HEDGE END TOWN COUNCIL
Operations Manager Report
March 2025
Recreation and Amenities

1. Albert Road Cemetery
- Since the last R & A meeting, the team has carried out five burials: three interments of ashes and two full burials.
- Our staff work hard year-round, often in tough conditions, to maintain high standards and provide an essential service during difficult times.

2. Allotments
- There are currently no vacant plots, and we have 54 people on the waiting list.
- While 54 may sound like a lot, the average waiting time for an allotment across England is 2 years and 8 months. Most of those on our list (51 people) have been waiting for less than a year.

3. Conservation Volunteers
- No CV session took place in February.
- March session is still to be confirmed.
- If you wish to join a CV session, please ensure you register with the office prior to attending.

4. Cricket
- The Cricket season resumes in May 2025.
- With spring (supposedly) here, maintenance work is ramping up. We're gradually lowering the grass height (cutting no more than a third at a time), rolling the ground for a firmer surface, and using the Quadraplay weekly.

5. Football
- Pitch maintenance work funded by the Football Foundation is now complete at Rodaway. This included Verti draining to improve soil health and drainage, plus 140 tonnes of sand added.

- Two new sets of mobile goalposts have arrived, part-funded by Tonia Craig's County Councillor grant and the Football Foundation. One set is for the main adult pitch, the other for

Hedge End Utd's U11 team.

- The U11 pitch has been moved to a drier spot to hopefully reduce downtime in winter.
- There is still an ongoing issue with horses damaging the play surface.

- Weekly tasks across both football sites include grooming (Quadraplay), grass cutting, line marking, soil repairs and seeding.

6. Graffiti and Vandalism

- Unfortunately one of the new Elm trees at Rodaway has been snapped off. We will retain it in the hopes that new shoots will appear from the damaged stem.

- All instances of graffiti are removed as soon as possible. Every significant incident is reported to the Police via their online 101 website.

7. Local Nature Reserve

- Wildern Nature Friends continue in their amazing efforts to record flora and fauna within the reserve. Their species count is now in excess of 1700 different species since they began recording in 2018 which is outstanding. https://www.facebook.com/groups/2030431683870743

8. Paddling Pool

- With under two months to go before opening, preparation work will begin in late April to get the facility ready to open in early May..

9. Play Areas

- No updates

10. Updates

- **Power line clearance** - SSE's tree contractors will be carrying out felling and pruning works around Hogsty pond as part of their routine maintenance to keep the power lines free of vegetation. We always try to work with the utility companies to try for the best outcome for council sites.
- **Locke Road/ Fawn Crescent** - The council took over management of the verges around Fawn Crescent last month, and the team have been busy trying to bring it up to standard. Works include clearing brambles, reinstating verges, sapling removal and tree pruning.

- **Roof repairs** - The 2000 Centre roof repairs are progressing well; the front of the building is now completed and work continues on the large span that faces Bursledon Road.On a sunny afternoon, we took the opportunity of viewing the works up close and personal. The views are really good from up there!

- **Mescott Pond** - Additional Willow clearance has taken place at Mescott Pond, this has really opened up the site and will allow us to manage the site more effectively for ecology and amenity. The reduced leaf fall and shade around the pond should allow it to start recovering and I am hopeful that within a few years the site will be a haven for wildlife.

- **Aspen Close Woodland** – This area has also had numerous Crack Willow removed, these were predominantly multi-stem trees that had collapsed or were beginning to fail. Their removal will allow the rest of the woodland to thrive.
- **St. Johns Rec –** The Willow arch at the play area has been coppiced this month. The Willows grow very quickly, so we try to coppice each section alternately every 2-3 years.
- From the 1st March hedging activities are reduced due the nesting birds. Work can continue, but sites but staff are vigilant and ensure that no nests are disturbed in any way.

If there are any specific items that you would like more information on or would like me to include any other areas, please let me know.

Many thanks
Brett Athow
Operations Manager