



PEASEDOWN ST JOHN PARISH COUNCIL

Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, Bath BA2 8SN
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Minutes of the Cemetery Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 24th January 2023 at 7.00pm at Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John

Present:

Councillors: Mandy Clarke (Vice-Chair); Richard Clarke; Audrey Gillard-Sprake (Chair); Andrew Larcombe; Les Sprake.

Cllr. Kathy Thomas was present at the meeting, in her capacity as Vice-Chair of Full Council. As the Committee was quorate, she did not utilise her voting rights.

In attendance:

Tanya West – Parish Clerk & RFO

Public Session: There was one member of the public present at the meeting who addressed the Council regarding the documenting and photographing of burials and memorials at Ashgrove Cemetery in order to share the information on the Bath Burial Index (BBI) (item CC036 – 24/01/2023 refers).

The points raised during their talk were as follows:

- The person is a volunteer on behalf of Bath Record Office and has been researching and documenting memorials and burials for the past ten years in places in and around Bath.
- The BBI and associated information is hosted by Bath Heritage Services.
- The aim is to have all the burial information and records publicly available for people to easily research their family history. Also, so that the entire area of Bath can be searched in one place rather than each cemetery/graveyard individually.
- There is no cost to the Parish Council.
- There are approximately 313,000 burial records within the Bath area, and only about 20% of them have memorials, so they require access to Burial Board records to update their documents.
- GDPR does not apply to the deceased and so this information can be made public.
- The person noticed that the Parish Council had made some information available on the website but would like to incorporate this and further information into the BBI.
- The person requires the date of death and date of interment and the abode information from the Parish Council records in order to finalise the BBI records as this information is not generally available via the memorials.

Councillors and the Clerk raised some questions, and the responses were as follows:

- Can the reports supplied to the BBI be shared on the Parish Council website?
No, they would only wish to have a weblink to the BBI on the Parish Council website.
- How will the information be kept up to date? Will the Clerk contact the BBI every time there is an interment?
No, this exercise should be looked at as a 'snapshot' of the current status of the cemetery. The same exercise will be undertaken again in about five years' time to cover anything new. There is no succession planning; at present they are the only person working on this project.
- What will be the impact on staff time?
The time taken to provide and arrange access to the records. The Clerk advised photographs had already been taken of the records so these could be provided rather than visiting the office. The person advised they would prefer to take their own records/photographs.

7.29pm – The member of the public left the meeting.

Minute Ref.	Agenda Item	Action
CC029 – 24/01/2023	Attendance Roll Call and Declarations of Interest The attendance roll call was undertaken (those present are detailed above). For the sake of openness, Cllr. Kathy Thomas declared that she was in ownership of an Exclusive Right of Burial/Memorial for a plot at Ashgrove Cemetery.	
CC030 – 24/01/2023	Apologies for Absence Cllr. Jonathan Rich was absent due to illness. This apology was duly noted. Cllr. Conor Ogilvie-Davidson was absent without apologies.	
CC031 – 24/01/2023	Minutes & Actions i. The minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting held on 18 th October 2022 had been circulated in advance of the meeting; but not in sufficient time for them to be reviewed by all councillors. It was therefore agreed their approval should be deferred to the February Full Council meeting. ii. The Actions Register on Planner was not fully up to date. The Clerk to action this whilst writing up the minutes so as complete for the following week.	Clerk Clerk
CC032 – 24/01/2023	Items for Urgent Report The Chair reported that she had received some very positive feedback from visitors from outside of the parish, about how well kept and peaceful the cemetery is. It was also raised that the kerb edge along the bottom car park was full of mud and leaves and will require clearing before any rains, otherwise it will block the drain in the corner of the bottom car park. Furthermore, inside the entrance gates, near the snow warden hut there are many brambles that need cutting back before they take over the area. The Clerk to follow up with the Caretakers regarding these matters.	Clerk
CC033 – 24/01/2023	Cemetery Related Policies & Procedures Councillors were advised that following discussions under agenda item CC036 – 24/01/2023 there would be further amendments required to the Interment and Memorial Policy, so this will be actioned and then presented to the Full Council meeting in February for adoption.	Clerk
CC034 – 24/01/2023	Risk Register Councillors received an update on the sections of the Risk Register associated with Ashgrove Cemetery. The Clerk had updated the document to incorporate the planned topple testing and the regular reviews of the pathways following the initial inspection and logging by the Caretaker. The amended document to be circulated to councillors for their comment prior to being adopted by Full Council.	Clerk & Cllrs.
CC035 – 24/01/2023	Review of Finances 2022/23 Councillors reviewed the income and expenditure report for the 2022/23 financial year for those budgets specifically linked to the Cemetery Committee. The income generated from interments has exceeded the expected budget; this is due to more out of parish interments taking place than in previous years, which are now charged at a higher rate. It was also noted that the costs relating to the topple testing will not be received until towards the end of the financial year, and up to £1,000 net has been agreed for this.	
CC036 – 24/01/2023	Interments and Memorials Councillors received updates and decisions were made as follows: i. Interments and memorials since the last meeting. There had been four interments since the last meeting and there would be another later that week. ii. Photographing and documenting of the plots and memorials. Cllrs Ogilvie-Davidson and Rich to work with the Clerk to obtain the drone aerial images required for the cemetery.	COD; JR & Clerk

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	<p>iii. Digitisation of the burial records and links to the Bath Burial Index. The Clerk provided an update on the works she had undertaken regarding the digitisation of the burial records for Ashgrove Cemetery. Cllr Thomas advised that pending approval of the Council, she was agreeable to work with the Clerk on the completion of these records. It was reported that some of the handwritten entries into the burial books are not always clear and so some of the names etc. need to be cross referenced to the memorials. The Clerk and Cllr Thomas had agreed this could be actioned during the 'down time' of the public drop-in day on Saturday 18th February which is being held for the Signage Project. Cllr Thomas advised this project is something that she had commenced with the Clerk some years ago as part of business continuity planning and so would like to see it completed.</p> <p>The Bath Burial Index information, as raised under the public session, was considered, along with the reports provided by their representative. The general feeling was the Council would like to link to the Bath Burial Index, however, it was resolved that the Council's own records are completed in accordance with the original plans first, and once actioned, the Bath Burial Index representative is granted access to the records to complete the report they have started. Once the Parish Council works are completed, the records, including a link to the Bath Burial Index can be published and a press release put together to make residents aware and help promote the information.</p> <p>iv. Topple Testing of the Memorials. A notice providing details on the Topple Testing of the memorials, due to be undertaken during March was circulated for comment. This notice will be displayed on the website, on notice boards, on the Facebook page and on the pavement sign at the cemetery. It must also be published in the local press for at least two weeks consecutively. The notice was reviewed, and no amendments were made, so the Clerk to proceed accordingly.</p>	<p>KT & Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>CC037 – 24/01/2023</p>	<p>Garden of Remembrance Updates on the Garden of Remembrance were received, and decisions were made as follows:</p> <p>i. Weeding of beds and splitting of larger plants e.g., phormiums. Weeding and some shrub pruning has been carried out on the main Garden of Remembrance circular bed. The splitting of the larger plants, such as the phormiums, was unfortunately not completed by the Caretaker prior to his leaving employment, however, this work has been commenced by the remaining Caretakers, although the recent frozen ground has slowed works. The dog wood will be cut back late February/early March in line with RHS recommendations.</p> <p>ii. The removal of commemorative flowers/items/trinkets on graves and installation of signs. Most of the commemorative items not in keeping with the cemetery rules have been removed, taken to the Parish Office, and collected by their owners. The plots continue to be monitored. The 'trinket' signs with the original supplier have now been abandoned and prices and turnaround times have been requested from other companies. These options were discussed, and as the new suppliers were more cost effective it was possible to purchase more signs within the previously allocated budget. It was therefore resolved to instruct the Clerk to order 6x signs; 3 for the trinkets, with 3 spares for other sign options so as to provide consistency around the cemetery. The Clerk to action as a matter of urgency. It was noted that the plate on the sign would need to be drilled for in order for the different signs to be attached with a rivet gun.</p> <p>iii. Scattering area at the Garden of Remembrance. Since the scattering area had been sprayed to clear the weeds, the process of</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>

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	<p>planting-up the beds has been started. With the help of a team of volunteers a border of heathers and lavenders has been planted around edge of each bed. Further (taller) plants will be purchased with the remaining budget of approximately £200 net, and these will be planted towards the centre of the beds.</p> <p>This will be planted up once the frosty weather has passed, along with the remaining bulbs to plant.</p> <p>iv. Formal hedges and replacement of dead plants. As part of the planting session with volunteer helpers (mentioned above), 50x Japanese Holly hedging plants were planted to fill gaps and replace any dead plants in the existing Japanese Holly formal hedge.</p> <p>v. Second phase of the cremated remains interments section. Fifteen granite slabs were delivered by Hobbs Marble & Granite on 17th January 2023 for the second phase of the cremated remains plots. Unfortunately, some slabs arrived with scratches on the surface, the Clerk has followed up with the supplier who advised they would deal with the faulty slabs accordingly. Fifteen more slabs are still due for delivery.</p> <p>vi. Gazebo and pergola and associated planting. Cllrs Richard Clarke and Les Sprake volunteered to prune the roses planted around the pergola in late February, in accordance with David Austin guidance.</p> <p>vii. Memorial plants and benches. A verbal request for a winter flowering clematis to be planted along the pergola as a memorial had been received. The Clerk to deal with as operational activity.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>RC & LS</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>CC038 – 24/01/2023</p>	<p>Cemetery Maintenance & Improvements</p> <p>Councillors received updates and made associated decisions on the general maintenance of Ashgrove Cemetery and considered any works to be undertaken during the current financial year or to be suggested for future projects, as follows:</p> <p>i. Upgrading the Pathways. Northavon and Nu Landscapes have both now provided quotations for replacing the bonded gravel path surface around the Garden of Remembrance with an alternative surface, the quotations were circulated for councillors' information. Cllr Larcombe explained about plans for a February Finance & Amenities Advisory Panel meeting to discuss allocation of funds for ear marked reserves and any associated project works. It was agreed that this pathways project should be included within these discussions, but to be specific that it is the Garden of Remembrance pathways only under consideration and not the tarmac pathways around the edge of the cemetery which will continued to be monitored and maintained over the next few years for any further signs of deterioration. It was requested for the Office Staff to obtain fully comparable quotations so the proposals can be considered as part of the ear marked reserve as a future project. The quotations should include for resurfacing the pathways as they are now; resurfacing the pathways extended to a full figure of eight; prices for resin bound gravel and for buff tarmac. Photographs should also be provided.</p> <p>ii. Irrigation system at Ashgrove Cemetery. Following discussions at the last meeting, a quotation for the installation of a bib-tap nearer to where the was supply comes into the cemetery building, was being obtained and would be actioned as operational activity if within the Clerk's sign off.</p> <p>iii. Boundary walls – review of any cracks etc. Quotations for any repair works to the cracks in the cemetery boundary walls are still being obtained and will be reported at the Finance & Amenities Advisory Panel meeting for possible Ear Marked Reserve funding.</p> <p>iv. Waste removal.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>

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	<p>Waste removal from the bottom car park is being actioned on a regular basis. There is not much waste at present and the blue barrels have been removed by the Scouts.</p> <p>v. Tree nursery. The bind weed from the tree nursery has continued to be removed by the Caretakers and Cllr Audrey Gillard-Sprake and Cllr Les Sprake. The area is currently clear although regular weeding will be required to ensure the area remains weed free.</p> <p>vi. Entrance gates. The cemetery gates need cleaning and repainting and repairing following one of them dropping making it difficult to close/lock at times. Councillors considered a quotation from KM Steel to recondition the cemetery gates. For £860+VAT the quotation included their removal, shot blasting, any repairs, galvanising, powder coating and reinstalling of all four of the gates. Being above the Clerk's sign off, it was resolved to recommend to Full Council that the Cemetery gates are fully reconditioned by KM Steel for £860+VAT with the funding to come from any remaining 'Cemetery Works' budget with any surplus from the 'Infrequent Operational Expenditure' budget.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>CC039 – 24/01/2023</p>	<p>Review of New Actions The Clerk provided a summary of the new actions generated from the meeting and advised they would be captured on the Actions Register in Planner after the meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>CC040 – 24/01/2023</p>	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting & Future Agenda Items The date of the next Cemetery Committee meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 11th April 2023 at 7pm at Beacon Hall.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

Meeting closed at 8.49pm

Signed.....

Date.....