeting*

- Was an independent tree survey for safety conducted by an accredited tree consultant, not the contractor. If so, ask to see it.
  - Was an ecological survey done. Who by? Ask to see it.
  - Perhaps a Freedom of Information request could be used.
  - When will the planting be done? Timeline.
  - They shouldn't ask for a DEFRA grant to replant.
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- When was the wildlife protected species survey carried out on Bummoor Copse? What were the findings?
  - What protection methods were employed to protect Early Purple Orchid – which flowers in May? (west side of Bummoor Copse, to the rear).
  - Why are non diseased, healthy, non dangerous trees being removed from Bummoor Copse?
  - Who from and how many are the complaints received concerning dangerous trees?
  - Why are trees not being coppiced in line with woodland management instead of being removed in entirety.
  - Why is ancient woodland being cut down in the face of world conservation during this current major climate crisis?
  - Why remove historic temperate forestland in its entirety?
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- Lack of effective communication
  - New time lines for restoration and replanting
  - Complete support for the statement read out
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- The public footpath notice at the side of the road has been taken down.
  - The streams behind Spiceall are blocked
  - The gate on the front field past Polsted Lane needs to be replaced.
  - Loseley needs to recognise the deep and emotional reaction to this work, and the distress to children and adults. The knowledge that the woodland was there contributed to placemaking.
  - Threat to woodland species under stress.
  - Hard to estimate the full impact of what has been lost and to understand if it can be replaced.

[REDACTED]

I have contacted the Forestry Commission, Natural England, and the Woodland Trust to understand what legal protections exist for ancient woodland and whether any breaches may have occurred. There appears to be no meaningful mechanism to prevent landowners from clearing ancient woodland, even within an AONB and SNCI. I am very disappointed that the Forestry Commission did not exclude the ancient woodland from the licence to fell, and I think it would be worthwhile to write to them formally asking that they give greater consideration to excluding such areas from felling licences in future.

I also spoke directly with Kathy Atkinson, Chair of the Surrey Hills National Landscape Board, and she has had an informal chat with one of the Directors. I asked them to consider how we might persuade Loseley to re-engage with the community. Kathy suggested an idea to encourage the estate to develop a proper long-term investment plan for the land they manage, involving some engagement with the local community to share the choices they are considering and encourage more transparency. Surrey Hills could potentially provide some funding to support this, helping the estate to access environmental expertise, create a well-considered longer-term plan, and bring the community with them on that journey. I don't know if this is something Loseley would now consider and they might now retreat further from the community but Surrey Hills are happy to have a dialogue with the Parish Council and I am very happy to help if you think Loseley might consider this.

Please could we also ask Loseley what their plans are now for the wood? In particular:

- Outline clear restoration plans for Bunmoor Copse, including replanting native species and restoring the bluebell habitat.
- Address the need to repair the wide vehicle tracks, which risk encouraging antisocial behaviour if left unmanaged.

[REDACTED]

This is the sort of thing we might be able to propose with Loseley

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [REDACTED] [mrsbags@btinternet.com](mailto:mrsbags@btinternet.com)  
**Date:** 14 May 2025 at 09:54:31 BST  
**To:** Belinda Sartori <[belinda.sartori@btinternet.com](mailto:belinda.sartori@btinternet.com)>  
**Subject:** Whole Estate Plans - South Downs National Park Authority

Hi [REDACTED]

Good to talk to you. This is what they do in the South Downs NP and we could learn from this approach and adapt it to the Surrey Hills. In fact I am meeting the Chair of the SDNP next week! So will ask her how it's gone.

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-policy/whole-estate-plans/>

As a National Landscape we are funded differently from National Parks, and we have a slightly different purpose in law, but the approach here looks to me like one we could nab and adapt, and possibly get it funded through the SHNL.

See what you think.

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I live at Flat 3 within Polsted Manor and have done so since March 2022 so I am well acquainted with Polsted Lane etc. During the second half of 2024 Loseley chopped back the verge and hedges of Polsted Lane and left it in a terribly untidy state. Sometime after this, I decided to try to clear up the lane myself, partially because it was such an eye saw but also because I have some of the tools

needed, including a battery operated chainsaw, for this type of work. I have used my chainsaw to chop up smaller trees which have fallen and blocked the lane. I have been clearing up the lane for a period of a few months now and I have recently started work on the stream that runs down the Burnmoor Copse side of the lane with a view to increasing the flow rate.

I have Alexander Moore - Molyneux's mobile number. I have spoken to him on the phone a few times when we have needed to open the gates for access to the Loseley Estate if a large tree has come down and blocked the lane while we have waited for SCC's contractor's to come and clear the lane. I have found Alexander to be helpful in these conversations.

Given the above, the question I have for Loseley is do they envisage carrying out any tidying up work along Polsted Lane as well as clearing the debris that is in the stream?

[REDACTED]

Several of us received a response from Jeremy Hunt yesterday, essentially forwarding a response from the Forestry Commission's Information Rights Manager Julia Lovell, at The Forestry Commission, following his letter to the regulatory authority regarding the tree felling on Loseley land, including Bummoor Copse.

At the end Jeremy Hunt's letter states:

*"Whilst I understand the upset these actions have caused, I trust this explanation and the information Julia includes is satisfactory, particularly with regards safety."*

It isn't satisfactory.

I'm copying in Catherine Masterman and Ramsey Nagaty. Although I have not discussed this response with either of them directly, I am getting the sense that residents are being fobbed off, not just by Loseley and the Forestry Commission but now it seems by our local MP on this matter.

I want to know how Jeremy Hunt, as our local MP **representing local constituents** who are deeply concerned by the tree-felling who are also **taxpayers that pay taxes to fund the Forestry Commission** can be satisfied with this response?

Multiple emails and communications have been made to the Commission by both individual residents and the PC about the logging, namely timing and extent of felling.

Yet, this was not cause for the Commission to exercise powers to halt the works until Loseley and/or its contractor, Silveroaks engaged with it. According to Julia Lovell's response all the Commission did was send a representative to the site who most likely took note of the logged Alder and Ash, which are included in the license conditions.

*"The area team have not had the opportunity to speak to the owner or their forestry agent but anticipate that felling has been done at this time due to the very wet nature of the woodland to minimise ground disturbance."*

The Forestry Commission has "anticipated" in place of actually obtaining any sort of response from Loseley or the contractor. Just how hard did they try to speak or meet directly with Loseley or Silveroaks? Is Jeremy Hunt not sufficiently curious to know?

*The felling licences include conditions which require felled areas to be restocked and maintained.*

How does anyone know these conditions will be met post-felling? If the Forestry Commission has failed to contact Loseley and Silveroaks now, what will change in future?

I imagine it will be left to residents to document the areas in the coming months, even years, to have any idea that these conditions are being met – nigh-on impossible since landowners are not obligated to share these with any stakeholders.

In her response Julia Lovell provided a link to “an excellent” guide on *Common sense approach to managing risk of trees* available at - <https://ntsgroup.org.uk/>.”

Rather than see us be condescended to it is important that Jeremy Hunt is made aware that we – local constituents – refer to the UK Forestry Standard, (the core reference point for UK sustainable forest management), which advises that owners and managers “*also need to consider the impacts of their decisions beyond the forest boundary and engage with others if the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity is to be achieved*”. It also notes that “*landowner, forest manager and interested stakeholders all have a role in determining the most appropriate balance of objectives for the local circumstances*”.

I urge the Parish Council not to be satisfied with this response from Jeremy Hunt even if he writes in his letter that he trusts the explanation from the Forestry Commission suffices.

[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jeremy Hunt MP** <[huntj@parliament.uk](mailto:huntj@parliament.uk)>

Date: Wed, May 14, 2025 at 3:04 PM

Subject: From Rt Hon Sir Jeremy Hunt MP (Case Ref: JE100695)

To: <[sara@vbfreelance.com](mailto:sara@vbfreelance.com)>

Dear [REDACTED]

By way of an update, Julia Lovell, Information Rights Manager at The Forestry Commission has written to me with the following response to the concerns raised by yourself and others in Compton regarding tree felling,

*‘I am sorry to learn that your constituents are still concerned about the works being undertaken at this site. Our Area team visited the site to confirm that the felling aligns with Felling Licences issued. They advise that the two key areas of felling pertain to:  
felling of large and mature poplar trees on a very wet site; and  
felling of diseased ash trees and alder coppice.*

*The area team have not had the opportunity to speak to the owner or their forestry agent but anticipate that felling has been done at this time due to the very wet nature of the woodland to minimise ground disturbance.*

*The felling licences include conditions which require felled areas to be restocked and maintained.*

*I understand that the Parish Council had a meeting last week and that our Area team are responding to your constituents directly on some of the questions. I would like to add, that woodland management is a necessary part of the woodland lifecycle and that managing risk of trees in an area of high public use is a legal requirement. You can find more information about this in the excellent guide on Common sense approach to managing risk of trees available at - <https://ntsgroup.org.uk/>*

*It is reassuring that your constituents care so much for this woodland, and I would like to reassure your constituents that the aims of the land manager and those who use the woods are aligned. The goal is to change the structure and age of the woodland for better resilience of the remaining and new trees, and so improve biodiversity, and manage risk for those who visit and live near this special site. I trust this answers your questions and I hope goes some way in alleviating your concerns.'*

Whilst I understand the upset these actions have caused, I trust this explanation and the information Julia includes is satisfactory, particularly with regards safety.

Thank you again for your correspondence, and of course, please don't hesitate to contact me again if you feel there is anything else I can help you with.

Best wishes

Jeremy

*Catherine Masterman*

I am writing in full support of everything that [REDACTED] has written and to add a couple of further points including those sent to the previous email which I understand has not been received.

With regard to the response from the Forestry Commission, neither they nor the contractors have given any satisfactory reply about why the works have taken place in nesting season other than the dryness of the ground. Whilst it is clear that is why they have not taken place previously in the year (following the December licencing) it does not in any way explain why they could not undertake the work later in the year, after nests are empty.

Secondly, without having spoken to the landowner, nor being willing to share anything about the ecological assessment, the experience of the contractor saying to residents that they were only instructed to remove the trees that would make money, (resident in Spiceall) and saying that they were not obliged to abide by the ecological assessment (resident in [REDACTED]) gives us absolutely no confidence at all that we share the same aims - indeed the note from the Estate suggests that their aims are entirely their own business so we have no reason to think that ours have any consideration at all.

I attach the statement I read out as requested (sent previously to the other account) and also would like to suggest that the **Parish Council could ask Jeremy Hunt as our MP to facilitate a meeting** between the Estate and the Council, given they are refusing to engage.

Finally, I have had a lot of responses on facebook to the posting of two photos (before and after) and a copy of my statement. Probably in total I have had 200 reactions in the different groups. The vast majority of the comments were sympathetic to the distress of the community. However, a number

asked what right I had to 'dictate' what people should do on their own land more than anyone else's back garden. I chose not to engage on social media but it is an important point that needs addressing.

The Estate is not a private home used only for domestic purposes, it is a business, and if a local business was established in the area pursuing a business model with a negative impact on the community then it would be legitimate to have a view. The fact it is a private residence means that this question becomes unclear. Presumably if I wanted to charge people to visit my house (which is very lovely and everyone is more than welcome) and admire my roses (admittedly on a smaller scale than Loseley's but still pleasing) I would need some sort of public licencing to do so. Understanding this is important in being clear about what locus the community has to take an active interest in the impact of their decisions.

It would be helpful if the **Parish Council were able to give clarity on the legal status of the arrangements** governing the money made from the Loseley Estate. Is it a Trust? Is it a Company? It is a registered Charity? The Estate is 587 hectares and a significant proportion of land in the constituency. It therefore has an outsized impact on local wildlife. The Government has recognised the outsized impact of large landowners at a national level and there is no reason why this should not be similarly recognised at a local level