



# NORTHAW & CUFFLEY PARISH COUNCIL

7 Maynard Place, Cuffley, Herts, EN6 4JA

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MEETING	Full Council
MEETING DATE	11 March 2026
SUBJECT	Cpt. William Leefe Robinson VC memorial, Millennium Gardens
AGENDA ITEM NO.	2025-26 Item 69d
REPORT BY	Sally Griffiths, Office Manager, Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council

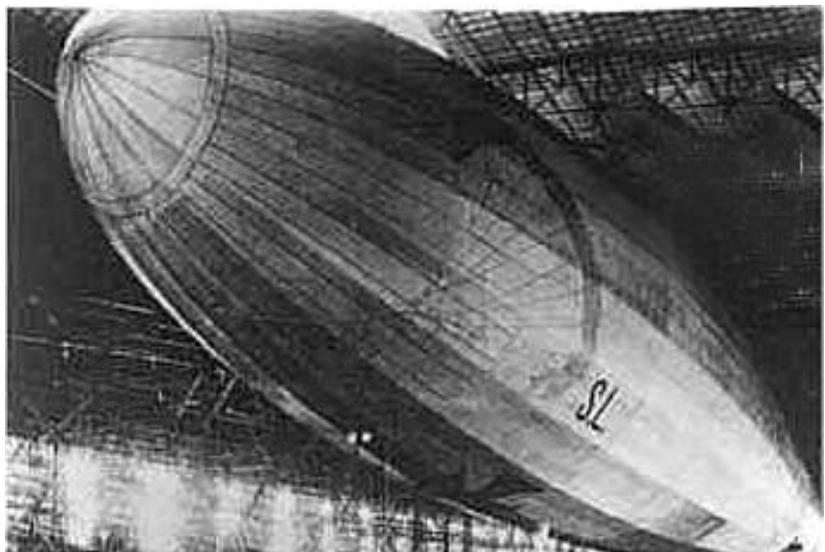
## 01 BACKGROUND:

On 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2016, on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the shooting down of the first German airship over British Soil, NCPC unveiled a memorial to Cpt William Leefe Robinson. The ceremony was attended, amongst others, by Mr Howard Guard, then Deputy Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, and Sir Freddie Sowrey, retired Air Marshal of the Royal Air Force.

The memorial is located in the Millennium Gardens, Cuffley, and consists of a Victoria Cross Commemorative Paving Stone, donated by the Department of Communities and Local Government, mounted on a, custom built, brick plinth, with two descriptive brass plaques.

The memorial celebrates the awarding of the Victoria Cross to, the then, Lt Robinson "For most conspicuous bravery." for his actions resulting in the destruction of the Schütte-Lanz SL11 airship. The awarding of the Victoria Cross to Lt Robinson remains the fastest VC ever awarded, being confirmed only 48 hours after the related action, and is the only VC ever awarded for action in Britain.

Picking up the trail of the airship over Ponder's End and Enfield Highway, the airship was destroyed in the air by Lt Robinson. While the explosion was visible to observers as far away as Reigate, the blazing wreckage slowly fell to earth landing in fields in Cuffley, with wreckage spread throughout the area around The Plough and East Ridgeway. In the days following, around 10,000 people travelled to Cuffley to view the site of the crash.





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Unfortunately, after 10 years, the memorial was in dire need of renovation, and, to this end, it was arranged for Falcon Structural Repairs to carry out some initial cleaning and remedial works, while they were onsite, to ascertain whether further renovations are required.

Before cleaning and remedial works:



After cleaning and remedial works: (Plaques have been removed for cleaning.)



While carrying out the administration relating to this required work, it was discovered that the memorial had never been registered as a war memorial.

To this end, steps are being taken to register, and list, the memorial with the appropriate authorities.



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## 02 PROPOSAL

As the landowners, WHBC have suggested that, on completion of the registration, a small ceremony could be carried out with the Parish Councillors and the Borough Mayor to commemorate/celebrate the achievements of Cpt William Leefe Robinson and this unique moment in the history of Cuffley.

It is therefore proposed that a ceremony should be arranged for 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2026, to coincide with the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the unveiling of the original memorial.

## 03 DECISION REQUIRED FROM COUNCIL:

### MOTION

Council resolves to proceed with arrangements for a suitable ceremony to take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2026, and that delegated authority be given to the Clerk to manage and oversee the project.

Implications (completed by the Clerk)	
Staffing Implications	Co-ordination, arrangement of works and overseeing, will be completed in normal working hours
Council objectives	Meets objectives
Equalities and human rights	There are no equality or human rights issues
Crime & Disorder	There are no crime and disorder issues.
Biodiversity	There are no biodiversity issues.
Financial	Decisions may give rise to expenditure from reserves
Legal	War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923, s1 as extended by LGA 1948, s133 Local Government Act 1972, s145
Risk Management	Material risks exist and these will be assessed prior to works carried out. Insurances and all other documents from contractors will be retained