

Amenities and Leisure Committee Meeting – 13th September 2023

Agenda Item 5.1 – Green Fair

The Day Before

With a forecast of heavy rain, wind and the possibility of Storm Antoni hitting Earley, staff had to consider whether or not the Green Fair could go ahead. Re-scheduling the event to a different date was not feasible, a huge amount of organisation goes into the event and the availability of stallholders would have been uncertain. As we know, the weather can change very quickly, so the decision was made to go ahead and see what the conditions were on the day.

On the Day

Despite a very wet start for staff at 6.30am, we were pleased to see the first of the stallholders arriving at 7am. The atmosphere was very cheerful with stallholders happily helping each another set up. Unfortunately, a few stallholders cancelled the night before and a few others were a no show on the day. Some stallholders arrived late due to the weather, so staff had to think on their feet with some re-arranging of pitches and staff erecting an additional gazebo where visitors could sit and keep dry.

The weather during the morning wasn't too bad, although there was some rain, we had plenty of visitors and everyone was in good spirits. The afternoon saw the arrival of torrential rain and the number of visitors started to dwindle. Officers had concerns about the bogginess of the ground and so, in consultation with the stallholders, we agreed to end the fair an hour early at 2pm.

Refreshments

Maiden Erlegh Rotary Club did a brilliant job serving hot and cold drinks and simple snacks and were very busy throughout the day. The Club put out tables & chairs decorated with tablecloths and flowers, which was a nice touch. The Club are keen to be involved again next year. We have a few ideas to further improve the provision of refreshments at future events, we will look into these and have agreed to have further discussions with ME Rotary Club.

First Class Falconry

The birds of prey display was very popular with all visitors. Alan Greenhalgh, the owner and handler of the birds was friendly, approachable and engaging. We got to know Lisa the Falcon, Molly the Owl and Kookie the Kookaburra and many others. The calls of the birds even had some nearby residents coming along to see if new species of birds had moved onto the nature reserve! We have provisionally booked First Class Falconry to return next year.

General Stats

Out of 49 stallholders who booked, 9 cancelled the day before and 11 were a no show on the day. In total 29 stallholders attended.

Emma Carroll Deputy Town Clerk
25.08.2023