

**MINUTES OF A SITE MEETING OF THE PROPERTIES & BURIAL GROUNDS  
COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 21<sup>st</sup> JULY 2020**

PRESENT: Cllr. Gilbert (in the Chair), Cllrs. Bunyan, Fairweather, Fletcher, Kings and Waters. Parish Warden – Ivor Hatcher.

APOLOGIES: Cllr Fermor.

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.

**1/20: Election of Vice Chairman.**

Cllr. Gilbert nominated Cllr. Waters to take the position of Vice Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed

**2/20: Allocation of Sites for Responsibility:**

The allocated areas of responsibility were agreed as follows:

Cllr. Gilbert	Vestry Hall Complex
Cllr. Fairweather	Sissinghurst Cemetery and War Memorial
Cllr. Waters	Golford Cemetery
Cllr. Bunyan	Anglely Cottage
Cllr. Kings	Noticeboards/Shelters/Benches/Cycle Racks/Red Telephone Kiosks and Cranbrook War Memorial.
Cllr. Fletcher	Tanyard Dental Surgery and Crane Lane Public Toilet Building.

Cllr. Fermor had contacted the Chairman prior to the meeting and offered to take responsibility for St. Dunstan's Churchyard, which was gratefully accepted.

**3/20: Issues from Inspections:**

a) Vestry Hall Complex:

Two quotes had been received to erect tower scaffolding and reapply the lining paper on the ceiling where it had come unstuck. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Kings, seconded by Cllr. Bunyan to accept the lower quote of £468 + VAT from Hurstways.

Cllr. Gilbert reported that we had received an email from our insurers advising us that the Financial Conduct Authority were beginning a legal test case in respect of COVID 19 related business interruption losses to resolve some key contractual uncertainties. We have been informed that at the current time, our claim has been declined and is unlikely to be affected by the outcome of the case.

Cllr. Fletcher advised that he had been approached by the Congregational Church who would like to develop the redundant public toilet building as a youth club. He felt this was worthy of further exploration.

Cllr. Gilbert had completed the annual inspection of Vestry Hall Cottage in February and had agreed some minor repairs with the tenants. There is also the boundary wall shared with Church House that requires attention, the Clerk needs to check the deeds to clarify who is responsibility for any repairs.

Members delegated the decision of when to re-open the Vestry Hall to the Clerk and the Chairman as there were several actions such as a specific COVID 19 risk assessment that is required, before a date can be agreed. It was hoped it would reopen by the beginning of September.

Cllr. Fairweather offered to contact Iden Signs regarding the new signage required for the Parish Office. It was agreed that the Parish Office would be open to members of the public by appointment only, at the current time. This would be reviewed again when the Vestry Hall opens. Any plans to rearrange the office space were on hold until the business options for the Community Centre were available.

b) St. Dunstan's Churchyard:

A report written by Sarah Harrington-James on how to enhance the churchyard for wildlife had been circulated to all the Committee Members. A quote of £270 to undertake a wildlife survey had been received. Members, along with the Parish Warden discussed the option of increasing the current wilding area and what implications this would have on the maintenance of the churchyard. It was agreed not to undertake a survey at the current time but to monitor the present wilding space and to keep it as a regular agenda item for discussion.

c) Sissinghurst Cemetery:

Cllr. Fairweather reported he had received a lovely email from a visitor, complimenting us on the condition of the Cemetery. Members agreed it was looking very good.

The lych gate had been made safe but required some structural repairs. A quote had been received from the original joiner who had made the structure. It was agreed the Clerk would seek two further quotes for comparison.

A request had been received to site a memorial bench close to an ashes grave. It was agreed the most suitable place would be under the cherry tree, which would afford some shade on sunny days and would not take up space needed for plots.

d) Golford Cemetery:

A quote had been received to resurface the parking area and paths to include the installation of pedestrian kerbs and drop posts at certain locations, to prevent unauthorised vehicular access to certain areas of the Cemetery. There was a significant amount of work required therefore it was agreed the Clerk would seek at least two further quotes for comparison. Cllr. Fletcher thought it would be worth investigating an alternative to pedestrian kerbs such as steel edging.

The Chapel had been closed since the beginning of the pandemic and would remain closed whilst the current guidance on social distancing is in place. The Independent Gospel Cause who had been using the Chapel for services will be advised that it will no longer be available to them. The Parish Warden will contact Rev. Peter Michell to discuss a mutually convenient time for him to collect any of their property which had been left in the Chapel.

The main gates had been closed after several incidents of some visitors driving over the grass to access the far west side of the Cemetery, causing damage in the process. Those responsible have been suitably advised that this is not acceptable. Members agreed the gates could be left open with immediate effect, however if there are any reoccurrences they will be closed again.

e) Angley Cottage:

Cllr. Bunyan advised the remedial works required to the exterior of the property had been completed and there were no outstanding issues. Cllr. Gilbert would inspect the original paperwork for when the heat recovery system was installed to ascertain if there are any additional checks required, to comply with new guidelines on legionella.

f) Benches, Noticeboards, Cycle Racks and Red Telephone Kiosks:

The Clerk agreed to compile a list of all the noticeboards and their locations for Cllr. Kings. The Parish Warden is undertaking a rolling maintenance schedule of all the benches and has asked Cranbrook Iron to prepare a quote to replace the wooden slats on the bench in Jockey Lane Car Park with a metal alternative.

We have received a request to replace the 'Sam Dann' bench at Bakers Cross which had been removed, as it was beyond repair. Members agreed that as it was used frequently by people waiting for a bus, a replacement would be of benefit. Cllr Fletcher referred to an example of a very substantial bench seat that he did not believe was expensive. The Clerk agreed to investigate.

**4/20: Items for Information:**

No items were raised.