

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

The Mayor
Cllr Jerry Keates
c/o The Library
Church Street
Hungerford, Berkshire
RG17 0JG
Tel: 07368 539434
Cllr.jerry.keates@hungerford-tc.gov.uk



The Town Clerk
Mrs Claire Barnes
The Library
Church Street
Hungerford
Berkshire RG17 0JG
Tel: 01488 686195
townclerk@hungerford-tc.gov.uk
www.hungerford-tc.gov.uk

Draft MINUTES of the Recreation, Amenities and War Memorials Committee (R&A) meeting held on Monday 20th July 2026 at 7.00pm, in the Library, Hungerford

Present: Cllrs Brunning, Hall, Alford, Fyfe, Keates, Reeves, Armstrong, Day & Terry

Also in attendance: Deputy Town Clerk (DTC), Representative from HAH & prospective candidate

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

Cllr Brunning welcomed Cllrs, the prospective candidate and representatives to the meeting

RA2026042 Apologies for absence - None

RA2026043 Declarations of Interest - none

RA2026044 Agreement of minutes of meeting held on 18th May 2026 and update on actions

ACTIONS: All actions completed with the following updates:

RA2026039

ACTION: HTC office to contact WBC to enquire where the bin has gone from School Alley near Fairfield Road

Update: DTC contacted WBC to request bin returned. Bin located and now in place although it was noted that there is graffiti on the salt bin and on one of the children's paintings in the alley way.

RA2026036

ACTION: HTC office to advertise on social media informing of the plant thefts and need to help keep Hungerford looking beautiful. CCTV will be reviewed. Cllr Day to provide wording and HTC office will advertise on social media.

Update: Completed

Great West Way sign – whilst WBC have agreed HTC can change the sign and a 'sticker' can be placed over it when HTC's membership expires, Cllrs would like action taken earlier.

ACTIONS:

- HTC office to check the agreement with Great West Way to see if we need to have 'GWW' signage present whilst still part of the scheme or can we action the above sooner
- Cllr Reeves to measure signs for sticker size
- Cllr Brunning to design a sticker to say 'Award Winners Britain in Bloom'

- Cllrs Keates & Reeves to install stickers once agreed

Meeting held with WBC Recycling team and concerns raised. Signs still need to be put up by WBC and made clearer as the current main sign is 'behind' site users so holds no value. Additional CCTV to be investigated by WBC. WBC has an objective /initiative on fly tipping and the use of CCTV cameras, and they should have actions completed by 2028.

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Terry

Resolution: Minutes agreed to be a true representative of the meeting held on 18th May 2026 with actions confirmed. All agreed with one abstention.

RA2026045 Receive updated summary of maintenance list

Cllrs confirmed the report had been reviewed and it was confirmed that the damage done to the wet pour at Bulpit Park was caused by the grass cutter. Maintenance have repaired it.

ACTION: TC to talk to the grass cutter and request not to cut too low or close to the wet pour.

RA2026046 Receive update on ROSPA

Cllr Brunning confirmed ROSPA have carried out the survey and the report is pending and will be distributed on receipt.

RA2026047 Consider request from the Community Food Project to erect a wooden shed at The Croft Field

Cllr Keates met with Community Project representative and agreed that the shed could be placed off the tarmac but they have requested alternative sites. An update is still pending. Cllr Keates confirmed the shed is placed on a temporary base it will not require planning permission.

ACTION: Community Food Project to confirm alternative sites.

RA2026048 Feedback from Britain in Bloom & Hungerford in Bloom, Cllrs Day & Brunning

Cllr Keates began by thanking Cllrs Day & Brunning for all their hard work, energy, management and tenacity in driving this project through to such an amazing conclusion and proposed a vote of thanks for all their hard work, great leadership and effort throughout the whole process.

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Armstrong

Resolution: A vote of thanks was issued for all their hard work, great leadership and effort throughout the whole process.

Cllr Day provided a brief summary of Judging Day explaining that the judges were confused about last years marks and just how much had been achieved this year. The lack of portfolio was discussed, and it was discovered that Cllrs Day & Brunning had uploaded the document rather than emailing it. This was rectified and the judges had all the necessary information.

Judges highlighted amazement at the level of community effort and involvement. Whilst Cllrs Day & Brunning co-ordinated the community effort and involvement, judges were impressed in the number of groups actively involved and the level of effort and commitment presented. The Judges thoroughly enjoyed their day in Hungerford and HTC keenly look forward to September when the results will be issued. Cllr Day

confirmed that the work carried out was not just for one day but as ongoing projects for the community to benefit from. It was noted that there is a new shop in Hungerford and they had heard of Hungerford's positive reputation of our high street.

RA2026049 Discuss and agree next steps regarding the potential sinking grave at St Lawrence's

Cllr Keates outlined another incident of a sinking grave at St Lawrence's and confirmed that he & maintenance had taken a probe to test the grave area. It is considered to be 3ft by 3ft in area and has sunken. The probe went easily into the ground, but it was noted that the challenge of taking action when the ground is so dry would be an issue.

The use of ground penetrating radio has been used, and the hollow is still there. Cllr Keates suggested once the area has had rain, the area should be filled with soil and monitored, and it was confirmed that the grave already repaired last year needs more soil added as that has shrunk again slightly.

ACTION: Cllr Fyfe to check the ground survey re the depression in the churchyard.

Proposed: Cllr Fyfe

Seconded: Cllr Day

Resolution: The grave to be infilled when the ground is in better condition and Cllr Fyfe will continue to monitor.

RA2026050 Discuss and agree the water source at Newtons Garden

Cllr Day confirmed a meeting had been held with the Dentists regarding water supply, but he is worried about the required increase in legionella testing and the impact, both financial and liability, it may have on him. He also stated that if he sold the practice, the new owners may not want the arrangement to continue. The dentist also questioned who would maintain the site and was concerned that the current tall/ overgrown grass is a fire hazard.

A mains pipe off the pathway was suggested – this would need a survey, and the water board will charge high fees. Alternatively, a borehole, using a mini digger was suggested but again, this would be an expensive option - £14-£21k. However, once completed, water would be permanently available at no extra cost and solar panels could also be utilised.

Cllr Reeves questioned whether there was a demand for allotments should the water issue be resolved. It was noted that there is not a massive waiting list; the location is difficult as there is no parking so it would only be suitable for residents who want a town centre site. There is a waiting list at Fairfield's Allotment so Newtons Garden could be offered

If there is a lack of demand for allotments, Cllrs considered alternative usage for the area:

- A community garden
- Arboretum / orchard
- General garden to residents to enjoy
- Local SEN school

A community garden was discussed but again the issue of water still applies.

ACTION: Cllr Keates to speak to Oaklands school to see if they would be interested in renting the land off HTC as they do have access to grants which would help them possibly put water in themselves. It was noted they have extended having recently rented more space off Herongate and they had mentioned wanting more land to utilise with students.

The community food project could use it to grow food for community but again water is the issue.

ACTIONS:

- TC to talk to the Grass Cutter to see if he will quote to cut the grass
- Cllr Day to look at costs for both mains connection and borehole with water specialists.

Proposed: Cllr Brunning

Seconded: Cllr Terry

Resolution: Cllr Day to obtain costs for R&A to review at next meeting

RA2026051 Discuss the new playing pitch strategy introduced by WBC and consideration for a new 3G Rugby Pitch

Cllrs discussed the new strategy from WBC who wish to encourage sports and leisure in the area. Consideration could be given to this going onto HTC's list for increased funding from WBC as the Rugby Club is unable to use the current 3G pitch due to it being oversubscribed. Cllrs discussed the benefits to HTC and number of sporting sites already available but agreed it would be a great facility for the rugby club. Cllrs also discussed the possible environmental impacts of plastic to the environment whilst noting it would be commercially viable.

ACTION: HTC Office to let the Rugby Club know this government proposal is available.

Proposed: Cllr Fyfe

Seconded: Cllr Day

Resolution: HTC to send the document to the Rugby Club for their information and action

RA2026052 Croft Field damp issues, update

Cllr Keates provided an update confirming that the rising damp on the internal wall has been resolved by builders using dry rods.

External walls need to be dealt with, and it was confirmed that the quotes provided were varied in price, approximately £9k to put in dry rods. It was noted that these rods could be purchased directly at £99 per pack so Cllrs concluded the majority of the quote was for the 25 yr guarantee and discussed the option of carrying out the work themselves.

Cllr Keates has checked the internal walls and the repairs carried out are working so proposed HTC buy packets of the rods and trial the repairs in the band room. If they work, to then undertake the work in the rest of the building. For the pillars where there is damp, 2 rods will be used. Other parishes have done this, saving significant sums of money.

ACTION: Cllr Keates and maintenance to carry out a repair to one wall and report back. If successful, they will carry out repairs to the other walls.

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllrs Armstrong

Resolution: Cllr Keates and maintenance to carry out a repair to the wall in the band room and report back. If successful, they will carry out repairs to the other walls.

RA2026053 Recommendations to Full Council on location for Phone Box and usage (see report)

Cllrs discussed 5 options as possible locations:

1. By the Post Sorting Office – either to the right or left of the telecoms box but questioned whether the post office would want it there and whether it would impact the light/view from their windows.
2. By the Cuttings, next to the barbers and against the railway wall, removing the black bin, would enable watering of any flowers due to accessibility.
3. At the corner of Church Street and High Street by Russell Marshall Estate Agents.
4. Outside Fairwise Travel, to replace the black bin, next to the bike racks
5. By the railings at the top of town in front of the flats.

Cllrs discussed the options and various concerns ranging from possible antisocial behaviour and vandalism. Possible uses discussed included:

- Tourist information booth, offering tourist information with QR codes, bus timetables, etc
- Window boxes
- To provide general information for Hungerford & surrounding areas with flower boxes attached
- Promote Hungerford primary schools pictures and art on the windows, offering a site to display competition winners

Consideration on where would be more visible to visitors, concluding the centre of town might be more appropriate.

Given the variety of options available, Cllrs agreed to vote and the results were as follows:

Two votes to No. 5 at the top of town and 7 votes for No. 4 – outside Fairwise and replacing the current black bin.

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Hall

Resolution: Move the phone box to the 4th option, replacing the black bin near Fairwise.

RA2026054 Any Health & Safety concerns

Cllr Alford raised concerns about the gap that was a potential trip hazard near the entrance to the Croft Field Activity Centre.

ACTION: Cllr Keates requested a photo of the area of concern and for Cllr Alford to send it to him.

HAHA – Kate Edwards discussed this issue of rats at Marsh Lane allotment following a complaint regarding the perceived lack of action taken to rectify the situation citing legal responsibility of the Council and HAHA to rectify it.

A survey has been completed and information is now available. Kate is in discussion with plot holders on what options can be taken, what action plot holders can take and what action HAHA can take.

There is some objection to using poison whilst others want immediate action to eradicate the rats. One of the plot holders is a vet who is very against the use of poison as were some of the Cllrs during the discussion, due to the impact to animals, children, produce etc. Other options discussed were the use of rat boxes, solar noise machines, growing plants/herbs that rats dislike eg peppermint.

It was agreed that education and increased guidance was needed for plot holders to ensure good practice going forward.

Kate discussed various options including mapping of impacted areas, area hotspots, memo's on best way to manage compost bins, concluding that prevention and education were vital. The location of the site is impacted by being near a canal, railway line, housing and there being private allotments nearby.

HAHA are having a meeting next week and Kate will present the issues, options to rectify the issue and for committee members to agree actions.

Kate stated she would be grateful if HTC would trust HAHA to agree on appropriate actions (after exploiting all options) and to report back to R& A committee. It was agreed that if poison is required, a professional pest controller will be used.

She commented on the range of initiatives recently carried out including team building, plot inspections, news letters, updating contact details, behaviour expectations, Hungerford in Bloom judging of the allotments, Marsh Lane solar panel working party, with the solar light system switch on set for 8th August

Cllr Reeves confirmed that HTC has a legal responsibility to ensure this situation is resolved due to food production and asked if there is information/guidance available on what not to put in compost bins. Kate concluded that possibly not and considered this a positive option and part of the drive to educate plot holders e.g. to dig deep enough to disturb rats, turn compost etc.

ACTIONS:

- HAHA to feedback to HTC within the next two weeks, providing confirmation of the agreed actions.
- HTC office to finalise audit checklist and send to Kate to review
- Kate to then provide dates for an audit, to be carried out by Cllr Keates and TC.

War Memorial Gates - Cllr Keates confirmed that whilst the War Memorial Gates have just been repaired, they have become rusty and suggested they should be repaired at the contractor's expense.

ACTION: Cllr Keates to liaise with TC regarding next steps

Railings at the top of Town – Cllr Armstrong has received 2 quotes which she would like advice on due to the work outlined by the contractors and price provided.

ACTION: Cllrs Keates & Fyfe to meet with Cllr Armstrong to review quote and work suggested by the contractors.

Meeting ended at 8.40pm