

Weaverham, Cuddington and Acton Bridge Cemetery Committee Meeting

Date & time 16th April 2025 at 19.30 **Location** Cuddington and Sandiway Village Hall

Attendees Cllr J Freeman (WPC) (Chairperson), Cllr D Ruchat (CPC), Cllr C Fifield (ABPC), Cllr A Crist (CPC), Cllr P Wilkinson (WPC), Cllr I Mills (WPC), Cllr G Edwards (WPC) until 19:50, Mr K Byrne, Mr G Robinson (Cemetery Maintenance Manager), Mrs C Robinson (Clerk to the Committee)

Apologies Cllr S Brookes (CPC), Cllr T Brocklebank (ABPC) Cllr P Chrimes (CPC),

Absent

Minutes written by Mrs C Robinson (Clerk)

The meeting commenced at 19:30

Agenda item	Notes & actions
1. Apologies	Apologies for Absence – as noted above.
2. Public Open Forum	There were no members of the public present
3. Declarations of interest	There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared.
4. Minutes of Committee meeting held on 18th February 2025	Cllr Wilkinson proposed and Cllr Ruchat seconded and it was RESOLVED that, the minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting held on 18 th February 2025 are accepted as a true and correct record.
5. Review decision, on Councillors request, to employ pest control to remove mole(s)	<p>Cllr Crist spoke on behalf of Cllr Chrimes outlining her concerns regarding the issue of the mole(s) in the cemetery and the impact the issue has had on her.</p> <p>After a full in-depth discussion on the options available, Cllr Mills proposed and Cllr Fifield seconded and it was RESOLVED that the Maintenance Manager should try all humane options to deter the mole(s) and the Clerk will contact the ICCM for additional advice.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action Mr & Mrs Robinson</p>
6. Review of grave refill project and decision on any further expenditure	<p>A detailed breakdown of the grave refill project had been circulated prior to the meeting in the Cemetery Maintenance Manager’s report. In April 2024 the JCC had approved a budget of up to £8k. After reviewing the Cemetery Maintenance Manager’s detailed summary Cllr Fifield proposed and Cllr Crist seconded and it was RESOLVED to increase the budget to the latest estimate of £9,300.</p> <p>It was also suggested that the 3 parish newsletter editors be forwarded a copy of Facebook updates on the Cemetery grave refill project for inclusion in the next newsletters.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action Mr Robinson</p>
7. Cemetery Maintenance Mangers report	<p>The Cemetery Maintenance Manager’s report was circulated prior to the meeting and contained detailed updates on matters arising, contractor maintenance and regular tasks, he highlighted for discussion and decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The JCC agreed to using selective weed killers and moss killers to help improve the grass at a total of just over £60 • The camera that is not working needs to be replaced and the one not getting power needs to be looked at. • The issue with the damaged bench has not been resolved by Northwich Town Council due to the original stain being discontinued. Cllr Fifield proposed and Cllr Mills seconded and it was RESOLVED to approve Northwich Town Councils quote of £275.00 if Cllr Crist could not find a solution in the meantime.

8. Clerks Report

The Clerk provided a report detailing interments from 1st April 2024 up until 31st March 2025 in advance of the meeting. In summary:

	Burials	Burials- C/Remains	GOR	Total	New Graves	New GOR plots
Parishioners	15	8	10	33	8	5
Non-Parishioners	13	3	3	19	9	1
Total	28	11	13	52	17	6

Interments in new graves includes 2 interments in graves that had been reserved, and one that had been pre-purchased.

The Clerk highlighted that the number of interments was lower compared to previous years (e.g. Nearer 60 – 70 and 83 interments in 2021/22).

9. Finance Report**a. Total Balances as at 31st March 2025**

	<u>DR -ve</u>	<u>CR +ve</u>
Current A/c		2,356.93
Reserve A/c		120,823.04
National Savings A/c		23,806.46
Unrepresented bankings		0.00
Unpresented Chqs/DDs	2,221.67	
		<u>144,764.76</u>

Summary

Total Balance B/Fwd @ 01/04/24	138,721.34
Plus total receipts	38,255.99
Less total payments	<u>32,212.57</u>
Total Balance C/fwd to 01/04/25	<u>144,764.76</u>

The Clerk also included a forecast vs Actuals report, full details circulated prior to the meeting:

	Actual 2023/24	Forecast 2024/25	Actual 2024/25	Difference
Total Payments	32,857.11	34,499.97	32,212.57	2,287.40
Total Receipts	41,228.01	47,112.21	38,255.99	-8,856.22

% of the year to date 100%

Income vs Expenditure – The overall balance has increased by just over £6k in the last year.

VAT claim to be submitted is for £1,361.78

Internal Auditor – As long as the accounts are approved, the Internal Auditor Jo O'Donoghue has pencilled in Friday 25th April for a review with the Clerk.

The JCC reviewed the figures and Cllr Christ proposed and Cllr Mills seconded and it was **RESOLVED** that the end of year figures were an accurate reflection of the cemetery's accounts, and they could be forwarded to the Internal Auditor.

10. Updates on matters arising were given

- Following a meeting with Cllrs Freeman and Mills towards the end of March, the Clerk is in the process of applying for the two new funds agreed at the last meeting.
- The new version of the memorial application including the highlighting of owners' responsibility for the condition of headstones is now being used
- The Clerk is working with Edge to change the numbering on plots 452 & 453 on the cemetery map as per the suggestion at the February meeting
- The Clerk attended the Cemex meeting on 26th March – despite raising the question, the Cemex contact could not give an update on when the land donation will go through – it is with the solicitors.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The clerk has amended payroll and the monthly standing orders to reflect 7 hours each for the Clerk and Maintenance Manager (but it should have been 7.5).
11. Correspondence	Nothing of note to raise with the JCC
12. AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None raised
13. Date of next meeting	Wednesday 18th June 2025 18:30 – site visit, followed by Weaverham Community Centre. TBC. Cllr Fifield asked for the start time of the meeting be added to the agenda.

The meeting closed at 20:30

Signed..... (Chairperson)

Date.....

7. Cemetery Maintenance Manager's Report

Maintenance Contract

No issues. Site visit to be organised to review contract scope. Date TBD. Contractor has hurt his foot.

Health & Safety

The headstone that was loose was fixed by the family using epoxy. It is still moving and will need to be readdressed. What is an acceptable timescale for resolving headstone issues given the potential costs? 1-2 months?

DECISION REQUIRED

Topple tests to be conducted after soil backfilling.

Regular Tasks

Task	Comment
Tidy Up	Focus has been on soil backfilling
Clear Branches & Leaves	
Garden of Remembrance	GOR's need to be weeded.
Back Fill Areas	<p>Section 1 still has to be backfilled. All other sections have been done.</p> <p>A large proportion of Section 4 has been seeded with grass seed.</p> <p>Additional time will be required to complete the task as the machinery could not be used. See attached summary. Costs need to be approved albeit this is still an estimate.</p> <p>DECISION REQUIRED</p> <p>There is a lot of dandelions and moss in the grass. This will have to be addressed after backfilling and will require a selective weedkiller and moss killer.</p> <p>Moss Killer £30.98</p> <p>Selective Weedkiller £30.00</p> <p>DECISION REQUIRED</p>
Replace Camera Cards	<p>A camera needs to be replaced and one is still not getting power.</p> <p>DECISION REQUIRED</p>
Building Maintenance	
Pests	Much less activity due to the weather.
Benches	NTC can no longer get the paint/stain that was used on the benches. The bench that was damaged has not been fixed despite many emails and texts. The donor has verbally

	<p>complained about how long this has taken. I explained to her that the weather has stopped any action being taken.</p> <p>Option 1 – try to create a stain to match – not sure of the cost or whether it will be a close enough match.</p> <p>Option 2 - sand and re-stain the whole bench at a cost of £275.00</p> <p>DECISION REQUIRED</p>
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Other Activities

Task	Details	Progress
Tree work	A few of the trees need to be removed in Summer/Autumn. Not urgent.	
Shrubs		
Edging	New edging will be ordered once the weather breaks. This is still ongoing and has been overtaken by the levelling work.	ONGOING
Paths	Bollard is to be installed on main path	ONGOING
	Broken slabs need to be replaced next to the hut.	ONGOING
Hedges		
Building	Moss needs to be removed	ONGOING
Fences & Gates	Main fence still needs to be fixed. Cemex will take a look.	ONGOING
	Fence to be removed following the site visit.	ONGOING
Roads	The tarmac next to the gully in the turning circle has dropped and collects water. I will look at what can be done to repair it.	ONGOING
Drains	The drain is still partially blocked	ONGOING
Field		
Wild Flower	Wildflowers are growing well and will be re-seeded next week with annuals as agreed.	ONGOING
Cemetery Grounds		
Car Park	No issues. Visitors still not using it enough.	
Complaints	The person that donated the bench that has been damaged verbally complained about the time it is taking to repair.	ONGOING
Equipment	Blower has been replaced.	
	Wheelbarrow has been replaced.	
	Lute has been temporarily fixed.	

Backfill Summary

LABOUR							TOTAL
	Contractor			Graeme Robinson			
Actuals	126 hrs rate £11.44 and £12.21		£1,479.94	129 hrs rate £16.65		£2,147.85	£3,627.79
Estimate	Soil	4 days	£390.72	Soil	4 days	£532.80	£1,418.58
	Seed		£195.36	Seeding	2 days	£266.40	
				Watering	2 days	£266.40	
				minus Standard Hours	-14	-£233.10	
TOTAL			£2,066.02			£2,980.35	£5,046.37

MATERIALS			EQUIPMENT HIRE			TOTAL
Actuals	4 Drops @ 18T	£3,240.00		Equipment Barrow	£126.00	£3,366.00
Estimate	18T	£810.00			£0.00	£881.00
	Grass Seed	£71.00				
TOTAL		£4,121.00			£126.00	£4,247.00

TOTALS							
Actuals							£6,993.79
Estimate							£2,299.58
GRAND TOTAL							£9,293.37

Redburn quoted: £500 per day

Stan Cadman quoted: £240 per day

Already agreed:

April 2024: *'Currently there are 281 graves that have dropped mainly due to the excessive amount of rain, 18 of which have been backfilled the past week with available soil. The Maintenance Manager will need to purchase approx. 83 tonnes of soil to finish the backfilling at an estimated cost of £3.5k for the soil alone. He will also get quotes for contractors to complete the work. Cllr Chrimes proposed and Cllr Wilkinson seconded and it was RESOLVED that the Maintenance Manager could spend a budget of up to £8k to rectify as it is a Health & Safety issue'*

Redburn quoted: £500 per day (2 people)

Stan Cadman quoted: £240 per day (2 people)

I decided these were expensive, especially as they would not do the work to the same specification as has been done. The number of graves requiring backfilling has also increased due to the excessive wet weather.

February 2025: *'Cllr Chrimes proposed and Cllr Ruchat seconded and it was RESOLVED to employ a labourer to assist the Maintenance Manager with backfilling approx. 350 graves that have sunk, partly due to the amount of wet weather. Estimated costs are £915 - £1,373 for labour and £400 - £600 for equipment hire'*

Joint Cemetery Committee meeting 16th April 2025 – Clerks Report

1. Apologies – Apologies received from Cllrs Chrimes, Brookes & Brocklebank.

3. Public Open Forum - I am not aware of any members of the public wishing to attend.

5. To approve and sign minutes of the Joint Cemetery Committee meeting held on 18th February 2025 – no amendments received to date, please let me know if you have any amendments asap.

5. Review decision, on Councillors request, to employ pest control to remove mole(s)– At the Cemetery clear up at the end of February and via subsequent emails, the JCC was asked by Cllr Chrimes to employ pest control to manage the mole that was in the cemetery. At that time, 6 Cllrs declined to approve the decision to employ pest control and 3 (including Cllr Chrimes) approved the decision to employ pest control. Cllr Chrimes has asked that the JCC review their decision.

6. Review of grave refill project and decision on any further expenditure- See Maintenance Managers report

8. Cemetery Clerk's report

From 1st April 2024 up until 31st March 2025:

- There have been 28 burials, 11 cremated remains burials and 13 cremated remains interred in the GOR.
- 15 burials, 11 cremated remains burials and 13 cremated remains in the Garden of Remembrance were of parishioners.
- 13 burials, 3 cremated remains burials and 3 cremated remains in the Garden of Remembrance were of non - parishioners.
- 10 further interments are in the diary for April
- 2 cremated remain interments are still to be arranged.
- 56 memorial requests have been approved, 33 for new headstones.
- 5 graves have been pre-purchased (0 by non-residents)
- 14 Transfers of ownership have been completed
- 5 Reservations (Residents only) – 1 in Garden of Remembrance

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Total	28	11	13	52	17	6

Interments in new graves, includes 1 interments in a grave that had been pre-purchased

9. Finance Report – please see separate file with detailed year end information including the breakdown per Parish Council

Total Balances as at 31st March 2024

	<u>DR -ve</u>	<u>CR +ve</u>
Current A/c		2,356.93
Reserve A/c		120,823.04
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Receipts 01/04/24 – 31/03/25

Receipt Description	Amount
Plot fees (incl. Pre-purchase)	12,740.00
Interment fees	13,720.00
Memorial fees	5,490.00
Misc (Incl. Transfers & Reservations)	835.00
Precept from Parish Councils	2,000.00
Donations	0.00
Interest & VAT reclaim	3,470.99
Total	38,255.99

Payments 01/04/24 – 31/03/2025

Please see separate spreadsheet

Income vs Expenditure – The overall balance has increased by just over £6k in the last year.

VAT claim to be submitted is for £1,361.78

Internal Auditor – As long as the accounts are approved, the Internal Auditor Jo O’Donoghue has pencilled in Friday 25th April for a review with the Clerk.

10. Matter arising (Clerks updates) (Also see Maintenance Managers report)

- The new fees have been applied from 1st April 2024, with only a slight issue from a Stone Mason that only occasionally does work at Gorstage
- The Clerk has returned the ‘Request for Information’ issued 7th February from the Valuation Office (an Executive Agency on HMRC), within the requested time frame.

11. Correspondence

Nothing of note to raise with the JCC

13. Date of next meeting - Wednesday 18th June 2025 18:30 – site visit, followed by Weaverham Community Centre. TBC