

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a meeting of the
Heritage Working Party
held on Wednesday 6th March 2019, at 7pm
in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham

Present: Councillor Nathan Gregory (Chairman)
 Councillors Jan Cover, Richard Crumly and Sheila Ellison
 Mrs Sue Ellis, Mr Roy Tubb and Dr. Nick Young.

In attendance: Georgina Curtis-Read (Community & Civic Admin Officer)

HT/2019/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received by Councillor Mike Cole.

HT/2019/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

HT/2019/03 MINUTES

AGREED

That the Minutes of a meeting of the Heritage Working Party held on 21st November 2018, having been previously circulated, be signed as a true record of the proceedings.

HT/2019/04 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

a) CLERKS REPORT

The Clerk showed the Working Party the Heritage page on the Town Council's website and welcomed feedback. The Clerk also informed the Working Party that there was now a Heritage line in the budget specifically for a blue plaque.

AGREED

That Dr. Nick Young would check the logs for the Heritage page on the website to see how much traffic it received.

b) OTHER MATTERS

There were no other matters arising.

HT/2019/05 BLUE PLAQUE PROPOSALS

a) The Working Party discussed methods of engaging with members of the public, to gather initial blue plaque suggestions. Methods were discussed for the 2019 launch of the scheme.

AGREED

To launch the scheme at the Annual Town Meeting on 11th March 2019 and to utilise social media, the Town Council website and local press, and to display posters on noticeboards and in the Library and to email the Schools, Churches & U3A.

b) The clerk presented a draft spreadsheet with the proposed timeline for the 2019 blue plaque scheme, based on the lead times gathered last year.

AGREED

That the initial gathering of members of the public's ideas be extended to Sunday 31st March 2019 and that shortlisting take place between 1st and 8th April 2019, with public voting between 8th and 22nd April 2019.

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HT/2019/06 ACTION PLAN

Progress on the recent action plan was discussed and tasks allocated:

- i) Public consultation for future Blue Plaques.
Started.
- ii) Creation of a Thatcham Historical Trail and website.
Councillor Gregory and Dr Young to research website costs.
- iii) The collation of all Heritage Open Day activities occurring in Thatcham.
Dr Young and Mrs Ellis announced that Thatcham Historical Society hoped to run a walk during the Open Weekends. Councillor Gregory to write to the owners of Crookham House, the Old Police Station and Thatcham House to enquire if they could be included in the walk.
- iv) Marking significant anniversaries, such as 75th anniversary of D-Day.
A low-key event such as an afternoon tea for the veterans and their families was discussed. The Old Bluecoat School was suggested as an intimate venue to use. Bestowing the honorary Freedom of the Town on the 2 – 3 veterans was discussed.
- v) Setting the topic for Thatcham Festival's historical events.
As it was 80 years after the outbreak of WW2, it was suggested this should be one of the topics covered. Dr Young agreed he would change his history talk to "Thatcham in 1939." Councillor Ellison suggested that the Festival service at St. Marys Church should be a commemoration of the start of WW2.
- vi) Make suggestions to West Berkshire Heritage Forum for inclusion on the Local Listings.
Councillor Gregory informed the Working Party that he had already suggested to Mrs Ellis that the Clock in the Memorial Tower and the War Memorial be included. Other suggestions put forward were The British School, Annette Henry's plaque and the Tomlin plaque.
- vii) Commission a play/production about Thatcham's History.
The ideas was discussed further and it was suggested that the Mayor write a letter to the secondary schools enquiring whether they might accept the task as a project and provide a few pointers of who should be included, such as Francis Baily.

HT/2019/07 INTERPRETATION PANELS

The Working Party reviewed final proofs of the southern and northern interpretation panels and were advised that they should be received early April. The constraints of entering a period of Purdah were discussed.

AGREED

That the families of the people mentioned on the panels be invited to attend a walk and a talk and that it be an open public event without refreshments

HT/2019/08 ANY OTHER IDEAS

There were no further ideas.

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HT/2019/09 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGREED That the next meeting of the Working Party would be an additional meeting to declare the winning blue plaque submission, on Wednesday 24th April 2019 at 10am in the Council Offices.

HT/2019/10 RECOMMENDATIONS

AGREED To recommend to the Recreation and Amenities Committee that the concept of a low-key D-Day “thank you” event be agreed, with a budget of £200.

AGREED To recommend to Full Council that Honorary Freedom of the Town be bestowed upon the 2 - 3 living residents that fought during D-Day¹.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

¹ POST MEETING NOTE: This matter would initially be considered by the Recreation and Amenities Committee.