

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a meeting of the
Heritage Working Party
held on 21st July 2026 at 19:00hrs
in the Thatcham Town Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham

Present: Nathan Gregory (Chairman)
 Councillors Mike Cole, Mark Lillycrop and Mark Thomas
 Fiona Hockedy, Roy Tubb and Dr Nick Young (Vice - Chairman)

In attendance: Dominique Culley (Events Officer)

HWP/2026/76 APOLOGIES

Councillor Owen Jeffery, Sue Ellis

HWP/2026/77 TO APPOINT CHAIRMEN OF HERITAGE WORKING PARTY

RESOLVED Mr. Nathan Gregory was reelected as Chairman of the Heritage Working Party for the municipal 2026/27 municipal year.

HWP/2026/78 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Chair asked the members to review their current declarations.

HWP/2026/79 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th April 2026, having been previously circulated, be taken as read, confirmed, and signed as an accurate record.

HWP/2026/80 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Events Officer noted:

- i) That the correct contact at Kennet School was still trying to be obtained for the Heritage Open Day event.
- ii) A briefing paper regarding the conservation area appraisal was still required.
- iii) A twinning connection was still to be identified.
- iv) A timetable of the new annual basis was still required
- v) It was discussed that the Peter Allen bench had been requested to be closer to the Town. A suggestion to name a bench in the Jubilee Gardens was made. Cllr Mark Lillycrop to contact Anne to check this suggestion. It was highlighted that this, however, would leave the canal path without a bench. Cllr Mike Cole advised that there is development contribution money that could potentially be used for a new amenity on the canal path.

HWP/2026/81 BLUE PLAQUES

- i) The Events Officer shared the results of the winning blue plaque as Gush 14%, Prehistoric Thatcham 55% and Gilberts 31%. The Events Officer was asked to check the threshold in the voting policy.
- ii) The location of the 2026 prehistoric plaque was discussed with the Events Officer showing a photo of the proposed location on the building from BBOWT. Nathan Gregory advised of his hesitations regarding the location. A vote on was taken and the location suggested by BBOWT was carried.
- iii) The Events Officer confirmed that the policy documents for blue plaque instillation criteria had been agreed by the Events Committee.

- iv) The blue plaque unveiling was discussed. It was agreed that it would be good to have someone that was originally involved in dig to do the talk. Dr Nick Young to do some research on who was involved. Requesting some artifacts such as a mammoth tooth from Newbury and/or Reading Museum was agreed.
- v) A discussion took place about the 2027 blue plaque and a shortlist was agreed as the following:
 - Albert Villas
 - Alice Bye Court
 - Mary Pease
 - John Hore
 - Henry Stradling
 - Domesday
 - The Mecey Family
 - Nicholas Fuller

The proposal was made that permissions were gained between now and September for the above 5 nominations. It was decided that for 2027, the letters were to be signed by the Mayor. By January 2027, 3 plaques with the required wording need to be ready for public vote.

HWP/2026/82 INTERPERTATION PANEL

- i) Events Officer gave an update on the Colthorp Mill Interpretation Panel.

Fiona Hockedy left the meeting at 20:12

- i) Events Officer advised the Interpretation Panels for Turnfields and St Mary's Church would have to be prioritized in an order; due to budget limitations it is not possible to move all panels forward at the same time. It was agreed that the research required for the panels would continue to move forward in the meantime. Cllr Mike Cole to discuss the budget for the panel at St Mary's Church with the Town Clerk.

HWP/2026/83 CONSERVATION AREA APPRASIAL

- i) Nathan Gregory to write a briefing paper on what is required. It was suggested that perhaps a Community Group could take this on if they had access to grants. Cllr Mike Cole advised that Thatcham Town Council are putting together a neighborhood plan and perhaps the appraisal is something that could be included. It was suggested that Nick Young, Nathan Gregory, Sarah Newman and Dominique Culley undertake a course run by Sue Ellis around criteria guidance. It was also agreed that Dominique Culley would look into a Historic England course that operates in this area.

HWP/2026/84 COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS 2026/27

- i) Events Officer gave a verbal update regarding the Heritage Open Day event. It was suggested that the Community Engagement Officer could record with Nick Young to do the audio recording. It was agreed that the event would be proposed as a daytime event, based on everyday lives at Colthorpe and Woodturning in the Council Chamber. This would include refreshments and display boards. Boards to be provided by Thatcham Historical Society. It was agreed that the event would be registered and hope that filming is possible. Cllr Mike Cole

asked for previous communications with Kennet School to be sent to him, to try and move this forward. Nick Young made some suggestions for events to take place as part of Heritage Open Days in 2027 including, evening talks, cemetery tours and celebrating Thatcham Historical Society's 60th Birthday and 10 years of blue plaques.

- ii) Events Officer gave an update on the Heritage Festival events schedule.

HWP/2026/85 Any Other Business

- i) Events officer to investigate why crosses are no longer placed on Commonwealth Graves as done 2 years ago.
- ii) Nathan Gregory to speak to Cemetery Officer regarding Gallipoli Markers.

Roy Tubb left the meeting at 20:52

HWP/2026/86 Date of Next Meetings

The proposed for 2026/27 are;
 Tuesday 29th September 2026
 Tuesday 19th January 2027
 Tuesday 20th April 2027

Time: 19:00 hrs

Venue: Council Offices, Brownsfield Road

HWP/2026/87 RECOMMENDATIONS TO COMMITTEE

- i) Recommendation to R&A to place a bench on the canal path.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:53 hrs.

Signed: _____ Date: _____