

Weaverham, Cuddington and Acton Bridge Parish Councils

Joint Cemetery Committee Constitution

1. Names

The Committee shall be known as the Weaverham, Cuddington and Acton Bridge Joint Cemetery Committee hereinafter referred to as the '**Committee**'.

The Cemetery shall be known as the 'Gorstage Cemetery' situated on Weaverham Road, Sandiway, in the county of Cheshire, hereinafter referred to as the '**Cemetery**'.

The Committee shall represent the interests of the residents of Weaverham, Cuddington and Acton Bridge, hereinafter referred to as the '**Community**'.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the committee shall be to provide and maintain dignified environmentally-sensitive site facilities for the burial of the dead.

- To provide the community with a range of socially acceptable burials and cremated remains interments at a reasonable cost.
- To ensure that such services meet the needs of the Community, while complying with applicable Acts and By-Laws, including, but not limited to:
 - Maintaining a Register of Burials
 - Notification of burials to the appropriate Registrar
 - Health and safety legislation
 - Burial law and practice as directed by the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA)
 - Any relevant ecclesiastical law for any ground consecrated according to the rites of the Church of England.
 - Relevant auditing requirements
- To ensure that long term requirements are included in the planning.
- To ensure that services provided conform with Community expectations of efficiency, sensitivity and care.
- The committee will carry out its duties without any religious bias so that as far as is reasonably practical all sects may be accommodated on an equitable basis.
- To inform and maintain public awareness of the range of facilities and services available.

3. Membership

- a) Membership of the Committee shall consist of 4 councillors from Weaverham, 4 councillors from Cuddington and 2 councillors from Acton Bridge Parish Councils.
- b) The committee shall have the power to co-opt not more than three members who are not councillors of the respective parishes. Such members shall have voting rights.

- c) Councillors serving on the committee shall be nominated by their respective councils and may serve as long as that council determines. Casual vacancies shall be filled by the relevant council as soon as practicable.

4. Clerk

The committee shall appoint a clerk to the Cemetery who shall act as a clerk and responsible finance officer to carry out the instructions of the committee to meet the purpose of the committee (Clause 2 herein) and shall maintain correct records of proceedings.

The committee will delegate the routine management and day to day application of rules and fees to the Clerk. The Clerk to refer any difficulties with the application of the rules or fees for determination by the committee or in the case of urgency to be determined by the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman, or if unavailable with any 3 councillors. Any such determinations to be recorded in the minutes of the next committee meeting.

The Clerk/ Responsible Finance Officer is responsible for maintaining proper books of account. The Clerk shall present to the April meeting the report and accounts for the preceding year for approval by the committee.

5. Chairman & Vice Chairman

The Chairman of the committee shall be elected from one of the three parishes in rotation for a period not exceeding three years. The Vice Chairman will be elected from one of the remaining two parishes in rotation for a period not exceeding 3 years.

- The Chairman shall chair both general and committee meetings, in their absence the Vice Chairman will chair.

6. Quorum

Five members present, with a minimum of one from Cuddington Parish Council and one from Weaverham and/or Acton Bridge Parish Council, shall form a quorum.

7. Meetings

- a) The committee shall meet quarterly and shall hold such additional meetings as may from time to time be necessary.
- b) Special meetings may be summoned at any time by the Chairman or any two members upon ten days clear notice being given in writing to all other members of the committee accompanied by details of the matter to be discussed.
- c) Meetings shall be held, as far as practical, in rotation in the 3 parishes
- d) All meeting minutes will be placed before the Parish Councils for noting.

- e) The Clerk will provide a report on activities taking place at the Cemetery and a financial statement.
- f) Cemetery rules will be reviewed at least once a year.
- g) Every matter within the remit of the committee shall be determined by the majority of the members present and voting, in the case of equality of votes the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

8. Annual General Meetings

The committee shall hold an Annual General Meeting in October or as soon as practicable thereafter at which the Chairman and vice Chairman for the following year shall be elected.

The committee will review the Cemetery fees and budget and present them to the three Parish Councils for approval.

All committee members will be notified in writing at least 3 weeks before the date of the meeting, giving the venue, date and time.

9. Finances

A current account, savings account and/or investment account will be maintained on behalf of the committee at a bank or Savings provider agreed by the committee, and in line with the JCC Investment Policy, once drafted. Four bank signatories will be nominated by the Committee, one to be the Clerk, and one from each of the Parish Councils. The signatories must not be related to, nor members of the same household.

All payments will be authorised by two of the signatories.

Records of income and expenditure will be maintained by the Clerk and a financial statement given at each scheduled meeting

The committee shall manage the finances of the Cemetery in the best interests of the Community and shall have power to act within the limits of the constitution. Any work required that will cost in excess of £10,000 shall have 3 quotes for the committee to review before appointing a contractor. The Clerk will have a discretionary limit of £500 for any urgent costs/expenses.

The Cemetery land and buildings shall remain the property of Cuddington Parish Council.

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 Band D equivalents as determined by Cheshire West & Chester in January of each year.

The Precept raised on the 3 Parish Councils covers the salary of the Clerk as of 1 April each year, to be divided using Band D equivalent properties as determined by Cheshire West and Chester Council in January of each year.

For the purpose of annual financial returns the costs as well as assets (including cash reserves, excluding land and buildings) shall be shared between the three parishes based on their respective Band D equivalent properties as determined by Cheshire West and Chester Council in January of each year.

Cemetery Fee's may require reviewing during the financial year (1st April – 31 March) if the committee feel there is a justifiable need. Any changes in the cemetery fees will be circulated to the three parishes for their approval before being implemented.

10. Approval of the Constitution

Approval of this constitution shall be duly minuted by the three Parish Councils and the constitution shall not be varied without their consent.

11. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to the constitution may only be made at the Annual General Meeting.

Any proposal to amend the constitution must be given to the Clerk in writing at least 10 days before the date of the Annual General Meeting. The proposal must then be circulated with the agenda of the meeting.

Any proposal to amend the constitution will require a two thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote, any such alteration approved at the Annual General Meeting shall be submitted for the approval of the three parish councils named in clause 3 (a) hereof.

This revised constitution was agreed at the 2026 Annual General Meeting of the committee on 1st October 2026:

Date

Name and position on committee

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Signed

Name and position on committee

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Signed