

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2025, Heckfield Village Hall, 7pm

Parish Councillors Keith Alderman (Chairman), Guy Chessell, Jenny Roberts
Clerk Susan Turner; Members of the Public: 2.

2025.

63 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Apologies: Andy Piercy, District Cllr Anne Crampton, County Cllr Tim Davies.

64 PUBLIC SESSION

The Chairman welcomed two members of the public:

- attending to discuss Hound Green issues;
- a Hazeley Lea resident attending for general interest.

- .1 Residents' events on Hound Green** – see Agenda items 69.4-7 below.
- .2 Hound Green phone box** – see Agenda item 69.8 below.
- .3 Defibrillator training** – see Agenda item 68 below.

65 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING of 11 August, agreed and signed.

66 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST in items on the Agenda, none.

67 REPORTS TO MEETING No reports received.

68 DEFIBRILLATORS

.1 Training Dates to be confirmed.

.2 Testing and checking

i. Initial checks

- Cabinet correctly installed with power and working air con.
- Door code – displayed on outside of cabinet? Kept to hand by pub / guardian.
- Defib correctly set up and operational. Green tick in box; on pressing the 'on' button, saying 'unit ok'.
- Defib registered with the Circuit, has a registered guardian; visible to SC Ambulance service on their system, door code available on calling 999..

ii. Ongoing checks

- Once registered with the Circuit, the system will ask for a monthly update to confirm the defib is checked and working.
- Checking requirements: the Cabinet has power; the defib unit is showing a green tick is in the box; to be aware the visible tab is printed with the pad's expiry date.
- An agreed system in place to liaise with the guardian and inform a minuted Parish Council record.

69 HOUND GREEN

.1 Pond working party on the Green To hand clear sections (to be agreed) of the pond area by hand. Pond is dry at the moment.

ACTIONS KA to contact potential volunteers; groundsman will take spoil to Green Waste (ST).

.2 Drainage engineer – Meeting arranged with Hart.

.3 Green management – Agreed the gorse patches can be cut back anytime; also to pull out Oak and any other saplings, unwanted vegetation.

.4 Brash piles – Will be removed; delay due to groundsman staff shortage.

.5 Nov 5th bonfire Agreed unanimously a bonfire not to go ahead due to potential risks.

.6 Christmas tree KA to discuss with *Hortus*.

.7 Carol singing

- Note from Heckfield Church Warden: 'The three churches in the HMR Parish don't have a formal choir, although I would wager that there would be a lot of people keen to attend this and give their voice enthusiastically! (St John's at Hook does

- have its own choir.)' Will put up posters in the churches.
- In hand for Hound Green residents to discuss with Whitewater School.
- Potential for supporting music via PA system.
- GC to discuss with local residents.
- Aim to have date in diary by mid October.

- .8 Telephone box** Reportedly a group of residents would like to see one of the old 'telephone' header signs reinstated for authenticity, a nod to the past.
Discussion The original signs are faded, and damaged to various degrees. One thought to be in reasonable condition. To retrieve from storage and look to mounting inside the phone box. To consider as a header panel for the next restoration.
- .9 Bus shelter maintenance** – Requires maintenance check, wood treatment, some timber and roof shingles replacing. To discuss with Merronbrook (KA).

70 GLEBE WOOD

- .1 Ash trees** A plan and timescale in place; rolling Agenda item, awaiting further updates.
- .2 Lengthsman tasks** Agreed no further strimming, cutting back from paths needed

71 REMEMBRANCE

- Service 12.15pm 09 November. KA and JR to attend.
- Wreath and 50 more street poppies to order (ST). Noting not to be put up before Saturday 01 November – allowing a week before. To ensure bus shelter memorial is cleared of old wreaths at the same time.
- Recalling good turnout last year including four vicars. This year Marion de Quidt has retired; Helen Sherlock is new associate priest dedicated to HMR Parish; works Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays.

72 HIGHWAYS AND MAINTENANCE

- .1 Hedge cutting and ditching**
- i Vicarage Lane – The tractor hedge cutting prior to ploughing match – see item 75.4 – pushed in adjacent ditch which, importantly, drains from the Field House. Situation rectified, immediate neighbour and landowner response.
 - ii Little Church Farm hedges not cut last year and encroaching into road. Noting hedgecutting is a management requirements for Council Farms. To make use of planning response to request the hedges be cut this year (ST).
- .2 Red Hill gateway** Complete with signage, good feedback received.
- .3 Horse box** To put notice on windscreen. Noting Hill Farm advertised to let.
- .4 Mapboards** - New text received from the Mutton.

73 PLANNING

- .1 Parish planning applications** – Planning Update **APPENDIX I**.
- i. New applications since last meeting
[25/01877/HCC](#) (Validated 29 Sept) Little Church Farm, Mattingley Green. Demolition of lean-to dairy. County Council is decision maker.
 Parish Council: no comment re dairy but see 72.1 above re hedges.
[25/01772/CA](#) (Validated 15 Sept) Yew Tree Cottage, Hazeley Bottom. T1 Sweetgum - Lift canopy by up to 3 metres from ground level and crown thin by up to 20%.
 Noted beautiful tree, agree needs some managing. Parish Council no comment.
 - ii. Recent applications of note
[25/00477/FUL](#) (Validated 21 March) The Mutton at Hazeley Heath. Erection of eight units of guest accommodation with associated parking, landscaping and new sewage treatment plant. Applicant's Parking Survey circulated. Other recent supporting documents include Heritage Impact Assessment and 'views'. Consultee responses received from HCC Highways and Hart Conservation Officer.
Recap Guest accommodation site as originally proposed was changed due to trees; moved forward to car park.
Discussion Parking at peak times an issue in any case. Noting the Mutton's agreement

with Hazeley Farm to park staff cars which is positive. Farmer now putting out white lines across his entrance. Lines and signs needed by cottages, residents continue to be unable to get their cars out (or in) due to parking opposite, where cars are breaking down the banking. Parking survey not an accurate overall reflection. Continue to take photos to illustrate what is described as 'alleged bad parking'.

Highways response to Parking Survey – final para

'The parking survey data provided shows that the peak occupancy was on Sunday 3rd August at 13:00 where there was a total of 37 cars parked at the site: nine of which were staff, 25 were customers and three were parked on the road. On this basis, it is considered that the site cannot accommodate an increased demand for parking and there would be overspill parking as a result of the proposals, and as such additional parking should be provided in order to accommodate the expected demand. The Highway Authority are therefore unable to provide a recommendation at this time as further information is required.'

Conservation Officer response

'Conclusion: Objection. Harm identified to the heritage assets.'

.2 Hart Local Plan Update

Hart have issued their Call for Sites – open from 29 August to 5pm on 10 October .

www.hart.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/new-hart-local-plan

Includes sites for uses as below. (Anticipated that Lodge Farm at North Warnborough (Odiham Parish) will be submitted for warehousing etc.)

- Housing (market, affordable, self and custom housebuilding)
- Specialist and supported accommodation (eg housing for older people, housing with care / extra care, residential / nursing accommodation)
- Gypsy and Traveller pitches (permanent, transit sites, stopping places); Travelling Showpeople plots
- Economic development (eg offices, industrial, laboratories, warehousing, distribution / logistics, data centres, retail, leisure, hotels)
- Community facilities (eg health, cultural, open spaces, sport and/or recreation)
- Green infrastructure (Biodiversity off-setting sites, Suitable alternative natural greenspace (SANG))
- Renewable and low carbon energy generation (eg solar, wind, battery storage)
- Mixed use schemes.

74 FINANCE & GOVERNANCE

.1 Accounts to date **APPENDIX II Bank reconciliation 29 September = £32,222.97.**

Payments since last meeting

23 Sign-rite – Gateway signs	£660.00
24 PGGM-3207 – Maintenance AUGUST	£384.00
25 Clerk – Salary-AUGUST	£468.00
26 EON – Phone box electricity	£10.02
27 HVH-86 – Meeting venue	£32.00
28 PGGM-3207 – Maintenance SEPT	£384.00
29 EON – Phone box electricity	£2.84
30 ICO (DD) – Data protection register	£47.00

.2 Budget update **APPENDIX III**

.3 Internal audit complete – **APPENDIX IV Conclusion of audit posted to website.**

75 FURTHER REPORTS

.1 SID update. Device by *Hortus* not working. New batteries needed? Noting an important location for the SID at approach to Hound Green.

.2 Hazeley Heath Consultative Group meeting of 11 September.

i Minutes circulated **APPENDIX V**

1 RSPB restructuring in 2024 included a 'Reserves recategorisation' resulting in staff reduction.

2 Works carried out since previous meeting:

- Tree felling. Work by Euroforest to take trees back on both sides of the road still to be completed. Much is to be done by hand rather than machinery. Works needed for road

- safety and to improve habitat. Land clearance also taken place around 'Eddie's house'.
- Volunteers have been active in clearing birch; a small scrape has been made on 'the Arrow Lane side', and age profiles of heather slopes have been improved.

- 3 Deer impact and management: No report from the Deer Action Group SE, but deer numbers are reduced. JR questioned the professionalism of the cullers, suggesting they were active outside agreed hours of the day.

ACTION Mattingley PC will do a deer impact assessment jointly with the RSPB this winter.

- 4 Reported that Bramshill House has bought the farm behind Crabtrees with the intention of reviving the Jacobean Deer Park. Deer fencing needed!
- 5 Money is tight, particularly as the local RSPB office also manages land at Blackbushe Airport down to Castle Bottom. Countryside Stewardship funding of £10K has been successfully applied for but any capital projects require major effort in making the necessary proposals.
- 6 Grazing on Hazeley Heath: The 11 cows on the Heath will be removed week of 06/10. There are four cows based in Farnham, and they may be brought over when specific grazing tasks are required. RSPB consider that after two years Hazeley Heath has been well-grazed and, in some areas 'over-grazed'. It has been shown recently that the cows are finding it difficult to get enough food. Last winter they needed supplementary feed. Noting that hungry cows in winter are the best to naturally manage excessive vegetation.
- 7 Wildlife survey reports – 2025 breeding bird surveys: Nightjar, Woodcock and Whitethroat have had a good Spring/Summer; Dartford Warbler and Stonechat numbers are sound. However, Woodlark numbers are well down and Tree Pipits were not seen. The Woodlark drop is due to reduction in suitable breeding habitat.
- 8 Planned Winter Work by Hart District Council: Birch clearance around the tank ramp and further clearance by Arrow Lane.

- .ii **Deer impact assessment** Suggestion by JR to HHCG meeting that KA join the impact assessment with RSPB on behalf of the Parish Council to record good practice and ensure no conflict of interest. KA confirmed agreement.

- .iii **Deer park** Comments re the positives of pushing the Fallow deer towards a deer park (noting still the odd white deer by Moneys Farm). Plus the need to fence.

- .3 Geocache request** Parish Council confirmed agreement and support.

- .4 Ploughing match** - Sunday 14th September, National Vintage Tractor & Engine Club – Thames Valley Group: Included a national vintage area final and a Ferguson area final. This event now routinely held on Alan Bishop's field off Vicarage Lane, previously at Thackams farm. Notice on Hound Green whatsapp promoted community interest.

- .5 Heckfield bus service survey** – No further update.

- .6 Local Government Reorganisation** Majority proposal to Government **APPENDIX VI.** A four-mainland unitary proposal including a North Hampshire Unitary comprising BDBC, Hart and Rushmoor continues to be supported by the majority of Councils who have now approved and submitted (for Government deadline of 26 September) a joint proposal entitled: *Close enough to be local, big enough to stay strong.* 'Option 1' is favoured: Government will consult later this year.

- .7 Hart Housing Strategy 2026 to 2031 Consultation**

<https://forms.office.com/e/Pg06rtPksV>

Hart is working on an updated five-year Housing Strategy. This will cover the Council's priority areas and actions for affordable and private rented housing, for the next five years. The consultation asks if the objectives and actions identified align with what we would consider important. Should take 5-10 minutes, open to Tuesday 14 October.

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NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

7.30pm, Heckfield Village Hall meeting room
Mondays 14 October, 17 November.

Meeting closed at 9.15pm with thanks to all.

For signature (p4 of 4)

APPENDIX I MATTINGLEY PARISH PLANNING UPDATE 29 SEPTEMBER

NEW APPLICATIONS SINCE LAST MEETING of 11 August

25/01877/HCC (Validated 29 Sept) Little Church Farm, Mattingley Green. Demolition of Lean-to Dairy

25/01772/CA (Validated 15 Sept) Yew Tree Cottage, Hazeley Bottom. T1 Sweetgum (Liquid Amber) – Lift canopy by up to 3 metres from ground, and crown thin by up to 20%.

25/01647/**PREAPP** (Validated 29 Aug) Stags Barn, Hazeley Lea. Replacement outbuilding and new lightweight glazed link to existing listed barn conversion with repositioned access into curtilage. Planning & heritage advice sought to include an on-site meeting and written response.

APPLICATIONS PENDING / RECENTLY DECIDED

25/01432/PDTEL (**Opinion issued 26 August**, Validated 30 Jul 2025) Hill House, Hazeley Heath. Notification of intent to install fixed line broadband electronic communications apparatus - one x new 13m medium pole.

Hart response: no objections and no conditions – On the understanding that the proposed works do constitute permitted development.

25/00643/HOU (**Grant 10 Sept**, Validated 30 June) Ramsdale House, Reading Road. Replacement windows and doors.

25/00477/FUL (**Pending**, Validated 21 March) The Mutton at Hazeley Heath. Erection of eight units of guest accommodation with associated parking, landscaping and new Sewage Treatment Plant.

Parish Council objections re parking. Objection from Conservation. More info required from HCC Highways.

Balance brought forward 1st April 2025						£24,885.07
Date	Item	Precept	Grants	VAT	Interest	Total Receipts
18/05/2025	Parish Precept	£15,569.00				£15,569.00
2025/26	Bank interest				£259.31	£259.31
	TOTALS	£15,569.00	£0.00	£0.00	£259.31	£15,828.31

MATTINGLEY PARISH COUNCIL - EXPENDITURE 2025/26 - 29 September														
No	Inv Date	Pay Date	Supplier	Description	Salary	Admin/ Governance	Community / Donation	Maintn Contract	Green -	Phone box	PROECT Gateway	POND Project	VAT	TOTALS
1	15/04/2025	28/04/2025	HALC	HALC / NALC subs		£342.00								£342.00
2	22/04/2025	28/04/2024	PGGM 3079	Maintenance April				£292.75					£58.55	£351.30
3	APRIL	28/04/2025	Clerk	Salary-April	£468.00									£468.00
4	22/04/2024	08/05/2024	Herpetologic	Ecological Survey HG								£268.00	£53.60	£321.60
5	25/05/2025	28/05/2024	PGGM 3079	Maintenance May				£320.00					£64.00	£384.00
6	12/05/2025	30/05/2025	B&Q	Paint-primer / black satin						£33.33			£6.67	£40.00
7	12/05/2025	30/05/2025	Travis Perkins	Plywood						£35.50			£7.10	£42.60
8	20/05/2025	30/05/2025	Amazon	Consumer Unit fireboard						£32.35			£3.95	£36.30
9	MAY	31/05/2025	Clerk	Salary-May	£468.00									£468.00
10	09/06/2025	13/06/2025	SSEN	Phone box FFR968/2						£461.02			£92.20	
										£386.32				£166.90
11	12/06/2025	13/06/2025	Gallagher	Insurance 2025/26	:	£756.65								£756.65
12	25/06/2025	28/06/2024	PGGM 3079	Maintenance June 3174				£320.00					£64.00	£384.00
13	June	29/06/2025	Clerk	Salary-June	£187.20									
14	June	29/06/2025	HMRC	PAYE-AMJ	£280.80									£468.00
15	03/07/2025	03/07/2025	HVH-58/67	Meeting venueMay-June		£64.00								£64.00
16	24/07/2025	25/07/2025		Moles Hound Green					£200.00					£200.00
17	25/07/2025	25/07/2025	PGGM-3198	Gate							£380.00		£76.00	£456.00
18	25/07/2025	31/07/2025	PGGM-3207	Maintenance July				£320.00					£64.00	£384.00
19	JULY	31/07/2025	Clerk	Salary-July	£468.00									£468.00
20	31/07/2025	31/07/2025	WV Cons Soc	Donation 2025			£50.00							£50.00
21	03/08/2025	03/08/2025	GEM Electrical	K6 wiring - cabinet/plugs						£516.00			£103.20	£619.20
22	04/08/2025	04/08/2025	HVH-77	Meeting venue July		£32.00								£32.00
23	01/08/2025	21/08/2025	Sign-rite	Gateway signs							£550.00		£110.00	£660.00
24	25/08/2025	28/08/2025	PGGM-3207	Maintenance AUGUST				£320.00					£64.00	£384.00
25	AUG	28/08/2025	Clerk	Salary-AUGUST	£468.00									£468.00
26	10/09/2025	10/09/2025	EON	Phone box electricity					£9.54				£0.48	£10.02
27	03/09/2025	04/08/2025	HVH-86	Meeting venue Aug		£32.00								£32.00
28	25/09/2025	29/09/2025	PGGM-3207	Maintenance SEPT				£320.00					£64.00	£384.00
29	16/09/2025	16/09/2025	EON	Phone box electricity					£2.84					£2.84
30	29/09/2025	29/09/2025	ICO (DD)	Data protection register		£47.00								£47.00
				TOTALS	£2,340.00	£1,273.65	£50.00	£1,892.75	£212.38	£691.88	£930.00	£268.00	£831.75	£8,490.41
	Date		Supplier	Description	Salary	Admin/ Governance	Community / Donation	Maintn Contract	Green -	Phone box	PROECT Gateway	POND Project	VAT	TOTALS
£8,490.41														

APPENDIX III BUDGET UPDATE

MPC THIS YEAR at 29 SEPT	2025/26 TO DATE	2025/26 LATEST ESTIMATE	2025/26 BUDGET - MAR 2025	2026/27 BUDGET - DRAFT	2027/28 BUDGET - DRAFT	
EXPENDITURE						EXPENDITURE
CLERK'S SALARY	£2,340.00	£5,616.00	£5,191.20	£5,191.20	£5,191.20	CLERK'S SALARY
CLERK'S ALLOWANCE		£324.00	£324.00	£324.00	£324.00	CLERK'S ALLOWANCE
EXPENSES		£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	EXPENSES
TRAINING						TRAINING
GOVERNANCE/ADMIN	£1,273.65	£1,575.00	£1,775.00	£1,825.00	£1,875.00	GOVERNANCE/ADMIN
COMMUNITY / DONATIONS	£50.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	COMMUNITY
HOUND GREEN contract	£1,892.75	£3,688.58	£3,688.58	£3,873.01	£4,066.66	HOUND GREEN -contract
HOUND GREEN other maint	£212.38	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	HOUND GREEN other maint
PARISH MAINTENANCE		£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	PARISH MAINTENANCE
GLEBE WOOD		£500.00				GLEBE WOOD
HOUND GREEN TREES - ANNUAL		£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	HOUND GREEN TREES
Routine (Precept funded)	£5,768.78	£14,303.58	£14,078.78	£14,313.21	£14,556.86	Routine (Precept funded)
Projects						Projects
Mapboards		£800.00				
Hound Green trees - five-yr						Hound Green trees
HOUND GREEN POND	£268.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00			HOUND GREEN POND
Phone Box	£691.88	£691.88	£408.28			Phone Box
Red Hill Gateway	£930.00	£930.00	£3,131.00			Plough Lane gateways
Debif cabinet install	£0.00	£0.00	£100.00			Debif cabinet install
VAT	£831.75	£831.75				VAT
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£8,490.41	£22,557.21	£22,718.06	£14,313.21	£14,556.86	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
Routine expend (Precept funded)	£5,768.78	£14,303.58	£14,078.78	£14,313.21	£14,556.86	Routine expend (Precept funded)
Project expenditure	£1,889.88	£8,253.63	£8,639.28			Project expenditure
INCOME						INCOME
PRECEPT	£15,569.00	£15,569.00	£15,569.00	£16,347.45	£17,164.82	PRECEPT
County Cllr grant		£800.00				County Cllr Dev budget
Grants other						Grants other
Vat refund		£890.30				Vat refund
Bank interest	£259.31	£350.00	£350.00	£400.00	£450.00	Bank interest
TOTAL INCOME	£15,828.31	£17,609.30	£15,919.00	£16,747.45	£17,614.82	TOTAL INCOME
Surplus // Deficit	£7,337.90	£4,947.91	£6,799.06	£2,434.24	£3,057.96	Surplus // Deficit
Balance	£32,222.97	£19,937.16	£18,086.01	£20,520.25	£23,578.21	Balance

APPENDIX IV

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

MATTINGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

<https://www.mattingleyparishcouncil.gov.uk>

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")	✓		
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

28/09/2025

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

APPENDIX V.I

Minutes of the Hazeley Heath Consultative Group

11th September 2025, 11am, Victoria Halls, Hartley Wintney

Attendees: Mark Crisp (RSPB Reserves Warden) - Chair, Natalia (Tally) Azzopardi (RSPB Assistant Warden), Jess Cole [JC] (Hart DC Ranger), Jenny Roberts (Mattingley PC and volunteer), Julian Bishop (Commoners Rep.), John Collman [JRC] (Local Naturalist) – minutes, Lewis Thurston (RSPB Residential Volunteer), Debs Braybrook (Residential Volunteer)

Apologies: Chris Cornwell (Hartley Wintney PC), Tara Montford (Easement-holders Rep. + Small Landholder)

Item 1: Welcome & Preamble:

The last meeting of this Group was on 28/05/24. MC apologised for the lack of meetings since then. RSPB carried out a restructuring exercise in 2024 which included a 'reserves recategorization' resulting in a reduction in staff (who were then told to only do what they have the capacity for).

Item 2: The Purpose of the Consultative Group:

In brief, this group exists (i) for the main owners, RSPB and HDC, to inform the local community and stakeholders of what is happening and their plans for HH, and (ii) for local people to comment, raise issues and generally to provide help in the management of the site.

[Looking at old minutes, on 16/11/16 there was a '**Memorandum of Understanding**' for the Consultative Group which gave a Vision Statement for HH as follows: "**That we strive to maintain and improve the SSSI and SPA status of Hazeley Heath. That it be a place of peace and tranquillity, and a haven for wildlife, as well as the local community.**" Interestingly, it was recommended that the Group not only contain representatives for commoners, easement holders and small land owners, but also that meetings be attended by a representative from Natural England.]

Item 3: Works Carried out since Previous Meeting:

MC: Tree-felling alongside the B3011 did not go according to plan; work by Euroforest to take trees back on both sides of the road for reasons of both road safety and to provide improved habitat still needs to be completed – much work to be done by hand rather than machinery. Land clearance has also taken place around 'Eddie's House'.

JC: Volunteers have been active in clearance of birch, a small scrape has been made on 'the Arrow Lane side', and age profiles of heather slopes have been improved.

Item 4: Deer Impact and Management:

MC: No report yet from the Deer Action Group SE. Deer are still present on the Heath, but there are fewer, with the aim being to reduce their adverse impact on vegetation. JR questioned the professionalism of the cullers, suggesting they were active outside agreed hours of the day. Mattingley PC will do a deer impact assessment jointly with the RSPB this winter.

ACTION

JB reported that the new owner of Bramshill appears to have bought the farm behind Crabtrees with the intention of reviving the concept of the Jacobean Deer Park. He suggested that without new fencing, this would nullify any attempts to limit deer on HH.

Item 5: Austerity and Budgets:

MC: Money is tight, particularly as the local RSPB office is also involved in managing land at Blackbushe Airport down to Castle Bottom. However, Countryside Stewardship (CS) money has been successfully applied for. Opportunities for other income are always being looked for.

JC: £10k CS money has been promised, but any capital projects now require major effort in making the necessary proposals.

Item 6: Current RSPB organisation:

See items 1 and 5 above. MC's boss, Andy Daw, with the title of 'site manager', is based in Brighton.

APPENDIX V.II

Item 7: Grazing on Hazeley Heath:

MC: The current 11 cows on the Heath will be removed in week of 06/10. There are four cows based in Farnham, and they may be brought over when specific grazing tasks are required. RSPB consider that after two years Hazeley Heath has been well-grazed and, in some areas, 'over-grazed'. It has been shown recently (thanks to zapping rates) that the cattle are currently finding it difficult to get enough food. Last winter they needed supplementary feed.

JRC agreed that in the damper southern (HDC) section there had been some excessive poaching, but that hungry cows in winter were the way to naturally control excessive vegetation. He asked about monitoring the impact of grazing, and was told that the RSPB approach is to 'make up a relevant and suitable process'.

Item 8: Bird Ringing on the HDC heathland (on the 'plateau').

JC: Ringing is coordinated by Tim Alexander, but no reports from him have been received. There was general scepticism from the Group about the value of ringing. JRC reported that focused efforts elsewhere on the SPA re Woodlarks was providing useful knowledge of WL movements.

Item 9 Surveying/Wildlife Reports:

JRC summarised the results of his 2025 breeding bird surveys. In brief, Nightjar, Woodcock and Whitethroat have had a good Spring/Summer; Dartford Warbler and Stonechat numbers are sound. However, Woodlark numbers are well down and Tree Pipits were not seen. The WL drop is due to reduction in suitable breeding habitat.

JRC asked how well other survey results were collected and retained. For example, the newt survey done by Reading Univ. earlier in the year. MC said that the Ecology Dept. in the RSPB is looking into new ways of retaining old reports.

Item 10: Planned Winter Works by the RSPB:

MC confirmed that fire was **not** a management tool for the RSPB. (The increase in 'dry lightning' in the UK makes fire a big enough issue anyway.) The priority in the next few months is 'Gorse, gorse, gorse', by cutting rather than root-grubbing. If possible, the fire breaks will include bare ground on either side to increase effectiveness.

JRC complained that access for survey work through the gorse is becoming nearly impossible, so it was agreed he would meet with MC or TA to identify priority cutting areas. **ACTION**

Item 11: Planned Winter Work by Hart DC:

JC reported that the priorities will be birch clearance around the Tank Ramp and further clearance by Arrow Lane.

Item 12: Any Other Business:

a. JR reported that **The Mutton** had put in an application to build four 2-bedroom B&B apartments. Already, parking there is problematic. The extra accommodation could contravene SPA new-build constraints. MC offered the possible services of RSPB legal expert, Henrietta, if required.

b. JB complained about the prevalence of '**dog-poo**' bags being left hanging on trees. Asked the RSPB to put up notices encouraging dog-owners to 'bag-up and take it away'. **ACTION**

c. JB noted that **shards of glass** are appearing from the old landfill on the paths across 'The Plateau'. JC said that hogging will be laid over some of recently exposed landfill. **ACTION**

d. JR asked that the RSPB put a sign up on their grass at Hazeley Bottom to deter **illegal parking**. **ACTION**

e. JR and MC mentioned their **HH WhatsApp groups** and asked if group members knew about them. **ACTION** for JR and MC to publicise them to the rest of group members and to invite membership.

f. JRC said that there was scope for confusion in that many features on HH did not have **commonly accepted names**. Specific locations are needed when describing significant wildlife sites. Agreed that What3Words was good for identifying small features such as scrapes. **ACTION** JRC to meet separately with JC and MC to agree some basic place names.

Item 13: Next meeting:

The date of Thursday 12 March 2026 sounds good.

ACTION for RSPB to book.

JRC Sept 25

APPENDIX VI LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

PREFERRED OPTION 1

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION – MAJORITY PROPOSAL TO GOVERNMENT

A four-mainland unitary proposal including a North Hampshire Unitary comprising BDBC, Hart and Rushmoor continues to be supported by the majority of Councils who have now approved and submitted (for Government deadline of 26 Sept) a joint proposal entitled: *Close enough to be local, big enough to stay strong.*

Option 1 is favoured: Government will consult later this year.

Option 1

