

**MINUTES OF A SITE MEETING OF THE BURIAL GROUNDS AND PROPERTIES  
COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 24<sup>th</sup> JULY 2018**

PRESENT: Cllr. Clifford (in the Chair), Cllrs. Bunyan, Fairweather and Holmes. Parish Warden – Ivor Hatcher.

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Cook.

Members are required to declare any interests, dispensations, predetermination or lobbying on items on this agenda. Members are reminded that changes to the Register of Interests should be notified to the Clerk.

**01/18: Nomination of Vice Chairman**

Cllr. Bunyan nominated Cllr. Holmes to be Vice Chairman of this Committee. This was seconded by Cllr. Fairweather and agreed.

**02/18: Allocation of Sites for Responsibility:**

Allocated areas of responsibility were agreed as follows:-

Cllr. Clifford	Golford Cemetery & Cranbrook War Memorial. Noticeboards, bus shelters, red telephone kiosks and cycle racks.
Cllr. Bunyan	Vestry Hall, Information Centre
Cllr. Holmes	Vestry Hall Cottage
Cllr. Fairweather	Sissinghurst Cemetery & War Memorial
Cllr. Cook	St. Dunstan's Churchyard

**03/18: St. Dunstan's Churchyard:**

The Clerk advised that she hoped to be able to submit the planning application for the erection of a safety handrail in the very near future. Church Warden, David Riddick has started the process of applying for the faculty that is also required.

**04/18: Inspection of Properties**

a) Vestry Hall:

It was agreed that the Clerk would seek quotes for external decoration to the windows, guttering and fascia of the hall, including repairs where necessary. The Clerk would also seek an update from Hurstways on the internal decoration, which had been suspended until the lime plaster in the stairwell had dried out completely.

An email had been received from Revd. Ann on behalf of St. Dunstan's Church asking the Committee to consider allowing the Vestry Hall to be used 4 times a year for a Sunday lunch. She had already approached the caretakers to see if they would be happy to open the hall on their day off and they had agreed that would be acceptable. A full discussion followed, Members agreed that if no charge was made for the use of the hall it would not be setting a precedent, therefore Cllr. Clifford proposed that the Church be allowed to use the hall on 4 Sundays a year, dates to be agreed with the caretakers. This was seconded by Cllr. Fairweather and agreed.

The Clerk was chasing quotes for the installation of an L2 Fire Alarm System for the Vestry Hall complex. One survey for the work was scheduled for 26<sup>th</sup> July, two others are yet to respond to the request for quotes, despite being chased. It was agreed that to avoid further delays that any quotes received be referred to Policy & Resources for consideration.

b) Vestry Hall Cottage:

Cllr. Holmes stated that he had not completed a recent inspection; however due to the Fire Risk Assessment being completed and Cllrs. Veitch and Fletcher meeting with the tenants regarding implementing the recommendations, a further inspection had not been deemed necessary. The Clerk advised the tenants were in the process of decluttering as per one of the recommendations. Cllr. Clifford referred to the caretaker's checklist that had been circulated with the agenda and asked Members for their opinion. It was suggested that checking the accident book after each event should be included on the list. In response to Cllr. Holmes, the Clerk confirmed that if the Caretakers discover any issues with the equipment in the hall then it is reported it to her at the first opportunity.

c) Angley Cottage:

Cllr. Clifford advised that the current tenant keeps the cottage in an excellent condition. The tenant visits the Information Centre on a weekly basis to undertake the window cleaning, it was agreed that the Clerk would ask him to report any issues or concerns direct to her, at which stage an inspection could be arranged if necessary.

d) Information Centre:

Members agreed that the proposal from TWBC on the schedule of change in the provision of services should be publicised.

**06/18: Sissinghurst Cemetery:**

After the inspection the following items were raised –

- Vegetation including brambles from the Milk House was encroaching onto the access road, the Clerk would contact the owners to request removal.
- The small garden area to the right of the lynch gate needs tidying, the laurels need cutting back.
- The hedgerow to the north side of the cemetery is overgrown and untidy, the shrubs require cutting back and keeping at an acceptable height.
- On the southern boundary, the dead horse chestnut tree needs felling and the 3 yews need reshaping and all ivy removed from the trunks. The Clerk will apply to TWBC for the necessary permission and seek quotes to carry out the work

Cllr. Clifford reported that following a meeting with himself and Cllr. Fermor as tree warden, local resident Andrew Davidson had devised a proposal to improve and enhance the cemetery by planting a variety of suitable ornamental trees. The proposal was very detailed and could be carried out over a period of time. It was agreed that Cllr. Clifford would work with Mr. Davidson to create a schedule of phased work for the Committee to consider. The allocation of funds for the project could be discussed at the next budget meeting and included in the Committee's Five Year Plan. The condition of the paths particularly on the northern side would also need to be considered when the budget process is undertaken.

It had been brought to our attention that cremated remains had been interred at Sissinghurst without the relevant permission and without the necessary records being created. It was agreed that the family of the deceased be contacted to complete a retrospective interment form, so that the details can be recorded as is legally required and the fee payable collected.

**07/18: Cranbrook Cemetery:**

The Parish Warden advised that some people have reported difficulty in locating the Cemetery due to the lack of signage. It was agreed to obtain quotes for appropriate signage to be made and erected on the boundary fence of the approaches, to overcome the issue.

A request had been received from a family member to place a memorial tablet on the unpurchased grave of her late mother who had died in 1943. As the family member was only 3 years old at the time of her mother's death, Cllr. Clifford proposed that the grave purchase fee is waived on this occasion, this was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed.

A request had been received to place two cremation tablets on one burial plot. The Parish Warden confirmed there was sufficient space to accommodate the two memorials. It was proposed by Cllr. Clifford, seconded by Cllr. Fairweather and agreed to approve the application on receipt of the correct fees.

A letter had been received from the owner of a burial plot requesting that the Council consider either accepting the return of the plot or allowing cremated remains to be interred. Members raised no objection to the burial plot being used for the interment of ashes.

Cllr. Clifford reported on the success of the Chapel being used for a weekly Sunday service. The organ benefited from being played on a regular basis. There was also a coffee morning planned in the Chapel, its success would determine whether it should be considered as a regular event.

The Parish Warden reported that the bell ringing rope had become dislodged and no longer effectual. It was agreed that he would investigate and obtain quotes to remedy this. He also asked the Committee to consider installing a grab rail by the entrance door of the Chapel to allow for easier access for those people with mobility issues. It was agreed that he obtain a quote for an appropriate design for the Committee to consider at the next meeting.

The Committee were advised that there were only a few leaflets and postcards about the Chapel windows remaining. It was agreed that the Clerk obtain a quote for a reprint from Printing at Cranbrook, as they hold the original artwork.

#### **08/18: Bus Shelters, Red Telephone Boxes, Noticeboards and Cycle Racks:**

The Clerk advised that she had received a complaint from a parishioner regarding the cleanliness of the bus shelter on Hartley Road. It was proposed by Cllr. Fairweather, seconded by Cllr. Holmes and agreed that it be delegated to Cllr. Clifford and the Clerk to approve a quote for the cleaning of all the parish owned shelters. Cllr. Holmes also offered to check all the shelters to ensure that they contained timetables.

#### **09/18: War Memorials:**

Cllr. Clifford referred to the Silent Silhouettes that had been sponsored by Kent County Councillor Sean Holden, using his Members Grant and stated how good they looked now they had been erected.

Attempts to contact the owner of the property next to the Cranbrook War Memorial have so far been unsuccessful. Cllr. Clifford will continue to try, in order to seek permission to cut the hedge that borders their property. Providing permission is granted, quotes to undertake the work prior to Remembrance Day will be obtained for consideration at the next meeting. The Clerk confirmed that Reflections normally undertakes the cleaning of both war memorials free of charge just prior to Remembrance Day.

**10/18: Woodland Burial Site:**

The acquisition of a site for woodland burials had been discussed for many years. Cllr. Bunyan had seen a recent advertisement in the Wealden Advertiser, looking for land for this purpose; it appears to have become a commercial venture rather than a service provided by a local authority. Cllr. Clifford agreed that an article could be included in the December edition of Parish Cake suggesting that farmers wishing to diversify, could consider it as an option.

**11/18: Items for Information:**

No items were raised.