

## Weaverham, Cuddington and Acton Bridge Cemetery Committee Meeting

**Date & time** 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 18.30      **Location** Gorstage Cemetery, Cuddington

**Attendees** Cllr J Freeman (WPC) (Chairperson), Cllr D Ruchat (CPC), Cllr C Fifield (ABPC), Cllr A Crist (CPC), Cllr I Mills (WPC), Cllr T Brocklebank (ABPC) Cllr Phil Hallman (CPC), Mr K Byrne, Cllr P Wilkinson (WPC)(Arrived 19:40), Mr G Robinson (Cemetery Maintenance Manager), Mrs C Robinson (Clerk to the Committee)

**Apologies** Cllr S Brookes (CPC)

**Absent** Cllr G Edwards (WPC)

**Minutes written by** Mrs C Robinson (Clerk)

*The meeting commenced at 18:50*

Agenda item	Notes & actions
<b>14. Apologies</b>	Apologies for Absence – as noted above. The Chairperson also welcomed Cllr Phil Hallman from Cuddington Parish Council who replaces Cllr Pat Chrimes on the Joint Cemetery Committee
<b>15. Declarations of interest</b>	There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared.
<b>16. Minutes of Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025</b>	Cllr Crist proposed and Cllr Mills seconded and it was <b>RESOLVED</b> that, the minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting held on 16 <sup>th</sup> April 2025 are accepted as a true and correct record.
<b>17. Public Open Forum</b>	There were no members of the public present
<b>18. Review of site visit held prior to the meeting</b>	<p><b>a. Review of the parcel of land being donated by CEMEX</b> The review will take place once the land has been officially gifted to Cuddington PC. If possible, the Clerk will arrange a special meeting solely for review of the parcel of land, on site. She will also speak to other local cemeteries about the spreading ashes, types of graves etc <b>Action Mrs Robinson</b></p> <p><b>b. Decision on removal of dead shrubs from entrance</b> The Maintenance Manager will obtain quotes for the JCC to review. <b>Action Mr Robinson</b></p> <p><b>c. Decision on reduction in width of front hedge &amp; d. Decision on removal of small number of trees from land near car park</b> Cllr Freeman proposed and Cllr Hallman seconded and it was <b>RESOLVED</b> that width of the hedge should be decreased in stages over time, and a small number of trees could be removed from the land near the car park. <b>Action Mr Robinson</b></p> <p><b>e. Decision on additional assistance/cost for re-seeding</b> Due to the weather, the weeding and reseeded of the grass is taking longer than expected, and is roughly 1 full bay per day. Cllr Hallman proposed and Cllr Fifield seconded and it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to continue with additional assistance for the Maintenance Manager to get the grass weeded and reseeded. <b>Action Mr Robinson</b></p> <p><b>f. Oversized headstone</b> Following comments from one of the stone masons Cllr Freeman ask the Clerk to measure the headstone placed on plot 1137. The overall height was 39” which is over the maximum allowed. The Clerk will contact the stone mason to ask them to rectify. <b>Action Mrs Robinson</b></p>
<b>19. Cemetery Maintenance Mangers report</b>	<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"> <li>• The mole deterrent seems to be working, the JCC suggested the Maintenance Manager look at purchasing a couple more. <b>Action Mr Robinson</b></li> <li>• He highlighted the damaged bench had been repaired by NTC, for free</li> </ul>

- The Maintenance Manager highlighted the issue with litter at the cemetery, including used toilet roll; the JCC are happy with him highlighting the issue on Facebook and highlighting where the nearest public toilets are on the noticeboard.

**Action Mr Robinson**

**20. Clerks Report**

The Clerk provided a report detailing interments from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 up until 13<sup>th</sup> June 2025 in advance of the meeting. In summary:

	Burials	Burials- C/Remains	GOR	Total	New Graves	New GOR plots
Parishioners	5	2	3	10	4	2
Non-Parishioners	1	1	1	5	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>

*Interments in new graves includes 1 interment in a grave that had been that had been pre-purchased.*

**21. Finance Report**

**a. Total Balances as at 13th June 2025**

	<u>DR -ve</u>	<u>CR +ve</u>
Current A/c		1,873.51
Reserve A/c		117,613.86
National Savings A/c		23,806.46
Unrepresented bankings		990.00
Unrepresented Chqs/DDs	1,176.58	
		<u><b>143,107.25</b></u>

**Summary**

Total Balance B/Fwd @ 01/04/25	144,764.76
Plus total receipts	7,928.32
Less total payments	<u>9,585.83</u>
<b>Total Balance C/fwd to 14/06/25</b>	<u><b>143,107.25</b></u>

**Income vs Expenditure** – The overall balance has decreased by just over £1,650 since the start of the financial year.

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

	Actual 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26 (5% increase)	Actual 2025/26 (to date)	Difference
Total Payments	32,212.57	33,823.20	9,585.83 (28%)	24,237.37
Total Receipts	38,256.08	40,168.88	7,928.32 (20%)	32,240.56

% of the year to date:20%

**b. Review of Internal Auditors report**

Notes for review:

- The Committee must ensure that the insurance schedule includes fidelity insurance up to the value of the cash assets. **Action Mrs Robinson**
- The risk assessment needs to include a section on lone working, specifically covering the role of the Cemetery Maintenance Manager **Action Mr Robinson**
- It was noted by the Auditor that the Committee has not arranged a staff appraisal for a 2-year period. The contracts for the Clerk and Maintenance Manager include annual uplift in salary following appraisal. This need to be addressed as a matter of urgency and any scale increases be backdated. A sub-committee was agreed and identified to carry out the actions. **Action Cllrs Crist & Brocklebank**

**c. Decision on Signatories on the bank accounts**

Following the departure of Cllr Chrimes (an authorised bank signatory), from the JCC, those present reviewed the current bank signatories and Cllr Freeman proposed and Cllr Crist seconded and it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Ruchat would replace Cllr Chrimes and Cllr Fifield would also replace Cllr Brocklebank as signatories. **Action Mrs Robinson**

**d. Decision on investment on £50,000 into 2nd Growth Fund (Cllr Mills).**

Cllr Mills gave an overview of the options for investment of the £100k that has been moved from the NS&I account in preparation for investment into 1 or more growth funds. Although one of the options, CCLA, doesn't have FCSA protection, it is a 'fund' and used by many local authorities and it isn't an issue that it doesn't have FCSA protection. Cllr Hallman proposed and Cllr Fifield seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to invest £50k into the Eden Tree ethical fund and £50k into the appropriate CCLA fund.

**Action Mrs Robinson**

**The Parish Councils precept** was confirmed as **£2,000** (not £2,100 as per the forecast figure circulated), to be split between the 3 parishes as per the constitution. **Action Mrs Robinson**

<p><b>22. Updates on matters arising were given</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Clerk has corrected payroll figures to reflect 7.5 hours per week for both the Clerk and Maintenance Manager (instead of 7), and included the back pay into May salary payments (chqs), along with the Maintenance Managers overtime for backfilling, seeding &amp; watering. The monthly Standing Orders still need to be amended. <b>Action Mrs Robinson</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>23. Correspondence</b></p>	<p>Despite a request from a stone mason, the JCC did not want to consider increasing the maximum width of a base stone (currently 30") to the same as the maximum for a foundation stone (36").</p>
<p><b>24. AOB</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cllr Fifield proposed and Cllr Hallman seconded and it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to change the start time of the cemetery meetings from 19:30 to 19:00 (4 in favour, 3 abstentions).</li> <li>Cllr Freeman suggested that the frequency of the Cemetery meetings should be changed from bi-monthly to quarterly, but as this is a change to the Constitution it will need to be discussed at the October Committee meeting. <b>Action Mrs Robinson</b></li> <li>Due to the issue with the oversized headstone, Cllr Freeman has proposed some additional wording for the Memorial Application. This will be reviewed at the August meeting. <b>Action Mrs Robinson</b></li> <li>The Maintenance Manager will start a programme of topple testing, with a record of every single headstone's result stored. <b>Action Mr Robinson</b></li> <li>Cllr Fifield proposed that the Joint Cemetery Committee (who unanimously agreed) should record their thanks to Cllr Chrimes for her long service on the cemetery committee. <b>Action Mrs Robinson</b></li> <li>Both the Clerk and the Maintenance Manager will be away for a week's holiday around the end of June.</li> </ul>
<p><b>25. Date of next meeting</b></p>	<p><b>Tuesday 19th August 2025 19:00</b> – Action Bridge Parish Rooms TBC</p> <p>Cllr Hallman offered his apologies for the August meeting.</p>

*The meeting closed at 19:45*

Signed..... (Chairperson)

Date.....

## Cemetery Maintenance Manager's Report

### 6. Cemetery Maintenance Manager's Report

#### Maintenance Contract

No issues.

#### Health & Safety

No new issues.

#### DECISION REQUIRED

#### Regular Tasks

Task	Comment
Tidy Up	Focus has been on soil backfilling bit starting to tidy back up.
Clear Branches & Leaves	A medium sized branch from a tree fell in the wind. The branch has been cleared.
Garden of Remembrance	All weeded.
Back Fill Areas	<p>The areas in Sections 5, 6, 4 and 3 that were seeded have germinated albeit some areas are patchy and will require over seeding.</p> <p>Any further seeding has been postponed due to the amount of time required for watering. The amount of water is still not enough to force germination. It will be continued once the weather breaks. However, the areas that have been weeded require weeding again before seeding.</p> <p><b>Up to date figures to be given at meeting.</b></p>
Replace Camera Cards	A camera needs to be replaced and one is still not getting power.
Building Maintenance	
Pests	The mole deterrent appears to be working. We will need to replace the batteries every 2-3 weeks. Most activity is now near the hedge.
Benches	The damaged bench has been completely repainted. NTC jumped the gun and did it without permission but have agreed to do it free of charge. Our thanks are extended to NTC for this gesture.

#### Other Activities

Task	Details	Progress
Tree work	<p>Two of the smaller trees near the cemetery are struggling against the larger trees. They need to be removed.</p> <p><b>DECISION REQUIRED.</b></p>	

Shrubs	The dead shrubs at the entrance are hideous. A decision is required on whether to remove them. A skip will be required to dispose of the wood or a chipper will have to be hired to chip the branches.  <b>DECISION REQUIRED</b>	
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  Broken slabs need to be replaced next to the hut.	ONGOING  ONGOING
Hedges	The hedges at the front of the cemetery are almost 8ft wide. TTC are struggling to cut them due to the steepness of the hill. If they were reduced it would be possible to tie off on the perimeter fence. It will take a couple of years for the hedges to recover during which they will look bare. If it is done, the inner side would be cut back once the outer side recovers.  <b>DECISION REQUIRED</b>	
Building	Moss needs to be removed	ONGOING
Fences & Gates	Main fence still needs to be fixed.  Fence to be removed following the site visit.	ONGOING  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 looking good.	ONGOING
Cemetery Grounds		
Car Park	Used toilet roll was dumped at the carpark.	
Complaints		
Equipment		

## Joint Cemetery Committee meeting 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025 – Clerks Report

**1. Apologies** – Apologies received from Cllrs Brooks and welcome to Cllr Phil Hallman, who replaces Cllr Chrimes from Cuddington PC.

**3. To approve and sign minutes of the Joint Cemetery Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025** – no amendments received to date, please let me know if you have any amendments asap.

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

### 5. Review of site visit

**a. Review of parcel of land being donated by Cemex** – still no completion of the land gift; Clerk has contacted Cemex and Cuddington PC Clerk to try and get completed asap

### 7. Cemetery Clerk’s report

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 up until 13<sup>th</sup> June 2025:

- There have been 8 burials, 3 cremated remains burials and 4 cremated remains interred in the GOR.
- 5 burials, 2 cremated remains burials and 3 cremated remains in the Garden of Remembrance were of parishioners.
- 3 burials, 1 cremated remains burial and 1 cremated remains in the Garden of Remembrance were of non - parishioners.
- 1 further interment is in the diary for July
- 3 cremated remain interments are still to be arranged.
- 11 memorial requests have been approved, 8 for new headstones.
- 1 grave has been pre-purchased (0 by non-residents)
- 3 Transfers of ownership have been completed
- 0 Reservations (Residents only) – 0 in Garden of Remembrance

	Burials	Burials-C/Remains	GOR	Total	New Graves	New GOR plots
Parishioners	5	2	3	10	4	2
Non-Parishioners	3	1	1	5	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>

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

One of the Stone Masons has asked if the base stone for a headstone can be the same width as the foundation stone. Currently the max width for the foundation stone is 36” and 30” for the base; Stone Masons don’t always use both. But the customer in this case, wants both and for the memorial they have chosen (and open book) the base needs to be 36”. Please see the memorial request form for the current allowed maximums. **Decision Required.**

### 8. Finance Report

a. Cemetery Balances to date

#### Total Balances as at 13<sup>th</sup> June 2025

	<u>DR -ve</u>	<u>CR +ve</u>
Current A/c		1,873.51
Reserve A/c		117,613.86
National Savings A/c		23,806.46
Unrepresented Bankings		990.00
Unpaid Chqs/DDs (yet to be presented)	1,176.58	
		<b>143,107.25</b>

## Summary

Total Balance B/Fwd @ 01/04/2024	144,764.76
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<b>Total Balance C/fwd to 14/06/25</b>	<b>143,107.25</b>

## Receipts 01/04/25 – 13/06/25

Receipt Description	Amount
Plot fees (incl. Pre-purchase)	1,290.00
Interment fees	3,705.00
Memorial fees	1,260.00
Misc (Incl. Transfers & Reservations)	82.50
Precept from Parish Councils	0.00
Donations	0.00
Interest & VAT reclaim	1,590.82
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,928.32</b>

VAT claim paid 2nd May for £1,361.78

**Precept to be confirmed at £2,000?** As per the JCC constitution; 'For the annual precept calculation a contribution to the costs of developing and maintaining the Cemetery (figure to be agreed annually by the committee) shall be shared between the three parishes in proportion to their respective rateable values as determined at the date of the last official return. Such costs shall include remuneration paid to the Clerk.'

## Payments 01/04/25 – 13/06/2025

Date debited from bank Account	Cheque no./DD	Payee	Details	Total
01/04/2025	DD4073150757	Water Plus	Water Supply	19.70
11/04/2025	002056	Cai Megicks	Backfilling graves 3 days ; 21 hours	256.41
14/02/2025	Standing order	Carole Robinson	Salary	410.00
14/02/2025	Standing order	Graeme Robinson	Salary	460.00
16/04/2025	DD PC-51168	Propel Finance	Mobile Phone finance	11.68
22/04/2025	DD 05775349/001	O2 Monthly charge	Mobile phone charges	7.82
22/04/2025	002057	Cai Megicks	Backfilling graves 3 days ; 21 hours	256.41
30/04/2025	DD0014101734	SUEZ R&R UK LTD	Refuse collection - Excess weight charges	21.92
02/05/2025	002058	Cai Megicks	Backfilling graves 3 days ; 21 hours	256.41
07/05/2025	002060	Carole Robinson	Expenses - Soil, Grass seed, Wild flower seed, envelopes, folders, stamps	1008.17
08/05/2025	002059	Jo O'Donoghue	Internal Audit 2024/25	150.00
08/05/2025	002061	S Cadman	April Maintenance	733.00
21/05/2025	DD 05775349/001	O2 Monthly charge	Mobile phone charges	8.40
22/05/2025	002066	Carole Robinson	Salary	475.84
23/05/2025	002064	Cai Megicks	Backfilling graves 3 days ; 20 hours	244.20
23/05/2025	002065	Graeme Robinson	Salary	1657.10
30/05/2025	DD0014101734	SUEZ R&R UK LTD	Refuse collection 01/04/25 - 30/09/25	1299.76
30/05/2025	DD0014101734	SUEZ R&R UK LTD	Refuse collection - Excess weight charges	67.07
04/06/2025	002068	Cai Megicks	Backfilling graves 2 days ; 16 hours	195.36
12/06/2025	Standing order	Carole Robinson	Salary	410.00
12/06/2025	Standing order	Graeme Robinson	Salary	460.00
	002062	SLCC	Annual subscription	150.00

	002067	S Cadman	May Maintenance	756.00
	DD0014101734	SUEZ R&R UK LTD	Refuse collection - Excess weight charges	270.58
<b>Total</b>				<b>9,585.83</b>

**Income vs Expenditure** – The overall balance has decreased by just over £1,650 since the start of the financial year.

<b>Forecast vs Actuals</b>				
<b>Payments (Current Account) 1st April to 13th June 2025</b>				
	<b>Actual 2024/25</b>	<b>Forecast 2025/26 (5% increase)</b>	<b>Spend to date</b>	<b>Amount remaining</b>
Cemetery Maintenance	15773.44	16562.11	4889.20	11672.91
Cemetery Infrastructure	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Salaries & NI	12980.02	13629.02	3872.94	9756.08
Admin	772.61	811.24	253.67	557.57
Insurance	395.91	415.71	0.00	415.71
Subscriptions	403.81	424.00	150.00	274.00
IT	525.00	551.25	0.00	551.25
VAT	1361.78	1429.87	420.02	1009.85
Training	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Misc	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>32212.57</b>	<b>33823.20</b>	<b>9585.83</b>	<b>24237.37</b>
			28%	
01/04/2024				
Days in the year	365			
% of year	20%			
<b>Receipts 1st April - 13th June 2025</b>				
	<b>Actual 2024/25</b>	<b>Forecast 2025/26 (5% increase)</b>	<b>Receipts to date</b>	<b>Amount remaining</b>
Pre-purchase	2150.00	2257.50	430.00	1827.50
Plot	10590.00	11119.50	860.00	10259.50
Interments	13720.00	14406.00	3705.00	10701.00
Headstone	5490.00	5764.50	1260.00	4504.50
Transfer of ownership	385.00	404.25	82.50	321.75
Reservations	450.00	472.50	0.00	472.50
Donations	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Precept	2000.00	2100.00	0.00	2100.00
Misc (Incl precept)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interest	1879.54	1973.52	229.04	1744.48
VAT reclaim	1591.54	1671.12	1361.78	309.34
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>38256.08</b>	<b>40168.88</b>	<b>7928.32</b>	<b>32240.56</b>
			20%	

**b. Review of Internal Auditors report - Notes for review:**

- The Committee must ensure that the insurance schedule includes fidelity insurance up to the value of the cash assets. **Action Mrs Robinson**

- The risk assessment needs to include a section on lone working, specifically covering the role of the Cemetery Maintenance Manager **Action Mr Robinson**
- It was noted that the Committee has not arranged a staff appraisal for a 2-year period. The contract for the Clerk includes annual uplift in salary following appraisal. This need to be addressed as a matter of urgency and any scale increases be backdated. **Decision Required**

**c. Decision on Signatories to the bank Accounts**

Cllr Chrimes was the Cuddington PC signatory on the bank accounts, **decision required** on replacement and it would be a good time to review of all the signatories ( Clerk, Cllr Freeman (WPC), and Cllr Brocklebank (ABPC). Also pertinent to item 8d. Decision on Investments (Cllr Mills)

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

- The Clerk has corrected payroll figures to reflect 7.5 hours per week for both the Clerk and Maintenance Manager (instead of 7), and included the back pay into May salary payments (chqs), along with the Maintenance Managers overtime for backfilling, seeding & watering. The monthly Standing Orders still need to be amended. **Action Mrs Robinson**

**10. Correspondence**

Nothing of note to raise with the JCC

**11. AOB**

**a. Decision on Start Time of Joint Cemetery Meetings** – At the last meeting it was suggested meetings should start at 7pm instead of 7.30 (apart from site meeting which currently starts at 6.30)

**b. Decision on number of Joint Cemetery Committee meetings to be held/frequency** – At the last meeting it was suggested that the meetings be held 4 times a year instead of 6 (e.g. every 3 months, instead of every other month). The Constitution currently says: *'7. Meetings a) The committee shall meet every 2 months and shall hold such additional meetings as may from time to time be necessary.'*

**12. Date of next meeting** – Tuesday **19th August 2025 date & start time TBC** – should be at Acton Bridge Parish Rooms