



HASLEMERE TOWN COUNCIL

Clerk's report to Full Council November 2025

General Updates

We were very sad to hear of the passing of Robert Serman on 8th November. Robert was a well respected figure in the town, particularly known for his 21 years of service to the Haslemere Society, of which he was President from 2005-2017. The Mayor has sent a card to the family.

The Updated & Participate session scheduled for 24th November has been cancelled due to lack of take-up. I will attempt to re-book for January because there are some important updates that I would like to give. Also, I am hoping that Woolmer Hill Sport Association will come and present on how they see the recreation ground being run if HTC secure the freehold. It is really important that all councillors try to attend, Amelia will be in contact with some dates.

Haslemere Town Council, along with Ken Griffiths and Oli Leach (in a personal capacity) has funded £350 towards resurrecting the Charities fair, which had been cancelled. It is now taking place on Sunday 23rd November 10am-2pm at Haslemere Hall. Please come along to support this event.

A second issue of the e-newsletter went out last week with positive feedback received via email. This edition had 218 recipients compared to the last edition which had 128. The number of subscribers is now 226 which is a 21.5% increase in the last month, this number continues to go up each week.

A physical copy of the newsletter was also sent out two weeks ago to help drive traffic to our electronic newsletter as we plan to fully digitalise in the future. We saw a direct increase in subscribers following this publication.

Parking in the town centre car parks will be free after 2pm on 11th December, to coincide with the Christmas Carols event – please let Amelia know if you are able to put on a high viz for the event!

Waitrose in the town centre will be closed for 7 weeks from 17th January 2026. I have put the Chamber in touch with the Waverley Economic development team to see what support can be given to retailers at this time. Ward councillors are also being kept informed.

Haslemere Museum has found a cine type film from 1967, belonging to HTC, which they initially thought was a Cellulose nitrate film reel – highly flammable substance. It subsequently turned out to be benign and it currently being processed so that we can see what is on it. Watch this space for an update!

Christmas Market staff Involvement and future administration - Melanie Odell and Iain Lynch will be stepping down from organising the Christmas Market in two years' time – marking their 25th anniversary of arranging the event.

While no formal resolution has yet been made by the Town Council, over the past few years there has been informal discussion about the Council partnering with the Chamber of Trade, to take on its organisation.

To ensure continuity and support future planning, on 7th December, Town Hall staff will be shadowing the organisers throughout the whole day to see what is involved. This is intended as a fact finding exercise, ahead of Council making any formal decision about being involved in the future running of the event. The Town Clerk will report back to full council in due course.

Events

Christmas Charities Fair - 23rd November, Haslemere Hall – Mayor’s Charity Stall
Haslemere Christmas Market – 7th December, 10am – 4pm, High Street, Haslemere.
Christmas Carols Event - 11th December in the gardens of the Haslemere Museum.
Mayor’s Christmas Drinks- 19th December, 5:30 – 7:30, Town Hall – have you RSVP’d?

Land and assets, PAO report

Grover Gardens

The site currently contains an overabundance of *Prunus laurocerasus* ‘Rotundifolia’ (Common Laurel or Cherry Laurel). This species has become dominant, suppressing biodiversity and limiting the growth of native flora.

Contractors have been instructed to remove the larger laurel plants. To help reduce costs, Cllr Matthes and the Clerk organised a volunteer session to clear smaller, more manageable shrubs.

The volunteer session, held on Saturday 22 October, was well attended. In just two hours, participants managed to cut and stack a substantial quantity of unwanted laurel, which will be chipped once the larger specimens are removed. Volunteers expressed interest in returning for a further two-hour session to continue improvements to this bequeathed land.



SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace)

During inspection, it was noted that the Dead Hedge required attention, including adding branches and extending it by several metres. A team of volunteers, joined by Cllr Matthes and her husband Gareth, completed this work on Saturday 8 November.

Old tree stakes were repurposed to support the hedge structure. The dead hedge not only provides valuable habitat for wildlife but also serves as a natural boundary within the area.



Lion Green Winter Planting Scheme - Lion Green Toilets

In the first week of November, Haslemere Town Council officers carried out a winter planting scheme at the Lion Green toilet block. The project aimed to enhance the area's appearance during the colder months whilst subtly masking the building.

Seventeen *Betula utilis* 'Jacquemontii' (Himalayan Birch) trees were planted in a circular metal bed in front of the toilet block. These standard trees, with their distinctive white stems, will create a striking focal point throughout the winter. The bed has been underplanted with winter heather, repurposed from the High Street planters, ensuring there was no additional cost to the council.

Around the building, new beds were also prepared for *Cornus sericea* 'Flaviramea' (Green Dogwood), chosen for its vivid winter colour and structure, which will contribute to an attractive seasonal display in years to come.

The trees were sourced from Red Leaf Nursery, Tilford, whose owner, a Haslemere resident from Kings Road, kindly offered the council a trade discount. As we were staking the trees we only heard good positive feedback from members of the public.

Planting was undertaken by council officers Lisa, Joe, and Pippa, assisted by former Mayor Jim Edwards and Ken Griffiths MBE, whose help was greatly appreciated.

