HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the **Recreation, Amenities and War Memorials Committee** (R&A) meeting held on Monday 21ˢ September 2026 at 7.00pm, in the Library, Hungerford

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

Also in attendance: Deputy Town Clerk (DTC).

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

Cllr Brunning welcomed Cllrs to the meeting.

RA2026056 Apologies for absence – Cllr Armstrong, Dist. Cllrs Benneyworth & Gaines

RA2026057 Declarations of Interest - none

RA2026058 Agreement of minutes of meeting held on 20th July 2026 and update on actions

Cllr Brunning reviewed minutes and actions from 20th July 2026.

ACTIONS:

ACTION 1: HTC office to request Maintenance to move the litter bin and salt bin back to original location in school alleyway.

ACTION 2: Great West Way signs – Signs measured by Cllr Reeves; Artwork to be produced by Cllr Brunning

Marsh Lane Allotments

Cllr Reeves raised concerns regarding vermin at the allotment and questioned whether the appropriate process had been followed in accordance with the respective legal responsibilities of the Town Council and HAHA. He also questioned why the complainant had not been invited to attend the meeting at the allotments with Environmental Health and Pest Control.

Cllr Reeves emphasised that the safety of allotment holders and residents should remain paramount, particularly given the reported presence of vermin, the presence of children and dogs on site, and the fact that the allotments are used for food production.

HAHA confirmed that the appropriate processes had been followed, including visits from Environmental Health and Pest Control, and that their recommendations had been implemented. Guidance had subsequently been

circulated to allotment members, including information regarding the concerns and risks associated with the use of poison.

ACTION 3: TC to provide an update following HTC's meeting with WBC Environmental Health, Pest Control and a HAHA representative, confirming the process followed in relation to the complaint raised by an allotment holder and the subsequent actions taken.

ACTION 4: TC to arrange a follow-up visit with HAHA and the complainant to review the actions taken, confirm whether the concerns have been addressed, and identify any outstanding actions required.

ACTION 5: Newton Gardens – TC to confirm who paid for the grass to be cut.

Proposed: Cllr Keates
Seconded: Cllr Terry
Resolution: The minutes of the meeting held on 20th July were approved as a true and accurate record of the matters discussed, decisions made, and actions arising from the meeting.

RA2026059 Co-opt Cllr Reed to Recreation, Amenities and War Memorials Committee

Cllr Brunning proposed Cllr Reed be co-opted on to the Recreation, Amenities and War Memorials Committee. Cllrs voted and it was approved unanimously.

Proposed: Cllr Hall
Seconded: Cllr Day
Resolution: Cllr Reed was successfully co-opted onto the Recreation, Amenities and War Memorials Committee, AIF.

RA2026060 Receive updated summary of maintenance list

Cllrs reviewed the summary of the list and noted the work completed.

RA2026061 Receive update on ROSPA

Cllrs reviewed the ROSPA report. Apart from 1 'medium' action regarding the Toddler Swing, all actions were low or very low.

ACTION 6: Toddler swing at Smithambridge Road play park to be added to maintenance list.

ACTION 7: Bulpitt Road Play Park, cable ties, alongside chain protectors, to be inspected annually and added to maintenance list.

RA2026062 Any Health & Safety concerns

Cllrs raised concerns about three hollow trees at St Lawrence's. Review of the tree report (attached) confirmed that they will be scheduled for inspection, with appropriate action to follow.

ACTION 8: TC to appoint an arboriculturist and submit required tree application to WBC.

Cllrs confirmed that should they be made aware of any H&S concerns, they will contact HTC office.

RA2026063 Discuss the possibility of a circular route for vehicle access at St Saviours, Cllr Keates

It was proposed that a circular road be created at St Saviour's Cemetery to improve vehicle access and exit, particularly during busy services. Cllrs Keates and Fyfe reviewed the proposed route with Rev. Saunders and agreed that, although feasible, the route was tight for modern vehicles and hearses. As the original pathway was designed for horse-drawn carriages, the works were expected to be costly.

Rev. Saunders offered support from a working party and suggested the use of gravel to reduce costs. However, further investigation indicated that gravel grids and concrete edging would be required, with an estimated cost of £20,000–£30,000.

Cllr Fyfe suggested obtaining a quotation and, should the church wish to proceed, the church could then consider fundraising. Cllr Fyfe agreed to prepare a specification to enable the office to obtain appropriate quotations.

Proposed: Cllr Fyfe
Seconded: Cllr Keates
Action: Resolution: Cllr Fyfe to write a specification in order for TC to obtain the appropriate quotation.

RA2026064 Update on sunken graves at St Lawrences, Cllr Fyfe

Cllrs Fyfe and Keates reviewed the graves and did not consider the situation to be critical or presented a current risk.

It was agreed that, when the weather improves and the ground softens, further investigation will be carried out and any necessary actions agreed.

It was also agreed that the old grave and the new depression should be compacted and that this work should be scheduled for November.

Proposed: Cllr Day
Seconded: Cllr Keates
Resolution: Re-examine graves when weather is more suitable and ground is not too dry.

RA2026065 Britain in Bloom update, and plans going forward, Cllrs Day & Brunning

Cllr Brunning confirmed that the Britain in Bloom (BIB) Results Day would take place on 24 September.

Existing improvements, including those at Hungerford Day Centre, will continue, but Cllr Day confirmed that she felt entering BIB again in the immediate future is considered unlikely.

Cllrs Day and Brunning proposed establishing Hungerford Environment & Local Projects (HELP) to continue environmental and community projects without the demands of the BIB competition. Potential projects include:

- Continued improvements to the ASDA garage roundabout
- Maintenance work at Hungerford Day Centre
- Painting railings at the top of the town
- Supporting the URC with a flower-filled frontage
- Maintaining and improving existing high-street planters

Opinions varied regarding entering BIB in the near future. Some Cllrs felt a break would be beneficial, while Cllr Reeves suggested using the current momentum to consider entering again in 2027.

A major concern was the lack of sustained volunteer support. Much of the workload had fallen to Cllrs Day and Brunning and a small group, leaving them exhausted. Any future BIB campaign would require earlier publicity, stronger volunteer recruitment and more community involvement.

Cllr Reeves agreed to approach the Chamber of Commerce about potentially taking a leading role in BIB, particularly given the possible commercial benefits to Hungerford. The Newbury Weekly News could also be approached to promote any future campaign.

HTC to review opportunities for Good Exchange match funding for future projects such as spring bulb planting.

There was broad support for maintaining the environmental improvements achieved through BIB while moving towards a more flexible, project-based approach through HELP, with the option of returning to BIB when sufficient volunteers and support are available.

ACTION 9: Cllr Reeves to contact the Chamber of Commerce to explore its potential involvement in leading the town's future Britain in Bloom entry.

Proposed: Cllr Brunning
Seconded: Cllr Terry
Resolution: Create a new committee HELP, Cllrs Day & Brunning will not be part of BIB for the immediate future. Cllr Reeves to contact the Chamber of Commerce to explore its potential involvement in leading the town's future Britain in Bloom entry.

RA2026066 Leisure Centre update, Cllr Reeves

Cllrs Reeves & Terry attended the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) meeting and Cllr Reeve provided a summary of the meeting and agreed actions:

- EA (Everyone Active) went through the Gym Refurb taking place in October
- Hungerford members can use Northcroft whilst the refurbishment is happening
- Cllr Reeves asked for class capacity to be looked into as this is now smaller given the larger studio has closed
- Mike Cleary, General Manager, is moving to Thatcham, new General Manager to be appointed
- Cllr Reeves confirmed he is unable to attend the JAC Meeting with Cllr Terry on 13th January 2026
- Cllr Keates confirmed he will attend with Cllr Terry.

RA2026067 Consider purchase of & installation of a Kissing Gate at Triangle Fields

Cllrs considered Town & Manor (T&M) suggestion that the fence panel that is broken between the Common and the Triangle Field be replaced with a kissing gate. This would facilitate the runners and walkers that use that route regularly. The Rugby Club and Hungerford Hares would be in support of this.

HTC is responsible for the boundary adjoining the Common. T&M has suggested a gate which HTC's maintenance could fit. Budget is available that would cover the costs.

Cllr discussed the option and considered it would be appropriate to ensure the gate was larger and therefore more accessible for buggies, wheelchair users etc.

ACTION 10: Review costings for a larger accessible gate at next R&A committee meeting.

RA2026068 Tree Report, update

Cllr reviewed the Tree Report (see attached) provided by the TC.

Recommendations have been made for some works to take place by our arboriculturist. TC has obtained quotes and will look to instruct the the nominated company to carry out the works when appropriate.
TC to obtain necessary permission for any works at Fairfield's Allotment given that it is in a conservation area.

HTC also had some emergency work done to one tree at Bulpit Avenue that cracked during the drought, and it had a stem removed.

Confirmation of next of trees/areas to be inspected are:

- Bulpit War Memorial Avenue
- St Lawrence Churchyard. HTC is aware of some hollow trunks at the Churchyard and will provide updates regarding any recommended works and are currently in budget for the work being carried out.

RA2026069 Consider quotes for replacement / repair of safety surfaces at Bulpit Play Park. (Refer to Report) Summary below:

- The safety surface beneath the junior swings has been badly vandalised and requires full replacement. Patching is not considered suitable due to the extent of the damage and to obtain a guarantee.
- The surface edge around the roundabout is also damaged and requires repair. The raised edging will be cut into the ground to prevent further damage.

Quotations received:

- **Infinity:** £2,140.56 for swing surface replacement + £321.84 for roundabout repair = **£2,462.40**. Includes 3-year guarantee on new surface and 6-month guarantee on patching.
- **Tactical:** £1,293.24 to patch the swing area only; no response regarding roundabout repair.
- **Abacus: £5,767.75** for both works.
- Play Source and Creative Play: no quotations received.
- Funding is available from the **£25,000 Playground Equipment Earmarked Reserve**.
- Damage has been reported to the Police and an insurance claim will be pursued.
- The works support the Council Action Plan objective of maintaining public open spaces.

Proposed: Cllr Keates
Seconded: Cllr Terry
Resolution: Appoint Infinity to carry out the required works at a cost of £2,462.401.

RA2026070 Update on Newton's Garden, Cllr Day

Discussed earlier under **RA2026058 -** Agreement of minutes of meeting held on 20th July 2026 and update on actions.

Cllrs agreed that there was no current development as options explored by Cllr Day regarding cost and provision of a water supply were too expensive.

ACTION 11: TC to provide an update regarding next steps as it has been confirmed that HAHA no longer wish to 'manage' Newton's Garden.

RA2026071 Update on self-help with damp issues at Croft Field

Cllr Keates confirmed there has been no further worsening of the damp situation at the Croft Field Centre.

Dry Rods have been purchased and will be used to carry out repairs concentrating on the removal of skirting boards between the toilets and emergency exit.

The plan will be to review the work completed after 6 months to see how effective they have been. An update will be available at next R&A.

PART TWO

'The public and press may be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity might be prejudicial to the public interest as per the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960'.

RA2026072 Update on Leisure Centre Contract, Cllr Reeves

Cllr Reeves provided an update and Cllrs agreed discussions remain ongoing as legal matters remain unresolved.