

11 May 2021

Harpenden Town Council Acquires Rothamsted Park

Harpenden Town Council now owns Rothamsted Park after finalising the acquisition from St Albans City & District Council on 30 April 2021.

The transfer of ownership will bring numerous benefits to Harpenden residents and users of Rothamsted Park, with the Town Council planning significant financial investments and biodiversity enhancements.

Residents will see an immediate impact from the new ownership, with Harpenden Town Council investing £150,000 into the redevelopment of the Rothamsted Park Play Area. The Town Council is working in partnership with Playground Action Rothamsted Committee (PARC), a group of local residents who for a long time have driven forward the vision for the project and have fundraised more than £110k themselves. Residents should be hugely grateful to the outstanding work of PARC in getting the project to this stage.

Work on the £250k play area is set to commence in June, with an estimated opening date of late July for the new play area. We are really excited to be able to deliver this new play area within just a few months of taking ownership of the park.

The play area is just the start of a number of improvements projects that the Town Council will be making. We have also allocated significant funding to:

- Develop a new 3G pitch on the site that will provide first class facilities for junior football and sport in the Town.
- Build a new community pavilion to replace the two existing structures that are in a very poor state of repair.
- Make improvements to the grass sports pitches so that they are of a higher quality and are less susceptible to bad winter weather.
- Refresh the signage across the site.
- Increase the number of benches and bins.

All of our planned improvements will be set out in a new management plan for the site that will be developed during 2021. At the heart of this management plan will be a focus on biodiversity and making environmental improvements in the park. We will carry out community engagement on the management plan later this year and look forward to receiving ideas from residents.

Harpenden Town Mayor Cllr Paul Cousin said, "The Town Council is delighted to have taken ownership of Rothamsted Park. The park is an invaluable and much-loved asset for our local community, and this transfer will enable us to deliver significant improvements in the years ahead to ensure it is an outstanding and engaging open space for everyone to enjoy."

The Rothamsted Park transfer does not include the new Leisure and Culture Centres, depot building, or car parks, which will all remain under the ownership of St Albans City & District Council. Any queries regarding the transfer of ownership can be directed to Harpenden.Town.Council@harpenden.gov.uk.