

**Culture & Community Development
Head of Service: Richard Shwe**

Our Ref: JG/SV
Please ask for: Mr J Green
Direct line: 01727 819233
Fax: 01727 819360
E-mail: jon.green@stalbans.gov.uk
Date: 9 September 2010

MEETING OF THE ROTHAMSTED PARK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2010 AT 7.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, HARPENDEN TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, LEYTON ROAD, HARPENDEN, AL5 2LX

St Albans District Councillors Julie Bell, Chris Oxley and Mike Wakely;
Harpenden Town Councillors John Chambers, Daniel Chichester-Miles, Mrs Pat Kent, John Holley and Steve Green;
Harpenden Youth Town Councillor – Vacant;
Representatives of local groups and organisations that use Rothamsted Park

The room in which this meeting is to be held is equipped with an infra red hearing system for people with hearing difficulties. Advice on the use of the system will be provided at the meeting by the Corporate Administrator.

AGENDA

1. Election of Chair
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Replacement Members
4. Minutes

	<u>Pages</u>
To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 9 February 2010 (copy attached)	(3 - 5)
5. Harpenden Leisure Centre - Oral Report
6. Parks Report (6 - 8)

7. Items to be Raised by Management Committee Members

No notice of items to be raised has been received.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 22 March 2011 in the Council Chamber, Harpenden Town Council, Leyton Road, Harpenden at 7.00pm.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ROTHAMSTED PARK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Held in the Council Chamber, Harpenden Town Council, Leyton Road, Harpenden on Tuesday 9 February 2010 at 7.00pm.

Members In Attendance:

Councillor John Chambers (Chair) (St Albans District Council)
Councillor Mike Wakely (St Albans District Council)
Councillor Alison Steer (St Albans District Council)
Councillor Julie Bell (St Albans District Council)

Present:

Scott Machen (Leisure Connection Ltd)
Charles Smith (Harpenden Leisure Centre Manager)
Thomas Kearns (Youth Town Council)
Emma Payne (Youth Town Council)
Les Crabtree (Harpenden Town Football Club)
Callum Goodall (John O'Conner (Grounds Maintenance) Ltd)
John Holley (Harpenden Town Council)

Officers In Attendance:

Jim Bennie (Parks and Green Spaces Manager)

Apologies:

Harpenden Town Councillors Pat Kent and Steve Green
Ian Hunt (Harpenden Colts)
John Currie (Hertfordshire Orienteering Club)
Richard Shwe (Head of Culture and Community Development, St Albans District Council)

Date Change: The Parks Manager explained that the reason for the change of date for this meeting was because the previous date clashed with a Harpenden Town Council meeting, and he apologised for any confusion.

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

In the temporary absence of the Chairman, Councillor John Chambers was elected Chair for this meeting only.

2. **REPLACEMENT MEMBERS**

There were no replacement members.

3. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 17 September 2009 were confirmed.

4. **NOTES AND ACTIONS FROM THIS MEETING**

Harpenden Leisure Centre oral report:

A written report was circulated at the meeting (see Appendix 1). Members of the Committee congratulated the Manager on his report, and for the success of the programmes being run at the Sports Centre and the Swimming Pool.

Youth Town Council item:

The Chair then allowed the Youth Council members to introduce an extra item not on the agenda.

New Youth Shelter in the Park:

Harpenden Youth Town Council was proposing that a new Youth Shelter should be installed in Rothamsted Park, near to the Skateboard site. Youth Councillors did not have a final design to show the Committee, fully costed, but their initial investigations suggested that it could cost in the region of £10k, of which £2k grant funding was available. Ideas for the new shelter included a graffiti wall, power for lighting and wi fi.

Members of the Committee were asked for their initial reactions, which were broadly supportive of the principal - but concerns were raised about planning, adding power and lighting, discouraging misuse and rough sleepers and raising the finance. The police commented that the shelter should be in public view.

Councillor Bell agreed to take this project forward through the District Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee's Task and Finish Group's project called 'Hanging Out'.

Summer Event at the Skate Park:

The Parks Manager drew the Committee's attention to the well attended event that was organised as part of the opening ceremony for the skate park, and wondered whether the Youth Council could organise something similar as an annual event at the skate park. The Youth Councillors agreed to take this idea back to their Committee.

Parks Manager's Report:

The Committee then considered the various items raised in the report and noted the following:-

Park Ranger Service and Anti-Social Behaviour:

As this meeting was following on from a particularly severe and cold winter, there was little to report on this issue over the last six months. However the Harpenden Town Football Club representative reported that broken glass around their football stand was still a problem – particularly on a Friday night. The Police said that they would increase their presence at this time.

Sports Areas:

Dog fouling around the junior pitches was still a problem. The Parks Manager promised to ask the Dog Warden to visit, and erect some signs in these areas.

New Entrance Sign from Leyton Road:

The Parks Manager confirmed that it was the intention to work with the Sports Centre to design a suitable sign for this entrance, that reflected not only that it was the main entrance into the park, but also drew attention to the Sports Centre.

Permissive Cycle Route:

The Committee recommended that the trial route should now be made permanent.

Landscape Projects in the Park:

The Committee noted that improvement works for the entrances and the Rose Garden were part of a list of projects that would be undertaken by a new District in Bloom Project Officer.

Any Other Business:

The Parks Manager informed the Committee that he would be retiring at the end of March 2010, and therefore this would be his last attendance at this Management Committee. The Chairman expressed the thanks of the Committee, for his work over many years, and wished him well in his retirement.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 21st September 2010 in the Council Chamber, Harpenden Town Council, Leyton Road, Harpenden at 7.00pm.

The meeting ended at 8.10pm.

(SIGNED)

CHAIRMAN

Report to the Rothamsted Park Management Committee Meeting to be held on Tuesday 21st September 2010

Green Flag

The Park was judged in May and was awarded a Green Flag for 2010 in July. We have not yet received feedback from the Judges.

Park Ranger Service & Anti-social behaviour

Committee members are asked to report on any concerns they may have. As part of the grounds maintenance contract improvement plan, a member of staff from John O'Conner (Grounds Maintenance) Ltd has been in the park on Tuesdays and Wednesdays throughout the summer. This has increased the presence in the park from 5 days a week to 7 days. During these additional days, the staff member has been able to undertake other grounds maintenance responsibilities prohibited when in the role of park ranger.

Sports areas

Committee members are asked to report on any concerns.

Play area

The new play area entrance sign has been installed and the information now provides age limits for use of the play area.

A wall from a neighbouring property has been identified as potentially hazardous due to its instability, and a fenced exclusion zone within the play area has been erected until the property owner can make the wall safe.

Roads and paths

The repairs to the paths have been identified and prices have been obtained. This work should be carried out in October (at the time of writing).

Park Furniture

Park staff have commented that the dog bag dispenser at Orchard Avenue car park is being misused. They are finding that people are removing large quantities of bags at a time and it seems that they are not primarily being used for the park. This is costing the Parks Department more money than originally budgeted for and we need to see whether the increased cost is worth the benefit to the park.

Special events

The May Carnival and July's Highland Games were their usual successes. This year the Summer Sounds event was held in Clarence Park, with the agreement of both Youth Councils. The event didn't see the high numbers of young people as in previous years, due to the trial of publicising the event through web based media and not leafleting.

Activities for Young People

The park was one of the sites used for the Sports in the Parks and Play in the Parks programmes for 2010, which are both organised through the St Albans Arts, Sports & Health Development Team (SAASH), as part of the leisure management contract with Leisure Connection Ltd.

The table below illustrates the number of attendees at each event:

Play in the Parks	Sports in the Parks
<i>Easter Holidays</i> Week 1 - 30 Week 2 - 20 Total - 50	<i>Summer Holidays</i> Week 1 - 35 Week 2 - 33 Week3 - 29 Week 4 - 20 (bad weather) Week 5 - 16 (Bad weather) Week 6 - 12 (Bad weather) Total - 145
<i>May Half Term</i> Week 1 - 28 Total - 28	
<i>Summer Holidays</i> Week 1 - 66 Week 2 - 55 Week3 - 40 Week 4 - 32 Week 5 - 0 (Cancelled due to rain) Week 6 - No session scheduled Total - 193	

Environmental Study in the Park

The Council has now installed interpretative signs on environmental areas, to inform the public about the aims of the management and maintenance work.

The Herts Biological Records Centre will undertake a species and environmental survey of the park in September, to look at existing habitats and report on possible improvements through management and maintenance of the site.

Trial barbecue areas

The barbecue areas have been in situ throughout the summer and have been a great success. The amount of damage to the grass and reports of anti-social use of the areas have been minimal. Due to the success, the Parks Department is looking to install them in other main parks within the District.

Landscaping

The Council has now received quotes and designs back from the contractors and, if funding is available, planting should begin October/November 2010.

The Rose Garden

The two central borders are to be replanted with roses, to reduce the cost of annual bedding at this location. The surrounding borders will also receive new plants to supplement the existing planting, where there are a number of bare areas. The plant species chosen will include some prickly plants to add security to the rear fencing of Leyton Road properties.

Leyton Road entrance

To form part of a visual improvement, a small patch of grass is to be planted and a small post and rail fence installed to prevent car parking.

Amenbury Lane entrance from the car park

The grass area is to be reinstated and a small shrub bed added to direct people to stay on the path. A trellis will be installed on the wall and planted with climbers.