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

1. Albert Road Cemetery

- Since the last R & A meeting, the team have carried out six burials: four 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.
- An old Memorial bench has been removed this month due to deterioration of the timbers. The bench was '*donated by Crusaders Cricket Club in memory of Barry Kelway-pope 1994'*. Unfortunately we have no contact details, but the memorial plate will be retained.

- We have started grass cutting for the 2025 season, and over the next few weeks we will continue our work levelling sunken grave spaces and filling uneven ground.
- Excess soil from graves is being used to help level out the top of the bank along the Albert Rd side of the site.

2. Allotments

- April marks the beginning of the new Allotment agreement period, which typically brings a high turnover of plots as some tenants choose to relinquish them and many new tenants join. As a result, it's challenging to provide accurate figures on vacant plots and waiting lists during this time.
- There are currently 10 vacant plots, and we have 63 people on the waiting list. We expect the vacant plots to be quickly filled over the coming weeks.
- Ongoing maintenance continues at the allotments, including tree trimming, reinstatement of fencing at the bottom of Spring Field, the start of grass cutting, and repairs to several water taps.

3. Conservation Volunteers

- No CV session took place in March.
- April's session will take place in Home Farm woodland, and will continue the good work removing invasive species, litter picking and keeping paths clear..
- If you wish to join a CV session, please ensure you register with the office prior to attending.

4. Cricket

- The Cricket season resumes at the start of May 2025.
- The Cricket pitch is now on a weekly cut, we aim to maintain the grass to around 15 -18mm on the outfield and 12 – 18mm on the square. In addition we carry out heavy rolling (as weather allows) between now and the start of the season.

5. Football

- The football season is now drawing to a close, with the last matches taking place in the first week of May.
- The pitches have held up better this year, and we have had good feedback from the teams.
- The Quadraplay has made a noticeable difference to the grass sward and the addition aeration works funded by the Football Foundation should start to benefit the grass and pitch health this year.
- Horses continue to be an issue on this site.
- Weekly tasks across both football sites include grooming (Quadraplay), grass cutting, line marking, soil repairs and seeding.

6. Graffiti and Vandalism

- Overall a very quiet month for graffiti and vandalism.
- There was a fire at Dowds Teen Shelter – a large plastic item (possibly a wheelie bin) was set on fire leaving an area of melted plastic. This was removed and the ground repaired by our Grounds Team.

- 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

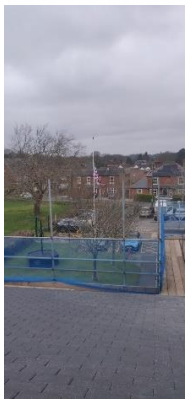
- Preparations for commissioning the paddling pool will begin at the end of this month. This process includes surface repairs, maintenance of machinery and the pumphouse, a full system clean, water filling, and calibration of the dosing equipment.
- The popular Paddling Pool Kiosk will once again be operated by Dan Jadczak, with the opening date to be confirmed.
- The changing rooms and toilets are currently being repainted, with additional repairs underway to ensure they are ready for the new season.

9. Play Areas

- No updates

10. Updates

- **Roof repairs** - The 2000 Centre roof repairs are now completed, although the lack of rain means it hasn't been put to the test. Myself and Sarah braved the scaffolding last week to inspect the finished roof and were impressed with the overall finish.



- **St. Johns Rec.** - The area near the table tennis tables has been tidied up and the ditch reinstated.

- **Dowds Farm –** Ditches that are part of the surface water management for the area have been dug out and reinstated, these ditches directly feed Mescott Pond.

- **Mescott Pond** – Pond outlets and inlets have been dug out, and the team have been clearing paths and removing more litter.

- **Morant Copse** – The team have tidied the area with the memorial stone in Morant Copse.

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the very sad loss of our R&A Chair, Jane Welsh. From the moment I joined the Council, Jane and I connected instantly—she was warm, supportive, and always willing to lend a hand. Her selflessness, quiet strength, and unwavering commitment to the community made her not only a valued colleague but a dear friend. It was a privilege to work alongside her, and she will be deeply missed.

Many thanks
Brett Athow
Operations Manager