

Loose Leaf

summer 09
newsletter



Pull out sections for
Volunteer Tasks and
Crawley Health Walks.



Notes from the Potting Shed

First let me explain the title. We are based at Tilgate Park, in Crawley and our office was once a potting shed. Don't worry – it has all mod-cons – glass in the windows, a roof and even a broadband connection. We still don't have running water but you can't have everything!

Gatwick Greenspace Partnership is an urban wildlife and community group working in the towns and villages in the Gatwick area. We do a huge range of work over many interesting sites. In the last few weeks we have done practical conservation work in an ancient parkland, a country park and an open space next to the motorway. Project staff have led volunteer tasks, guided walks, worked with college students and run an overnight camp for secondary school pupils.

In the coming months, we may become involved in a project to restore a long-forgotten mausoleum. We are training teachers in environmental education and volunteers to become walk leaders. We will also be organising the annual Crawley Walking Festival, which aims to explore some of the great open spaces



and countryside in and around Crawley.

By the time you read this The BBC's Springwatch programmes will be over for another year. But can help you get closer to nature, just outside your front door, all year round.

A big thanks to Barry and Tom for working so hard to get their new projects off the ground, to Huw and Kevin for running all the tasks and to the volunteers themselves for everything they do.

If you are interested in helping out, coming out or finding out then please give us a call at the shed, I mean office, 01293 550730 or email me: petecrawford@sussexwt.org.uk



Task Update

On a beautiful spring day at the beginning of April we opened up a glade in Edolph's Copse, Charlwood. The bluebells and primroses will benefit from more light. At the end of April we worked alongside Ian and the new Reigate and Banstead rangers at Riverside Park. We coppiced a long section of willow and other trees to allow more light in to encourage ground flora but also to keep the path open and maintain accessibility.

Alongside a very enthusiastic group from Crawley College, we returned to work at Broadfield Park clearing a large area of rhododendron and laurel and having a huge bonfire. There is plenty of work to be done on this site so doubtless we will be returning over the winter months.

The start of April saw the first corporate group of the year out when a large group from GlaxoSmithKline joined us to start work on a new wildlife garden area in Tilgate Park. The group worked hard clearing rhododendron and birch from a lowland heathland area as part of an ongoing project to develop this area for local school and community groups to use and enjoy.

We have also begun work on a completely new site at Betchwood Park in Dorking. Betchwood Park was once



part of a medieval deer park surrounding Betchworth Castle. Dating from the 11th century, the castle is now in ruins. But the park contains a number of ancient sweet chestnut trees, estimated to be at least 600 years old. These giants provide a clear link with history of the site and suggest that Betchworth Park has been wood pasture for hundreds of years. The plan is to restore the parkland, by removing many of the younger trees and scrub, and enhancing the remaining grassland. We made a start by clearing sycamore saplings. Working with Alex from Mole Valley District Council we hope to help kick start a local "friends of" type group through the inspirational display of skills, knowledge and enthusiasm the GGP volunteers can offer! (What a creep...)

At the time of writing we have just had a day out at Crabbett Park in Crawley, clearing sapling trees from a flood meadow. We had tremendous help from the student group again and staff from Crawley Borough came out with a chipper so we could dispose of the arisings. So thanks to all our volunteers, to Crawley College students and staff and to Janet, Ruth, Dave, and Andy for your assistance.

Painted Lady Invasion



As I write this at the end of the May we are in the midst of a fluttering invasion from North Africa. In the largest migration for twenty years, millions of Painted Lady butterflies (*Vanessa cardui*) have been passing through Sussex and Surrey and across the UK. Painted Lady butterflies are one of the most widely distributed in the world being found almost everywhere apart from South America. In North America it is often called the Thistle Butterfly, as that is the favoured food plant

They have been sighted as far north as Dumfries and Galloway in Scotland and on May 27th an estimated 18,000 passed through Scolts Head in Norfolk. On May 31st, 1300 were observed laying eggs on thistles in Keymer, near Hurstpierpoint.

The butterflies originate from the Atlas Mountains, Morocco, in North Africa.

This year a wet winter has led to an abundance of suitable plants for the caterpillars to feed upon. The butterflies were reported to be hatching out in hundreds of thousands in February. They then spread out northwards through Spain and France before finally making across the English Channel.

Here the Painted Ladies will breed and lay their eggs on thistles, nettles and mallows. The caterpillars hatch out and create a little tent of the leaves of their food plant, held together with silk. The caterpillars will pupate and emerge from their chrysalises, as butterflies.

The whole process takes about one month so look out for newly hatched Painted Ladies in July and August. They will then need nectar-rich flowers to feed from before beginning the reverse of the journey their parents took and returning back to North Africa, where the cycle begins again.



Crawley Health Walks



YOUR FIRST STEP TO A HEALTHIER FUTURE July–October 2009



Walking is a great form of exercise, regardless of how fit or how old you are. Health Walks are led by trained staff or volunteers. Walking as part of a group takes away fear of getting lost and is very sociable – we walk and talk!

This easy, gentle and safe exercise can help reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, strokes, diabetes, high blood pressure, bowel cancer, Alzheimer’s disease, osteoporosis, arthritis and stress.

The health walks are graded:

Level 1

Suitable for the very unfit, those recovering from illness, accident or operation and walkers with limited stamina. No stiles on these walks

Level 2

Some uneven ground and inclines on the route. Usually walk for about an hour, covering 2-3 miles

Level 3

Could involve steep inclines, stiles & rutted terrain. Walking for at least an hour and a minimum of 3 miles.

For all walks: a sensible pair of trainers or shoes (preferably lace-ups) are advisable. The level 2 and 3 walks will be wet and muddy and you may find a pair of walking boots useful, especially in winter.

If you are in Horsham or Horley there are Health Walks in your town, but you are more than welcome to come to ours!

Please contact Barry on 01293 550730 or barrywildish@sussexwt.org.uk with any queries

LEVEL 1 WALKS

Broadfield Park

10.00am Wednesdays. Meet at the Recycling Centre car-park, Broadfield Barton shops, Crawley. Buses 1, 10 & 20 call at the shops.

Cherry Lane

10.45 am Every Wednesday, Cherry Lane Recreation Field, Langley Green. The 4 & 5 buses run along the nearby Martyrs Avenue.

July

Wednesday 1st / 8th / 15th / 22nd / 29th

August

Wednesday 5th (not Broadfield Park) / 12th / 19th / 26th

September

Wednesday 2nd (not Broadfield Park) / 9th / 16th / 23rd / 30th (not Broadfield Park)

October

(currently not planned for Broadfield Park – this may change)

7th / 14th / 21st / 28th

Goff's Park

Starts at 10.30 am every Tuesday at Goffs Park, Horsham Road, close to centre of town. The 23 & 24 buses stop just along from the carpark. The walk begins from the free carpark by the level crossing.

July

Tuesday 1st / 7th / 14th / 21st / 28th

August

Tuesday 4th / 11th / 18th / 25th

September

Tuesday 1st / 8th / 15th / 22nd / 29th

October

Tuesday 6th / 13th / 20th / 27th

LEVEL 2 WALKS - ALL LEVEL 2 WALKS START AT 9-30 AM

The Tuesday walk alternates between Buchan Country Park and Tilgate Park. The Wednesday walk at Cherry Lane is on every week.

July

Tues. 7th Tilgate Park

Tues. 14th Buchan Country Park

Tues. 21st Tilgate Park

Tues. 28th Buchan Country Park

Wed. 1st / 8th / 15th / 22nd / 29th -
Cherry Lane

August

Tues. 4th Tilgate Park

Tues. 11th Buchan Country Park

Tues. 18th Tilgate Park

Tues. 25th Buchan Country Park

Wed. 5th / 12th / 19th / 26th -

Cherry Lane

September

Tues. 1st Tilgate Park

Tues. 8th Buchan Country Park

Tues. 15th Tilgate Park

Tues. 22nd Buchan Park

Tues. 29th Tilgate Park

Wed. 2nd / 9th / 16th / 23rd / 30th -
Cherry Lane

cont. on p11

Volunteer Task Programme

THE VEHICLE LEAVES TILGATE PARK FOR SITE AT 9-30AM PLEASE RING THE DAY BEFORE IF YOU WANT A LIFT, OR MEET ON SITE FROM 10-00AM ONWARDS. ON THE DAY PLEASE RING 07788 101544 OR 0777 590 7492 FOR QUERIES



July

Thurs 2nd – St Leonard’s Forest – heathland maintenance. Meet at the ranger’s lodge on the bridleway south of Forest Road, Colgate TQ221 324

Wednesday 8th – Betchwood Park, Dorking – Himalayan Balsam pulling. Meet at the first left off Punchbowl Lane opposite Ladygate Road TQ177 496

Thursday 16th Hammonds Copse – Pine clearance. Meet at bridleway entrance off Broad Lane near Newdigate TQ209 442

Wed 22nd Tilgate Park– installing a two plank crossing and steps. Meet at fisherman’s car park (free) next to golf club TQ 279 348

Sun 26th – St Leonard’s Forest – heathland maintenance. Meet at the ranger’s lodge on the bridleway south of Forest Road, Colgate TQ221 324

Thurs 30th Hammonds Copse – coppicing near the boardwalk. Meet at bridleway entrance off Broad Lane near Newdigate TQ209 442

August

Wed 5th Owlbeech Woods – birch/ holly pulling. Meet at the car park by the playground at the end of Owlbeech Way, off South Holmes Road, Horsham TQ197 316

Thurs 13th Glovers Wood – sphagnum pond clearance and coppicing. Meet at the end of Glovers Road, off Russ Hill Road, Charlwood TQ 237 410

Wed 19th – Rathlin Road Pond, Crawley – clearing scrub from the flood plain. Meet at Arran Close, off of Colonsay Rd, Broadfield, Crawley TQ 258 353

Sun 23rd – St Leonard's Forest - heathland maintenance. Meet at the ranger's lodge on the bridleway south of Forest Road, Colgate TQ221 324

Thurs 27th – Riverside Park – installing steps. Meet at the car park, Riverside, off Crescent Way, Horley TQ282 422

September

Wed 2nd – Buchan Country Park – heathland maintenance on our favourite country park. Meet at Buchan Park car park, off the Horsham Road, between Crawley & Horsham TQ 246 347

Thurs 10th – Glovers Wood – working around the Bell pond. Meet at the end of Glovers Road, off Russ Hill Road, Charlwood TQ 237 410

Wed 16th – Owlbeech Woods – tree felling. Meet at the car park by the playground at the end of Owlbeech Way, off South Holmes Road, Horsham TQ197 316

Thurs 24th - Hammonds Copse – coppicing to expose oaks. Meet at bridleway entrance off Broad Lane near Newdigate TQ209 442

Sunday 27th – St Leonard's Forest – heathland maintenance. Meet at the ranger's lodge on the bridleway south of Forest Road, Colgate TQ221 324

Wed 30th - Buchan Country Park – heathland maintenance on our favourite country park. Meet at Buchan Park car park, off the Horsham Road, between Crawley & Horsham TQ 246 347





Hard at work

October

Thurs 8th - Edolphs Copse – small-scale coppicing in this Local Nature Reserve (LNR). Meet at the main entrance off Stan Hill Road, Charlwood TQ 234 422

Wed 14th - Warnham Nature Reserve – felling/scrub clearance. Meet at Warnham Nature Reserve car park, off the A24. TQ 169 326

Thurs 22nd –Edolphs Copse - small-scale coppicing in this Local Nature Reserve (LNR). Meet at the main entrance off Stan Hill Road, Charlwood TQ 234 422

Sun 25th – St Leonard’s Forest – heathland maintenance. Meet at the ranger’s lodge on the bridleway south of Forest Road, Colgate TQ221 324

Wed 28th – Tilgate Forest – heathland maintenance. Meet at Parish Lane entrance, Pease Pottage TQ 282 332



New to us?

Tasks start at 10am and usually end around 4.00pm, but some of our volunteers come out for just the morning.

You need to wear clothes suitable for the weather, and sturdy footwear.

Drinks and biscuits are provided but do bring a packed lunch if you plan to stay out all day.

We provide all tools and safety

equipment and show you how to use all tools safely.

An adult must accompany children under 16 and you are advised to be up to date with your tetanus immunisation. A first aider will be available.

It is possible to arrange a lift from the office in Tilgate Park, Crawley, but please ring the office the day before task to confirm.



A well earned rest

LEVEL 2 WALKS - ALL LEVEL 2 WALKS START AT 9-30 AM

October

Tues.6th Buchan Country Park

Tues.13th Tilgate Park

Tues.20th Buchan Park

Tues.27th Tilgate Park

Wed. 7th/ 14th/21st/28th -
Cherry Lane

Directions

Buchan Country Park, Horsham Road,

Crawley. Toilets at start/finish. Meet at the Countryside Centre at the top of Buchan Park car park. Nearest bus 1, 10, 23, 24, 200

Tilgate Park, off Titmus Drive. Meet at fisherman's car park (free), next to golf course. Nearest Bus 2, 3, 73

Cherry Lane Recreation Field, - see level 1 for details.

LEVEL 3 WALKS – EXPLORE THE BEAUTIFUL COUNTRYSIDE CLOSE TO CRAWLEY!

July

Wed. 8th River Mole Meander (4 miles)
10.30am start Meet behind the Plough Inn, the Street, Ifield.

Thurs. 9th Staplefield Stroll (4.5 miles)
Meet at layby on west side of the village green, opposite Jolly Tanners pub, B2114, Staplefield

Tues. 14th Tilgate Park (3 miles) 18.30pm.
Evening ramble from the Fishermans' carpark, Tilgate Park.

Sat. 18th St Leonards Forest (7.5 miles)
10.00am start . Meet Buchan Park. Bring a packed lunch

Thurs. 23rd Balcombe (3.5 miles) 10.00am.
Meet lay-by on the B2036 South, just before you enter the villiage on the right.

Tues. 28th Maidenbower Circular (4 miles) 18.30pm. Meet Fishermans carpark, Tilgate Park.

August

Sat. 8th River Mole Meander (4 miles)
10.30am Meet behind the Plough Inn, the Street, Ifield.

Fri. 14th Tilgate (3 miles) 18.30pm.
Evening ramble from the Fishermans' carpark, Tilgate Park.

Thurs. 20th Faygate (5 miles) 10.00am
Holmbush Pub car-park, but away from the pub itself.

Wed. 26th Worth Lodge (4 miles)
10.00am Meet at Maidenbower Recreation Ground, Maidenbower Drive.

Mon. 31st Ouse Valley / Balcombe Viaduct (4.5 miles) 10.00am. Meet at Ardingly reservoir carpark (£1 to park)

For more walks try the Crawley and North Sussex Ramblers group. They run walks most weekends. They usually meet at Crawley railway station at around 9-00am and then drive to the start of the walk. It may be possible to car-share. Walks range between 5 – 11.5 miles, and venues include East Grinstead, Lewes and Cissbury Ring. Phone Clive for Membership enquiries on 01293 442994

LEVEL 3 WALKS – EXPLORE THE BEAUTIFUL COUNTRYSIDE CLOSE TO CRAWLEY!

September

Crawley Walking Festival

Sat 5th Gatwick Woods (4 miles) 10-30am Meet at Parsons Pig pub, Balcombe Road. Exploring the surprisingly wild edges of Gatwick. Booking essential on 01293 550730, to reserve a seat for lunch in the pub.

Sun 6th Old Crawley (6 miles) 9-30am. Ancient woodland, meadows and a water mill, without leaving Crawley! Meet at Goffs park carpark, by the level crossing on Horsham Road

Mon. 7th Worth Abbey (9 miles) 10.00 From Fishermans car park, Tilgate Park. Cross Worth Forest to reach the Abbey grounds. Bring a packed lunch.

Tues 8th Buchan Park (3 miles) 9.30am. Level 2 health walk. Meet at Visitor Centre Buchan Park, off Horsham Road Crawley.

Wed. 9th River Mole Meander (4 miles) 10.30 From the Plough Inn, Ifield. A ramble through the wooded countryside north-west of Crawley

Thurs. 10th Willoughby Fields (4 miles) 10-00am Meet Willoughby Fields / Crawley Rugby club, Ifield Avenue. Explore this little known site!

Fri.11th Tilgate Trail (4miles) 10.00am. From the Fishermans carpark, Tilgate Park. A walk around Crawley's largest park.

Sat. 12th Beyond Bewbush (8 miles) 10-00am Meet at Buchan Country Park. Through farmland and woods for a pub lunch at Lambs Green, and back. Booking essential to reserve a seat for lunch – 01293 550730

Sun 13th Pound the Parks (4 miles) 10-00am. A circuit taking in Grattons, Worth and Crabbet Parks. Meet at Grattons car-park, St Mary's Drive, by the railway bridge.

Thurs. 17th Slaugham saunter (4 miles) 10.00am Meet at Slaugham Church in the centre of the village.

Fri.25th Copthorne (5 miles) 10.00am Meet Copthorne Common Road, side road off Newtown Road.

October

Sat.3rd Burstow stream stroll (4.5 miles) 10.00 From carpark by play park, Oakside court off Broadmead, from Wheatfield Way, Langshott, Horley

Wed.7th River Mole meander (4 miles) 10.30 From The Plough Inn, Ifield.

Thurs. 15th Staplefield stroll (3.5 miles) Meet at layby on west side of the village green, opposite Jolly Tanners pub, B2114, Staplefield

Thurs. 22nd Rowfant Circular (4 miles) Meet at Rowfant carpark, Wallace Lane, opposite the old station and Colas.

Fri. 30th Balcombe (3.5 miles) 10.00 Meet lay-by on the B2036 South, just before you enter the village on the right.

For more information please contact Barry on 01293 550730 or email barrywildish@sussexwt.org.uk Crawley Green Health Project is sponsored by:



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Community Projects

Gatwick Greenspace Partnership is currently running two externally funded projects. The first is the Crawley Green Health project. Running since February, it developed out of the Crawley health Walks. These are going from strength to strength, with over 20 walkers out regularly on our Level 2 walks on Tuesday.

The walks are now accredited with the national Walking for Health Initiative. This shows that we deliver the best quality health walks. We can now proudly display the WHI logo on our walks.



In the last three months we have piloted a new Level 1 walk in Langley Green. This was a little slow to start but has shown great success in the past few weeks, so much so that we are putting on a new weekly Level 2 walk, also at Cherry Lane playing Fields. So “thank you” to everyone who helped spread the word and promote this new walk.

Within the last three months Barry has also become a trainer for health walk leaders and will be running training days, for anyone who wishes to become a health walk leader. Please contact Barry for information.

Lastly we would like to thank: Matt



and the Active Crawley team for his continued support, Brenda and all the volunteer leaders for giving up their time and leading some fantastic walks, and especially all the walkers for showing up in all weathers and being a pleasure to walk with.

The Forest Schools Co-ordinator for the Weald Forest Ridge, Tom Forward, has also hit the ground running. Tom now has his own van to carry the considerable quantities of kit and bundles of brash around. There are also leaflets explaining about Forest School activities, which have gone to all the local schools. Tom has made good contacts with a number of schools and already delivered events to 250 school children, with more booked in. Thanks especially to Simon and Ruth for smoothing the way...If you are a teacher or involved with a children’s or youth community group and would be interested in Forest Schools please contact Tom – 07771 375 254 or email him: tomforward@sussexwt.org.uk

Maidens of the Weald

The High Weald is recognized as one of England's Finest Landscapes and is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It is a medieval landscape of rolling hills, small irregular fields, abundant woods and hedges, scattered farmsteads and sunken lanes. The Weald Forest Ridge is the highest ridge of the High Weald AONB. The Weald Forest Ridge Landscape Partnership Scheme has been formed to enable people to reconnect with their local landscape, access and enjoy it, understand its unique heritage, take part in caring for it, and leave a legacy for future generations.

What is the Maidens of the Weald project?

To celebrate the launch of the Weald Forest Ridge Scheme, Same Sky will be working across the Weald Forest Ridge area to create four giant 'Maidens of the Weald'. There will be a maiden for each of the four mediaeval forests in the area (Ashdown, St Leonards, Tilgate and Broadwater). They will join together for a spectacular fiery finale on the evening of 3rd October in Tilgate Park.



TILGATE MAIDEN
Wednesday 19 -
Sunday 23 August
11am-4pm
Gatwick
Greenspace
Classroom, Tilgate
Park, Tilgate Drive,
Crawley RH10 5PQ



You can visit the Tilgate maiden at any time while it is being created by a same sky artist in residence. If you'd like to help create the maiden, you can book onto a session on Saturday 22 or Sunday 23 August from 1pm-4pm by calling Bec on 01273 571106, or by emailing bec@samesky.co.uk.

For more information on the High Weald visit www.highweald.org



Roadside Revelations

Even within our urban haunts you can find some of the most beautiful of wild flowers. We visited a local roadside verge, known to be a rich fragment of grassland and we weren't disappointed.

Amongst the swathe of ox-eye daisies and birds-foot trefoil were two species of orchid. The first is our most frequent British orchid, the Common spotted –orchid, (*Dactylorhiza fuchsia*). This species can vary in colour from almost pure white to deep pink and range in height from a few inches to a couple of feet. The leaves are narrow and dark-spotted and the plant blooms between May and August. It is pollinated by bees and hoverflies.

More exciting was the discovery of several Bee orchids (*Ophrys apifera*). A beautiful and exotic flower, the blooms look like a bee perched on the stalk. They prefer poor and disturbed soils such as road verges and flower



Bee orchid

between June and July. In parts of the Mediterranean, the bee-shaped flower acts as a lure to bees such as the solitary *Eucera* bee and helps transfer pollen. In Britain however, the flowers are self-pollinating. The orchid release tens of thousands of tiny dust-like seeds, but very few germinate, as they need to form a symbiotic relationship with fungi in the soil, in order to survive. The orchid “bulb” slow grows underground and only flowers some three to five years later. Because of this long life-cycle the plants can often be seen in great numbers one year and then not appear again for several years.

We also discovered Grass vetchling, *Lathyrus nissolia* nestled amongst the grasses. This is a difficult plant to spot, its leaves looking just like blades of grass until its distinctive paired crimson pea-flowers appear in May - June.

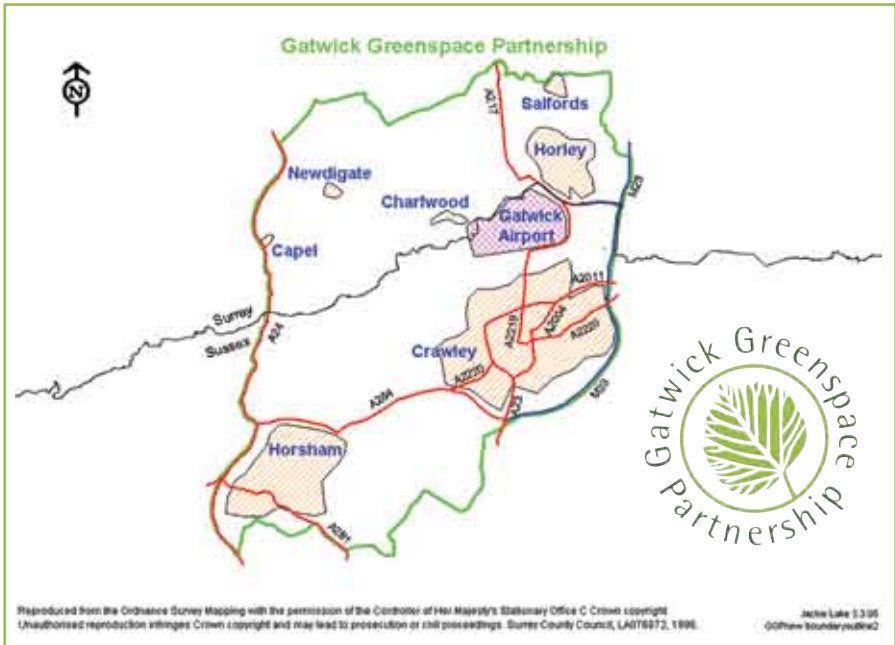
We are also keeping an eye on some helleborines, on another site and will try and take some photos for the next newsletter.... Let us know if you see orchids, or any other wildlife sightings. Photos are always appreciated.

P.S. we have just seen a Bee orchid in Tilgate park, Crawley!



Common spotted orchid

Gatwick Greenspace



For more information contact Pete & Huw:

Gatwick Greenspace Partnership, Tilgate Park, Crawley, RH10 5PQ

tel: 01293 550730 or 0777 590 7492

web: www.sussexwt.org.uk/community/page00001.htm

email: petecrawford@sussexwt.org.uk

The Gatwick Greenspace Partnership is managed by Sussex Wildlife Trust and supported by Surrey County Council, West Sussex County Council, Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, Mole Valley District Council, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, Horley Town Council & BAA Gatwick

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