

HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL
Leisure & Amenities Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the above-named Committee held virtually on Tuesday 21 July 2020 at 7.30 pm.

Present	Councillors	Simon Marshall - Chairman Jante Baird James Baker Mike George Helen Kitajewski Samantha Marshall David Powell Fiona Stimpson
In Attendance		C Fenton (Head of Leisure & Deputy Clerk) H Maan (Administrative Officer) One member of the public

L 4894 Virtual Meeting

RESOLVED: that in view of the COVID-19 Lockdown Period, this meeting of the Leisure & Amenities Committee be held virtually.

L 4895 Apologies and Reasons for Absence

RESOLVED: that the apologies of Cllrs Hudson, Kumar & Marr and the Town Clerk be accepted.

L 4896 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Non-Pecuniary Interests

There were no Declarations of Interest, in relation to any items included on this agenda.

RESOLVED: noted.

L 4897 Public Forum

A member of the public asked whether it might be possible to have Pickleball lines painted on the newly refurbished tennis courts in Horley Rec. She explained that it was an upcoming sport, which was a mixture of tennis, badminton & table tennis and added that there no outside courts available anywhere in the Borough. After some discussion the following was resolved:

RESOLVED: that Trevor May Contractors be contacted regarding the possibility of pickleball lines being painted on the tennis courts in Horley Recreation Ground.

**L 4898 Approval of Minutes
Leisure and Amenities Committee, 25 February 2020**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the above meeting of the Leisure & Amenities Committee, including all confidential items, be approved.

L 4899 Bonfire & Fireworks Display, Horley Recreation Ground

The Head of Leisure advised that, in view of the ongoing uncertainty regarding Coronavirus, the Horley Lions had made a decision to cancel this year's Bonfire & Fireworks Display.

RESOLVED: noted.

L 4900 Outside Bodies - Horley RBL Committee Meetings

The Head of Leisure reported on updates received from the Horley Royal British Legion. The Branch Secretary had been giving reports on volunteer work being carried out to start to repair the Earl Haig Sports & Social Club, home of the Horley RBL, following the building's recent devastating fire. He had also reported that, with regard to the Remembrance Parade & Service, current Government and Legion Regulations would not permit these to go ahead. If nothing had changed by November there would just be wreath layers on Remembrance Sunday, with no Parade, congregation or service. There would also be no face to face selling of poppies.

RESOLVED: noted.

L 4901 Fund Raising for the Earl Haig Sports & Social Club

Cllr Powell explained to members that he had recently been elected President of the Horley Royal British Legion, a post he had been honoured to accept. In his capacity as Horley RBL President and also as Town Mayor, Cllr Powell planned to fundraise to help towards the £70,000 needed to repair the Earl Haig Sports & Social Club, which also served as the headquarters of the Horley Royal British Legion. He aimed to walk the equivalent distance from Horley to the Menin Gate (165 miles), by walking laps of the Memorial Gardens & Horley Recreation Ground, assisted on occasions by other Horley RBL members. The walk was planned to commence on Saturday 8 August. The walkers would be carrying a wreath, which at the end of the walk was to be presented to the Mayor of Ypres to lay at the Menin Gate. (A press release is appended.) A Town Councillor questioned whether the Town Mayor should be raising money for what these days was essentially a private club. Cllr Powell replied that Field Marshall Earl Haig had helped establish the Royal British Legion and had presented the land and club to the Horley RBL and the Horley community in 1923. Other members supported Cllr Powell's fundraising initiative,

- L 4901) given that there were no significant financial implications for the Town Council.

RESOLVED: that Horley Town Council support the fundraising walk planned by Town Mayor and Horley RBL President Cllr David Powell.

Horley Churchyards

- L 4902 The Head of Leisure reported that, due to Covid restrictions, there had not been any meetings of the Churchyards Committee since earlier in the year.

RESOLVED: that the Head of Leisure contact Revd Leslie Wells to discuss the possibility of remote Committee meetings being held. (Virtual meeting subsequently arranged to take place on 12 August.)

- L 4903 ***RESOLVED: that the grant application by St Bart's Church for tree works be declined, in view of recent grants that had been given by HTC to the Church.***

- L 4904 **Grounds Maintenance Update**

The Head of Leisure told members, that despite extra litter collections being needed during the current lockdown, idverde had no plans to make any extra charges for this service. Issues regarding weeding in some areas, as highlighted by members had been forwarded to idverde. The reinstatement of areas of Horley Rec, following the funfair visit towards the end of the previous year would be undertaken as soon as weather conditions permitted.

RESOLVED: noted.

Re-opening of Horley Town Council Playgrounds

- L 4905 The Head of Leisure advised that, following receipt of Government Guidelines, all playgrounds in HTC open spaces had been re-opened from 11 July. Thorough risk assessments had been carried out by contractors Bennetts, which included deep cleaning of the equipment six days a week and signage had been displayed, modelled on that being used by Reigate & Banstead. The Head of Leisure added that the cleaning of equipment included the fitness equipment at Horley Rec and gate handles to the tennis courts. A member suggested that the cleaning of the safety railings at the top of the skate park ramps also be included in the cleaning regime, as well as the entry gates to the multi-use games area (MUGA) at Horley Rec. (Cleaning of the skate park railings was subsequently included in the cleaning regime and it was ascertained that there were no entry gates to the MUGA.)

L 4905) RESOLVED: noted.

L 4906 RESOLVED: that additional daily equipment cleaning costs of £9.50 per park be approved, the frequency to be reviewed from September onwards.

L 4907 RESOLVED: that payment of £1,300 plus VAT to PLG Signs for parks signage be ratified.

L 4908 Playgrounds and Grounds Inspections and Repairs

It was noted that Bennetts were continuing to carry out their regular inspections and only minimal repairs had been identified recently. In response to a question from a member it was suggested that members only resume their own designated grounds inspections when they felt able to do this safely.

RESOLVED: noted.

L 4909 Refurbishment of Tennis Courts, Horley Recreation Ground

It was noted that the tennis courts had now been re-opened for free play.

RESOLVED: noted.

L 4910 LTA "Tennis for Free" Initiative

The Head of Leisure told members that some Tennis for Free schemes were likely to start later this year. It was possible that the Horley Lawn Tennis Club may also be able to provide its own community coaching for Horley residents at the Horley Rec courts.

RESOLVED: noted.

L 4911 Café in the Park, Horley Recreation Ground

The Head of Leisure reported that, at a recent virtual meeting with the contractors and the Café Working Group, Newlyn's had confirmed they would honour the quote for the original car park extension (Plan A), which extended into the grassed area of the park. The cost of the re-design of the extension towards the park boundary (Plan B) had been unexpectedly high, as a result of necessary tree works, and had far exceeded the Café budget. The matter had been brought to the urgent attention of the Leaders Group, who had given approval for Plan A to go ahead so that the project could meet the anticipated Practical Completion Date of mid-August. Final snagging was now underway and the final inspection by Building Control would take place once this was complete. The building was now fully insured and, once the engrossed Lease and Rent Deposit Deed had been executed by both parties and the statutory notice period served, the Café

- L 4911)** Operator would be able to commence their fit-out. A further Progress Meeting with contractors and Café Working Group was to be held in early August.

RESOLVED: noted.

Visit by Circus Wonderland to Horley Recreation Ground

- L 4912** The Head of Leisure advised that Circuses, being classed as an outdoor event had been included in the Government Guidelines, which permitted outdoor events taking place from 11 July. Circus Wonderland, who were due to visit Horley in September this year had produced a very detailed Covid Risk Assessment. Seating capacity within the Big Top had been reduced from 500 to 220, one-way systems introduced and the wearing of masks strongly recommended. The audience would be encouraged to clap or stamp their feet and not to cheer & shout. The Big Top would be cleaned & disinfected between performances, with the side walls raised to increase air flow. There would also be full compliance with the NHS Track & Trace service. After some discussion the following was resolved:

RESOLVED: that Circus Wonderland be permitted to visit Horley Recreation Ground from 6-13 September 2020, subject to there being no further restrictions on Outdoor Entertainments by that time, for a reduced fee of £1,000. (The Circus to be offered the opportunity to give more performances or extend their stay, should they wish to do so.)

- L 4913** **RESOLVED: that permission be given for Circus Wonderland to visit Horley Recreation Ground from 5-12 September 2021.**

L 4914 Other Events in Horley Recreation Ground

The Head of Leisure advised that both the Horley Lions Charity Dog Show and Open-air Cinema showing had already been cancelled for this year.

RESOLVED: noted.

L 4915 Visit to Court Lodge Fields by Extreme Fun, Summer 2020

The Head of Leisure told members that the Extreme Fun Fair was still unsure as to whether they would visit Horley this year. A site visit with the operators was planned for later in the week, which would be attended by the Committee Chairman, Cllr George & the Head of Leisure.

RESOLVED: noted.

(Afternote: following the site visit with Extreme Fun, the operator was offered an extended stay until mid-September at a reduced fee, however they decided that it was not economically viable for them to visit Horley in 2020.)

Football at Court Lodge Fields

- L 4916** The HTC Administrative Officer updated members on plans for Grassroots Football at Court Lodge. She explained that matches were permitted to commence from the beginning of August, which would include pre-season friendlies. The changing rooms were not allowed to be open at the present time, although toilet facilities would be provided. A number of additional teams had expressed an interest in playing at Court Lodge for the 2020/2021 season, however revenue would still be reduced with the lack of the changing rooms at the present time.

RESOLVED: noted.

- L 4917** It was noted that a number of clubs and organisations were currently offering football training and classes to children at Court Lodge Fields, for which no charge would be made during the current Pandemic. Full public liability details had been provided.

RESOLVED: noted.

Tree Works in Horley

- L 4918** **RESOLVED: that a failing oak tree at Court Lodge Fields be felled (plus stump grinding) by Heatherlands Tree Care for their agreed quotation of £900 plus VAT.**

- L 4919** The Head of Leisure advised that some minor tree works had been carried out in the Bolters Wood area of Emlyn Meadows, following concerns raised by a resident about dead branches overhanging their property. The Tree Surgeon had advised that further work would be required, before or after the wood was transferred from the North West Sector Building Consortium to Reigate & Banstead.

RESOLVED: that Reigate & Banstead be made aware of the tree surgeon's concerns.

Horley Allotments

- L 4920** **RESOLVED: that the toilet at the Langshott Allotments be re-opened from Monday 27 July, the toilet to be cleaned twice weekly, additional costs of £10 per week to be approved.**

- L 4921** The Head of Leisure advised that an unauthorised gate leading from an adjoining garden into the Langshott allotments site had been revealed. Following consultation with the Site Steward, letters had been sent to residents in the identified area.

L 4921) RESOLVED: noted.
(Afternote: the owner of the gate was subsequently identified as an allotment holder, who agreed to keep the gate padlocked shut.)

L 4922 RESOLVED: that the RBBC Planning Officer be contacted for any updates regarding the Westvale Park allotment sites.

L 4923 Gatwick Greenspace Partnership (GGP)

The Head of Leisure updated members on information received from the Gatwick Greenspace Partnership. GGP staff were for the most part still on Furlough, a phased return of some staff in August was being considered. GGP budgets were currently being updated and subscription invoices would be sent to Councils in mid-August once the phasing back of staff had been confirmed.

RESOLVED: noted.

L 4924 Horley Open Spaces Advisory Committee (HOSAC)

RESOLVED: that HOSAC Committee members be contacted, regarding a virtual HOSAC Committee Meeting being held in September or October.

L 4925 Horley Conservation Group (HCG)

It was noted that the Conservation Group was currently carrying out limited socially distanced activities, independently of the Gatwick Greenspace Partnership. (Latest Newsletter appended.)

RESOLVED: noted.

Environment Working Group

L 4926 Cllr George updated members on a recent meeting of the Group. He explained that there had been discussion regarding the establishment of a Horley Commercial Hub in Horley. This would be a Pop-Up Shop, acting as a mentoring, as well as occasional trading space for new businesses, offering support for school leavers and a space where people could rent a desk for home working. A joint submission by the Horley & District Chamber of Commerce and the Town Council had been made to the RBBC Economic Recovery Group. Further updates would be provided at the August Full Council meeting.

RESOLVED: noted.

L 4927 Cllr George added that Gatwick Airport had just provided 50 laptop computers to the Level Up Project (donating laptops to local schools), which

L 4927) was being masterminded by Cllr Martin Saunders.

RESOLVED: noted.

L 4928 Application to Horley Town Council Grants Scheme

RESOLVED: that Horley Town Council, using the General Power of Competence, make a donation of £100 for flowers for the "Q Garden Project", a flower bed in the centre of Horley looked after by residents.

L 4929 Photography Competition

The Head of Leisure told members that a former entrant in the HIB Photography Competition had asked whether there would be any sort of competition this year. Members agreed with the suggestion that the running of an online competition be explored, showing how local people have used outdoor spaces in Horley during the Pandemic.

RESOLVED: noted.

Letters Received

L 4930 Members considered a request from a resident to have a tree or memorial bench in a Horley park. Members suggested that a small tree within a flower bed might be possible but agreed that a bench would be preferable.

RESOLVED: that the Head of Leisure seek further information from the resident concerned.

L 4931 The Head of Leisure reported receipt of correspondence from the Secretary of a planned Horley Community Action Group (HCA), who aimed to work on diversity initiatives for Horley. The Group was in the early stages of its formation and the Secretary had asked whether the Town Council might consider having representation on the Group.

RESOLVED: that the matter be considered at a future Council meeting once the Horley Community Action Group has been formally established and details of its Constitution etc made available to HTC. (The HCA Secretary to be informed accordingly.)

L 4932 Diary Dates

RESOLVED: that future dates be noted, namely the launch of the Menin Gate Walk on 8 August and Circus visit in September.

Meeting closed at 9.25 pm. next meeting: 22 September 2020



VIETNAM veteran and Horley Town Mayor David Powell is in training to walk the equivalent distance from his hometown to the Menin Gate in his latest fundraising stunt.

The daredevil mayor, and now recently appointed president of Horley's Royal British Legion, is no stranger to extreme and adventurous projects with a long list of daring feats to his name including **a record-breaking 30,000ft skydive**.

Inspired by the efforts of 100-year-old Captain Tom Moore's £32 million pound walk for the NHS, Mr Powell, 84, will complete the epic 165-mile walk by trekking laps of the Horley recreation ground and Memorial Gardens, to raise cash to help restore the town's Royal British Legion headquarters in Albert Road after it was engulfed in flames in May, leaving members without a place to meet and

locals without its popular venue.

Around £70,000 worth of damage was caused to the Earl Haig Sports and Social Club, following an electrical fault on May 15. It was damaged further still just days later by arsonists, adding more costs to the repairs.

Now Mr Powell is determined to get the social club back up and running and is prepared to put on his walking boots to do it.

Mr Powell explained: "I am determined to raise the money we need. It's vital that we have the Earl Haig back up and running as quickly as we can but we need the people of Horley to help us."

He added: "It will be hard for me to walk that far. I'm hoping I will have some help from other veterans and supporters so if I need to rest I can.

"It will take us weeks to complete but I am determined to do it."

Mr Powell has a proven track record of extreme fundraising ideas, in 2014 he broke the world record as the oldest person to do a skydive from 30,000ft to raise money for the Royal British Legion, as well as countless other skydives and abseils for charity.

Kevin Devlin, chairman of the Earl Haig club, said news of the fire brought people to tears.

He explained: "When I heard it had caught fire I was devastated. People were crying and couldn't believe what they were seeing.

"So many people, including young families, get so much joy from the club, I can't put into words what it would mean to be able to get the club restored."

He added the club was deemed "uninsurable" because the wiring was done in 1916 when the building was completed.

World War 1 legend, field marshal Earl Haig, helped establish the Royal British Legion and presented the Earl Haig club to them in 1923.

For most of the war he commanded the western front in France and died in 1928.

Mr Devlin paid tribute to his own army of volunteers, including local businesses and tradesman, who helped him clear the debris and start repair work.

He said: "D&R Carpentry have been fantastic. They fitted the whole roof including tiling, labour free.

"Plumwell have helped enormously too by supplying toilets and sinks free of charge."

He added: "The list is endless of the volunteers, electricians, carpenters, plumbers, tilers, plasterers, decorators, bricklayers and general labourers working 12 hours a day, seven days a week. I could not wish for a better team."

Tony Keay, secretary at the Royal British Legion, said: "The Earl Haig is our headquarters and without it we have nowhere we can hold our meetings.

"It's a lifeline to many of our members and a social gathering for us all."

He added: "We also run our Poppy Appeal from the club which is one of the main ways we raise money, last year we raised £23,000 for the appeal. If we don't have a place to host the appeal, we may not be able to raise so much, which will be devastating."

The 165-mile hike, will commence on Saturday, August 8th, at 11am.

As a symbol to those who died in battle, Mr Powell will carry a wreath with him for the duration of the trek and ask the Mayor of Ypres, in Belgium, to lay it at the Menin Gate in memory of the fundraising veterans.

Cllr Powell was deployed to Vietnam in 1967 in an undercover operation heading up a security team to guard the British Embassy in Saigon against Viet Cong attacks.

Extra information

*Every evening at the stroke of 8pm buglers play the Last Post under the Menin Gate as part of a powerful ceremony to remember the thousands of fallen soldiers from the Great War.

Historically, the Menin Gate of Ypres was simply a crossing point over the moat and through the ramparts of the old town fortifications, on the road to the

nearby town of Menin. It had a special significance for the troops though: it was from this spot that thousands of soldiers set off for the part of the Front called the Ypres Salient – many destined never to return.

- Source www.visitflanders.com

For interviews, contact Earl Haig Sports and Social Club chairman Kevin Devlin on 07968 744506 and Cllr David Powell via Horley Town Council

HORLEY CONSERVATION GROUP – JULY 2020

It seems a long time since the last Horley Conservation Group (HCG) task was undertaken. Indeed the last official task was undertaken on March 14th to tidy the areas around Tanyard Pond and the community orchard at the Fieldings. Since then literally hundreds of local residents have discovered the area and enjoyed the diversity of wildlife and space that it has to offer. Behind the scenes Reigate and Banstead Borough Council (RBBC) workers, members of the HCG and some local residents have busied themselves keeping the area clean, tidy and safe for all to enjoy. With playgrounds closed many families have taken the opportunity to explore the area and witness the wildlife on offer. Over 40 different types of birds to be spotted including birds of prey such as Red Kite, Buzzard, Sparrow Hawk and Kestrel as well as the elusive Great Spotted and Green Woodpeckers. Anyone who has been really lucky will have seen some of the deer that roam freely in the fields and noticed that we have a couple of fawns this year (picture below)



RBBC have maintained the fields, regularly emptied the bins and are now starting to erect information boards and signage across the area to both help and inform all those who visit. With the variety of wildlife it is vital that all of us who use this area for recreation and pleasure keep it clean and tidy. Discarded waste including plastics, paper and dog poo can soon accumulate and have a devastating effect on the wildlife as well as on the cattle and sheep that regularly graze the fields in and around the area.

An ongoing threat to the habitat every year is the appearance of Himalayan Balsam in the Burstow Stream. The largest annual plant in Britain Himalayan Balsam grows up to 2.5m high from seed in a single season. Himalayan balsam spreads quickly as it can project up to 800 seeds from a single plant up to a distance of four metres. Many seeds drop into the water and contaminate land and riverbanks, downstream and upstream because of the explosive nature of its seed release. Commonly found along riverbanks and streams, around ponds and lakes, in wet woodlands and in ditches and damp meadows. It spreads quickly and forms dense thickets, altering the ecological balance and character of wetland habitats. The thickets out compete our native plants. Every year the HCG undertake 'Balsam Bashing' events to help keep our rivers clear of this menace and whilst 'lock down' has been in place a few of our members have been out and about clearing the worst spots (picture below).



One of the jewels in the crown of the HCG is the newly established community orchard at the Fieldings. Earlier this season blackcurrant bushes as well as spring bulbs were planted alongside the young fruit trees. One of the tasks this year was to scythe the area but as you can imagine this supervised activity had to be cancelled. Instead a group of HCG members came together with strimmers, rakes and a lot of energy to tidy the area a few weeks ago. If you venture through the orchard now you will see that fruit is ripening ready for community consumption later in the year. (picture below).



Of course there is always something that everyone can help with and that is helping to keep the area litter free. Please encourage everyone to be responsible for the correct disposal of their rubbish either into a bin within the area or to take it home for disposal there.

If anyone wishes to be involved in activities with the HCG please go to our website and email the group. Until next time – enjoy the area and look after it.