

## **Leisure, Events, and Environment Committee Meeting – Councillors' Update Tuesday 4 March 2025**

### **Leisure and Events Update**

#### **Past Events**

##### **The Great British Spring Clean**

Two open events were held—one from the office on Wednesday and another the following Saturday at Weston Wood. Both events had good footfall, with a variety of age groups attending. We weighed everything on the Saturday and collected 123kg of rubbish from Weston Wood, with approximately 26 participants. A leaderboard was created, which added a bit of competitive fun for attendees. I cannot provide the attendance number for Wednesday as I was on annual leave.

Additionally, we loaned equipment to a few individual residents, the local church, and Croxley Danes School, all of whom also participated in the initiative.

**Positives** – This initiative gave the Parish an opportunity to showcase our environmental efforts and raise awareness within the community, while also encouraging residents and local groups to get involved.

**Areas for Improvement** – Participation numbers could be higher. We need to make more effort in collaborating with local organisations to boost involvement.

##### **Neurodiversity Week**

As with last year, we held a silent disco in the community hall. This year, we increased the number of headphones available and extended the session time. Feedback was very positive, and the changes improved the experience by offering more space and a longer duration.

The larger group sensory session went extremely well and sold out all 25 places. Feedback on the day was overwhelmingly positive, and attendees were very grateful. We raised £270 for SPACE Herts.

**Positives** – A well-rounded event. Additional props and arts and crafts were successful. The introduction of a £2 charity fee reduced no-shows and ensured strong attendance.

**Negatives** – The afternoon sessions were much more popular and sold out quickly, while the morning sessions had slower uptake. Adding another afternoon session could help increase overall attendance.

##### **Artistic Adventures – Launch Session**

We offered 12 spaces, and all were booked and attended. At present, all sessions are fully booked for the next four months. The launch session ran very smoothly, with positive feedback from both parents and children.

**Positives** – The sessions have had a strong and enthusiastic response, selling out quickly.

**Negatives** – Due to high demand, we could consider offering more sessions. Unfortunately, two of the 12 children were from Chorleywood, meaning not all spaces directly benefited Croxley Green residents.

### **Repair Café – Launch**

The first session ran smoothly, with only minor adjustments suggested by volunteers. Over 50 items came through the doors, and most were successfully repaired. Engagement and feedback for the initiative have been extremely positive, with both local residents and visitors expressing thanks that Croxley Green Parish Council brought this project to the area. Local organisations and businesses are keen to support and help promote it.

Looking ahead, we're likely to feature specialist stalls from local businesses offering sustainable services—such as a tech repair business providing free software updates or mobile fixes. This is a great way to support local enterprise and promote sustainability.

The slow launch allowed us to iron out operational issues, particularly around admin organisation on the day and volunteer task allocation. The next session will take place this Sunday, just before the LEE meeting this update is for.

**Positives** – Feedback has been excellent, with twice the usual social media engagement compared to other events. We have a great team of enthusiastic volunteers, and attendees are very thankful for the service. The Parish has received significant recognition across South West Herts and beyond.

**Negatives** – We need to be mindful that the project doesn't outgrow our capacity. As the only initiative of its kind in the district, it risks becoming a district-wide service rather than one just for Croxley Green. However, Green Friends in Watford attended the launch and may soon open their own version.

Set-up costs (e.g. glues, PAT tester, insurance) have been relatively high. Most Repair Cafés take donations to help repurchase equipment and support sustainability. We are not currently set up for this as we are not VAT registered.

### **Councillor Considerations:**

1. Should we restrict attendees to Croxley Green residents only?
2. Should we begin accepting donations to help cover running costs?
3. Do you have any suggestions for businesses or organisations we could invite as feature stalls?

### **Youth Council**

The Youth Council is still active, currently with five members. A new call for members will go out this month, as one member has friends interested in joining.

Key discussion items on the agenda include:

- Redesigning the Watford flower beds after gas works
- Revamping Dickinson's Square
- Ideas for reusing the red telephone box

**Councillor Action** – If you would like to attend a meeting or suggest an agenda item, please contact me.

## **Easter egg Trail**

Very successful and popular this year. The good weather saw a huge increase in participants from last year with over 250 eggs given out.

All ran similar to previous years apart from the addition of a interactive google earth map participants could use.

## **Easter egg hunt**

All ran very smoothly. Pre event registrations were over 500 children participating, there was likely a couple hundred more than this turn up on the day.

Taking into considering adults attending with children the total amount of participants was approximately 1400 minimum.

The change to the lay out worked a lot better with positive feedback.

Pre bagging the sweets save a lot of time and hassle compared to previous years.

**Positives – all ran smoothly and on time. Very popular.**

**Improvements needed** – parking was still observed on the green spaces, parking marshalls should be assigned and signage placed to deter this.

With increased numbers comes increased costs, the price of cholate has also increased. The budget needs to be adjusted accordingly.

A lounder PA system would have been beneficial.

A tissue style tape will be placed next year to avoid false starts.

## **Councillors' considerations –**

- Increasing budget to reflect increase of participants and increased costs of chocolate.
- A large number of external participants, does this need to be over seen?

## **Upcoming Events**

### **80th VE Day Community Picnic**

This event is shaping up well, with a strong wartime theme throughout. The budget has primarily covered essential infrastructure (toilets, sound system, first aid), while entertainment spending has been modest.

We've borrowed gazebos and tables from community groups, meeting our needs without additional cost. This is a significant community effort, with multiple voluntary contributions and ideas brought together.

Confirmed Attractions Include:

- Chiltern Open Air Museum with staff in character
- Croxley History Project – wartime exhibition

- Three Rivers Museum – ration books and memorabilia
- Local residents displaying Home Guard uniforms and 1940s radios
- 1930s–40s Car Show, including a WWII field kitchen with live demos
- Food provided by RBL and All Saints Church, with additional options (ice cream, Greek food) to cover dietary needs
- Guides’ 1940s campsite with interactive displays
- George Ritchie, local performer, singing era-themed songs
- Dance workshops, Chiltern Brass Band, and community dance groups
- Winston Churchill impersonator performing comedy sketches
- Adam K Ginder DL, representing the Lord-Lieutenant
- Colourmaze, inflatables, and garden games for modern entertainment

**Issues Arising** – Given the lack of similar local events, we anticipate high attendance, including visitors from outside Croxley Green. Parking is the primary concern. As a contingency, the Clerk has approved hiring two agency staff (£340) to manage parking, freeing councillors and officers to focus on the event grounds.

**Councillor Action** – We urgently need volunteer stewards. Please reach out to your networks. Even one or two hours of support in high-vis to patrol the grounds would be hugely helpful.

### Event site plans for acknowledgement

#### Site Plan - Exhibitor Placement

Pitch	Organisation
1	Swing dance UK
2	Peter Denchfield
3	Clive Hooley
4	Chiltern Open Air Museum
5	Croxley Green History Project
6	Three Rivers Museum
7	Girl Guides
8	Make do and Mend
9	Anytime Fitness
10	Summit Chiropractic
11	Dig for Britain
12	Ovelix Greek
13	All Saints Church
14	Royal British Legion
15	Colour Maze
16	Inflatables, small ride and sweets.
17	Rebels and Rascals Face Painting



#### Detailed Car Show site plan

Pitch	name	Vehicle
1	Steve. C	Willy's Jeep MB 1942
2	Michael. M	Standard Ten 1934
3	Nigel. S	Willys Jeep 1942
4	Jill. H	Ford Coupe 1932
5	Peter. K	Ford roadstar 1934
6	Michael T	Ford GPW Jeep 1942
7	Barry. R	small tank - ford 1943
8	Roger C	Ford Model Y 1933
9	Stuart D	Willys MB 1944
10	Charlotte	TBC
11	Charlotte	TBC
12	TBC	TBC
13	Graham England	Ford half ton pick up 1940
14	Charlie foster	Willys Jeep 1943
15	Charlie foster	ford eight 1939
16	Stuart D	Willys MB 1944
17	Paul J	Ford GPW Jeep 1942
18	tbc	tbc
19	Norman McLean	Bedford QLD 1942

## **National Children's Gardening Week 2025 – The Return of Croxley Green's Sunflower Competition!**

I need to determine whether we go ahead with this as it has come to my attention that one of the local pubs are running one to raise money for charity. I will confirm if we collaborate or halt our event in due course.

## **Pre-School Allotment**

Now Phillipa is back from maternity leave this session will resume from June.

## **The Great Big Green Week**

The event will take place on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June at the Community Centre, after the repair café. Local organisations including TRDC, a toy library, the wildlife trust, the allotments, to name a few will form a 'green' market style event both in and outside with a variety of presentations taking place within the Parish Council chamber room. We have a full variety of exhibitors due to attend. Full scheduling and marketing for this event will begin from the beginning of May, so not to overlap with VE Day.

Please provide thoughts, feedback, and confirmations where needed. Your support is invaluable in making these events successful.

Author:

Nicola Dicks, Community Events and Engagement Officer

## **Rangers Update**

- During March Stephen attended a chainsaw course, he passed.
- Orchard has received its first cut of the year, cut intervals will be dependent on weather conditions.
- Replanting of entrance sign planters Replacement of rotten bed within the allotment.
- Defibrillators around the village have been updated with new pads and new batteries if needed.
- Installed sign outside St. Oswald's Church relating to the defib.
- First spring cuts of some footpaths.
- Wooden Bridge over the River Chess which I found to have cracks in, has been replaced by Herts County Council after its failure.
- Consistent monitoring of MUGA, not much of an issue recently, but still an issue.
- A hedgehog was found within the MUGA and relocated into the vegetation behind the MUGA.
- Engine Management Light fixed on the Toyota Hilux.

Author:

Stephen Reid, Ranger