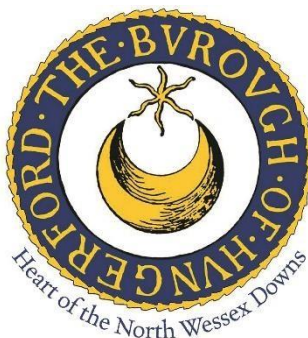


HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the Recreation, Amenities and War Memorials Committee (R&A) meeting held on Monday 19th May 2025 at 7.00pm, in the Library, Hungerford

Present: Cllrs H Simpson, C Winsor, A Fyfe, J Keates, G Montgomery, D Alford & D Reeves

In attendance: Deputy Town Clerk (DTC), 3 members of the public who are considering joining HTC as Councillors.

The minutes of the meeting are recorded in order they were discussed at committee meeting.

DTC declared the meeting open and the first item on the agenda was to elect a Chair and Deputy Chair for Recreation, Amenities and War Memorial Committee (R&A) Committee.

RA2025025 Propose election of the following positions and received signed acceptance of office forms: Chair and Deputy Chair of Recreation, Amenities & War Memorials Committee.

Cllr Simpson explained that she was happy to continue as Chair if no one else wanted to carry out the role. Cllr Fyfe nominated Cllr Simpson.

Proposed: Cllr Fyfe
Seconded: Cllr Montgomery
Resolution: Cllr Simpson was voted unanimously as Chair of R&A. AIF

Cllr Winsor explained that she would be happy to step down if someone else wanted to carry out the role. Cllr Simpson nominated Cllr Fyfe for the role of Deputy Chair after expressing her thanks and appreciation to Cllr Winsor for all her hard work. Cllr Fyfe accepted the position of Deputy Chair of R&A.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson
Seconded: Cllr Winsor
Resolution: Cllr Fyfe was voted in as Deputy Chair of R&A. AIF

Cllr Simpson continued as Chair for the rest of the meeting.

RA2025026 Apologies for absence – Cllr Armstrong

RA2025027 Declarations of Interest – none

RA2025028 Agreement of minutes of meeting held on 17th March 2025 and update on actions

Cllr Simpson read through the Actions from the Agenda – There are no actions outstanding and those that needed further investigation are listed on this agenda.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Cllrs agreed that the minutes were a true representation of the meeting held on 17th March with actions recorded as accurate or on today's agenda. AIF with one abstention.

RA2025029 Receive updated summary of maintenance list

Cllr Simpson read out the actions from the maintenance report provided (see below) and the Maintenance work priority list provided. Cllrs noted that there was only one red action recorded and that has been scheduled for immediate repair. A good number of actions have been completed and an updated list will be provided, prioritising work to be scheduled.

Cllr Simpson noted that whilst the graffiti is being removed, she will speak to the schools to remind them & their pupils that the skate park is their asset and they need to look after it more.

Cllr Simpson thanks Cllr Keates for helping put all the flags out with the Maintenance man.

Actions required/to consider:

- Concrete post at Smitham Bridge - consider using Wet Pour on the goal post
- DTC to report 101 vandalism at Bulpit Lane play park and gate post pulled out – Cllr Simpson to forward post from Facebook. DTC to refer issue to maintenance for repair/action
- DTC to confirm if any CCTV covers Bulpit Lane play park
- Cllr Simpson to liaise with schools regarding need to keep areas litter free and for pupils to realise these are assets for their benefit
- DTC to confirm ownership of fence between cricket pitch and Hungerford Common

RA2025030 Receive update on ROSPA

Cllr Simpson read out the summary from the ROSPA report (see below). Concern was raised that some of the issues that were listed in December's report were no longer recorded as an issue in March. However, as remedial work had not been carried out, concern was raised about any discrepancies this highlighted as a number of H&S issues were identified by Cllrs during the recent H&S Walkabouts.

Concern raised regarding the need to ensure that any action required is taken to ensure there are no outstanding H&S risks. ROSPA have confirmed risks in their latest report and as such, HTC is covered.

Cllr Simpson requested Cllr Fyfe carry out a review of ROSPA and the H&S walkabout checklist findings to ensure consistency and compliance and report back to R&A.

Actions:

- DTC to forward December & March ROSPA reports and all H&S walkabout reports to Cllr Fyfe
- DTC to confirm fees paid to ROSPA
- Cllr Fyfe to carry out a comparison study of ROSPA and H&S checks

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Montgomery

Resolution: Cllr Fyfe to carry out a review of ROSPA's December 24 & March 25 reports and H&S Walkabout checklists to ensure they are a) fit for purpose b) value for money. AIF

Cllr Simpson thanks Cllr Winsor for completing the report on Triangle Field and thanked all Cllrs for their help with carrying out the H&S Walkabouts and for completing the reports.

Actions from H&S Checklists:

Triangle Field:

- Entrance gully needs emptying – **Office to obtain a quote**
- A new Height Restriction sign is required for entrance barrier - **Office to order**
- The vegetation from behind the containers needs to be cut back - **Office to obtain quote**
- The Sin Bin window hatch needs replacing with a Roller Shutter - **Office to obtain quote**

St Lawrence's Churchyard

- Main gate pathway – left hand stone (old gravestone) smashed and sunken leaving significant step to tarmac on northern edge. Remains a trip hazard (long standing issue) and Cllrs discussed option of having a sign to flag this. Cllrs noted it has been raised before with the Diocese who felt this was not a real H&S concern. **TC to seek advice and re options and put together a Budget for it to be actioned next financial year.**
- Gravestones/graves – several gravestones are leading at precarious angle. Solid but will worsen / some have completely fallen over. This has previously been reported and Cllr Simpson confirmed that contractor's carryout scheduled 'wobble' tests and may have laid them down as a result.

St Saviour's Cemetery

- Panel down by the house – Cllrs discussed that this might be a more difficult task than originally thought and might require 2 people and suggested a contractor might be required - **Office to obtain a quote for contractors.**
- Brambles – Cllrs discussed whether they needed to be removed and considered it suffice if they were cleared next time the contractor was working there.

Bulphit Playground

- Gate to Memorial Avenue is damaged. Cllrs agreed to increase this to URGENT on maintenance list - **TC to increase status to urgent and action to be taken immediately.**
- Cllr noted that a "No Dog" sign was required – **Office to order a replacement.**
- Cllrs discussed the issue around the mesh matting by Memorial Avenue side gate and noted that it has been an issue for a while and questioned if an alternative could be sought. Cllrs felt this could be marked as 'not urgent' but could consider 'special bark resin' at a future date.

Skatepark

- Cllrs discussed the need to replace the SPH low fence adjoining the car park and suggested the need to increase the height. **Cllrs requested the TC consult with the tenants to see if a 5ft fence would be adequate** (check height restrictions imposed by WBC)
- Office to obtain quote for a composite picnic bench as and when a new bench is required.
- **Office to obtain quote to extend Resin Bark surface to bottom of slopes.**
- Cllrs felt that the back kerb verges – **to be carried out by maintenance** and TC to obtain a quote for infilling the potholes
- Cllrs discussed if a survey of 3 large trees in SPH front garden is required – **TC to confirm where in the tree schedule they are for maintenance** and for **Arboriculturist to check the situation (free) and highlights any issues or actions required.**

War Memorial Avenue

- Cllrs discussed the removal of 12 conifers in front of railings. **A quote has been requested from AES and will be forwarded to committee for next meeting.**
- Cllrs discussed options for cleaning Bridge Street War Memorial paved area and agreed they will ask BMW Garage for support as the manager has previously mentioned he would be happy to help as his team already clean their forecourt and they have the equipment. **TC to speak to BMW before end July to ensure it is cleaned before VJ Day on 15th August.**
- Cllrs mentioned that the bollards needed painting and black, edged in gold at the top would be fitting. **TC to obtain a quote from AES.**
- Cllrs noted that the tree roots needed to be trim – **TC to obtain a quote from AES.**

Smithambridge Playground

- Mesh fencing poor – **TC to add to Action Plan to replace as funding allows.**
- Seats/benches – Cllrs agreed the rough surfaces & wood rotten & split needed to be sanded down and treated before summer – **Add to maintenance list.** Again, concern raised that the condition of the table was not mentioned in ROSPA report.
- Surface – remove guano from wet pour areas – **Office to check when this was last done and for it to be onto the maintenance list.**
- Swings – baby swings – plastic split – check integrity. **TC to raise with ROSPA as the issue was highlighted by the H&S walkabout.** Cllr Fyfe's overview should highlight what further action is required.
- Clean bird guano from swing seats. Cllrs agreed this needed to be done – **add to maintenance list and for Office to confirm when it was last done.**
- Roundabout needs repainting and Cllrs - **add to maintenance list so that maintenance can paint the blue section.**
- Climbing Activity unit – ball broken securing rope & rope is starting to fray in places. Needs to be cleaned before summer holiday. Cllr Simpson highlighted concerns re ROSPA not mentioning this in the latest report -**TC to add to the maintenance list.**

Allotments

- Cllrs identified that Fairfield's shed was covered with Ivy. **HAHA confirmed they will review this next week and establish a working party to rectify it.**

The Hub, Library , POD Buildings

- Fire exit gate (east side) bar is sticking open – **TC to report this is reported to the Library.**
- Library toilets ceiling requires repair from previous water damage (roof has been repaired). This is not on the maintenance list as the work needs to be carried out by the library. **TC to speak to the Library.**

Cricket Club Benches

Cllrs reviewed the comments recorded by Cllr Reeve and actions required:

- 10 x benches need re-staining
- 1 x bolt refix.
- 1 x mounting.
- 1 x permanent removal

TC to add the repairs to the maintenance list.

Cllr Simpson again thanked Cllrs for their hard work and thorough reporting.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Winsor
Resolution: Cllrs requested actions be added to the maintenance list or for quotes to be obtained. AIF

RA2025031 Consider quotes for actions required for War Memorial Avenue repairs following the Structural Engineers report (refer to report).

Cllrs discussed the quotes obtained and agreed the work was needed. Cllr Montgomery suggested AES be contacted due to their reasonable pricing.

Proposed: Cllr Montgomery

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Recommendation that both works be carried out and completed by AES. AIF

RA2025032 Update on Tree programme (bracket fungus and other issues) and agree next steps (Refer to report).

Cllrs confirmed the bracket fungus has deteriorated and noted that one tree was lost and another tree had been replaced but due to lack of light (by the canopies of the established trees) it failed to thrive. The arboriculturist suggested that the tree be felled or the tree canopies reduced. **TC to speak to RBL to get their views on next step.**

Cllr Montgomery mentioned that a 'fungus specialist' has moved to Hungerford and he could speak to her to seek further advice on treatment and available options. Cllrs looked on the internet which stated there is no treatment for bracket fungus but the impacted trees can live for 30 years and the fungus will spread to weak, old and damaged trees.

Action: Cllr Montgomery to liaise with fungus specialist and report back to R&A next meeting
Cllr Simpson to speak to RBL to obtain their views and report back to R&A next meeting

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Montgomery

Resolution: Cllrs to liaise with specialist and RBL and report back to next R&A meeting

RA2025035 Consider quotes for guttering at Triangle Field Club House and agree & instruct a contractor.

Cllrs discussed the fact that this has been on the maintenance list for a long time and agreed an action was urgently required. Cllrs discussed that Paul Culley has carried out work for HTC before, was the cheapest quote and his work is of an excellent standard.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Montgomery

Resolution: HTC Office to instruct Paul Culley to complete the work

RA2025036 Consider quotes for Library Roof and agree next steps.

Cllrs discussed this issue and agreed that further quotes were required as it was noted that WBC are not taking any responsibility for this.

Action: TC to confirm if there are any more quotes, how many companies were contacted requesting they provide a quote and how many responded.

Proposed: Cllr Keates
Seconded: Cllr Simpson
Resolution: TC to confirm urgency and obtain further quotes and refer back to F/C for decision

RA2025039 Contract for Hungerford Leisure Centre

Cllr Reeves confirmed the details of the reports provided in the briefing information. The amount of contribution has increased from £17,000 to £40,000+ and increased with RPI. Further increases are expected as there is 20 years remaining on the lease. HTC's donations are paid to WBC.

HTC has tried to arrange joint meetings over the last 10 years but to no avail. HTC does not want to see the centre close and recognises what a brilliant facility this is for the community. HTC, unlike some Parishes, does not have a break clause but noted it might be possible to negotiate on the contributions it makes. It was noted that there should be at least 3 'Joint Advisory Committee' (JAC) meetings per year and so far, only one has recently been held.

Cllrs would like oversight of accounts and profitability and for confirmation of whether we are contributing directly for Hungerford's Leisure Centre or into a 'generic pot'.

Cllr Reeves confirmed the centre is losing money, membership figures are down whilst noting just how lucky Hungerford is to have such a large leisure centre and the need to ensure it is viable is paramount. He noted it is positive that the JAC's meeting have started.

Cllrs suggested further legal guidance on our position and suggested HTC contact the Portfolio Holder to hold a meeting to discuss options e.g. regarding funding contributions.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson
Seconded: Cllr Winsor
Resolution: Cllr Reeves & Simpson to hold a meeting with the Portfolio Holder

RA2025038 Review Comparison Report of St Lawrence's churchyard following the recent survey and agree work required. (Cllr Fyfe).

Cllr Fyfe presented a comparison report (see below) and noted there were no major issues identified.

Cllr Fyfe to provide a copy of the presentation on the comparison report.

Actions:

- An annual check of St Lawrences graveyard and grass areas be added to the Annual H&S Walkabouts (no major risks were identified)
- Establish a working party (not considered appropriate for HTC to carryout this work) to provide a report and QR code for visitors to the church which can be put on the notice boards, Virtual Museum etc so that details of old graves and their owners can be made available alongside the history of the graveyard.

It was noted by Cllrs that HTC has responsibility for the churchyard but is unable to clean the gravestones without Faculty permission.

Action: TC to confirm the criteria for HTC being able to take any action directly without consulting the Diocese.

Proposed: Cllr Fyfe
Seconded: Cllr Keates
Resolution: Add a detailed review of St Lawrence's churchyard to H&S Walkabout Checklist

Part 11

RA2025037 Update on the work completed at Section F, St Saviours Cemetery and agree actions required.

This was declared by Cllr Simpson appropriate for discussion as a Part 11 on the agenda.

Action: to obtain a solicitor's letter and for actions to be completed in accordance to the cemetery regulations

Proposed: Cllr Montgomery
Seconded: Cllr Reeves
Resolution: Solicitor's letter to be obtained and actions to be carried out in accordance with the Cemetery Regulations.

Meeting ended: 9.31pm

Reports from R&A meeting as discussed:

R&A 19th May 2025 – UPDATES from Town Clerk

RA2025029 – Receive updated summary of maintenance list.

Some of the main works completed by our maintenance man are shown below. Please note these are in addition to his routine checks of our assets and H&S checks.

- More work removing graffiti
- Fitted new tap outside office
- Fixed damaged edge on slab outside Croft Field
- Pinned down bumps in grass matting at Skate Park
- Fixed band room door – moved frame to allow for expansion
- Made safe bollard at War Memorial
- Put up 6 new signs on playparks
- Tightened connection on play rope
- Put chain and bolt on large storeroom door at Triangle Field to stop wind catching it
- Fixed damage to Bulpit PP climbing frame/slide
- Repaired several benches with new rails and bolts
- Replaced leaking tap in boiler room at Triangle Field
- Put up flags for VE day
- Repaired concrete and fixed loose barriers outside Croft Field Centre and added fluorescent tape
- Repaired swing basket

RA2025030 – Receive update on ROSPA. The March ROSPA report has been received. RB is working on items identified. Main points are below.

Smitham PP (Very few points identified by ROSPA)

- Gate to bridge has violent action – *RB has adjusted the gate. The risk has been downgraded by ROSPA.*
- Rocker – Paintwork is poor. *This is the smallest piece of equipment and the only one left for Roger to paint at Smitham PP. On his list.*
- Rot identified on wood on activity slide unit – *RB assessing.*
- Concrete exposed on the goal posts again – *RB to look at.*

Bulpit PP

- Zip slide spring stop is damaged – *REPLACED*
- Tighten crutch strap on baby swings. *Office getting quotes for 2 new baby swings. The straps can't be tightened so this is needed. It is low priority but is next on the list!*
- Gate to entrance requires buffer and is missing a catch – *Catch DONE. RB to look at buffer.*
- Side gate bent with trip points underneath – *RB to do. On list.*
- Metal exposed on Carousel – RB advised it is not a safety concern. *Sourcing quote for new hand grip.*
- Minor crack identified on dome – *RB to fill. On list.*

Skate Park

- Grass matting raised is a trip hazard and hard to mow around. A hole has appeared. – *RB has since fitted around 20 pins.*
- Some grass erosion
- Bin needs securing to fence. *Zip ties in place: RB will look at securing further.*