MEETING OF SHEFFORD AND CAMPTON JOINT BURIAL BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Board held via Zoom on Thursday 2nd March 2023, 2pm.

Present: Cllr Ash and Longson for Campton & Chicksands and Cllrs, Pollard, Fensome, Mackin for Shefford. Clerk for Shefford Francesca Fitch, Check Quinlan, Clerk for Campton and Chicksands, Tammy Medley.

Apologies Cllr Fowler

10/23 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING, MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the 2nd March 2023 meeting were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting, proposed by Cllr Ash, seconded by Cllr Mackin.

Matters arising: None.

11/23 RIALTAS:

The Clerks are progressing with the inputting, CQ is preparing the historic paperwork and background information which is required to establish grave ownership prior to the data inputting stage.

12/23 STAFFING:

The Clerks have carried out a full day's work in March, two half-days in April (met virtually) and one day in May. Due to TM's postponed surgery, any joint working in June and July is expected to be carried out online.

Although it was proposed for Members to be the Joint Burial Board representative at funerals, CQ has been available to cover this role for the most recent funerals: therefore, no requests have been made via the WhatsApp group. If this situation changes later in the year, we will recommence sending out requests for cover via the WhatsApp group. Cllrs confirmed they would still be happy to attend if required.

13/23 FINANCE:

The bank balance as at 15.05.2023 is £34.9k in credit.

The income and expenditure for the year to 31st March 2023 for the expenditure relating to the Campton Burial Ground + Campton and Shefford Cemetery is attached (including the percentage split between CCPC and STC), together with the variance analysis showing explanations for actual expenditure against budgeted costs.

Following a joint meeting with our Internal Auditor, the Internal Audit has been completed and both Councils have received their final audit report, which includes the respective Joint Burial Board accounting proportions.

Independent Hyde Chambers Funeral Home have now made payment for the funeral of the late Stephen Dilley.

14/23 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE:

In May 2023, the Clerks carried out a topple test of the right-hand side of the old section of the cemetery – 8 memorials had to be laid flat.

Granite setts have been salvaged from another site in Shefford and will be used to replace the red engineering bricks at the main entrance gates (thus lowering the level under the gates, allowing them to close easily) when funding allows.

An order has been raised to LEF Paving and Landscaping to repair the crack that has appeared in the perimeter wall by the main entrance gates.

Funding will need to be set aside to repair the tarmac path surface, which is starting to deteriorate in several areas. In the long-term, some of the paths will need resurfacing, or be changed from tarmac to crushed aggregate (plane off the top surface and top up with fine aggregates), such as the pathway through the old section of the cemetery.

A replacement push-down pressure tap has been installed on the standpipe (the old tap started gushing out water following the snow and freezing temperatures in December 2022).

A granite bird bath and memorial plaque, donated by a resident, has been installed between the benches on the raised area designated for contemplation.

Following a successful application to Central Bedfordshire Council for a tree planting grant, two Irish Yew trees (Taxus b. 'fastigiata robustus) have been planted as part of our 2022/23 tree planting programme. A third Irish Yew tree (a larger specimen) will be planted by the Shefford Branch of the Royal British Legion, together with a small memorial plaque,

The edging up of the memorial plaques in the Garden of Remembrance has been completed. All non-regulation memorials have been removed.

Central Bedfordshire Council have issued a notice for a definitive map modification order 2023 for "Shefford: footpath no 2" (the footpath running adjacent to the Cemetery, Ampthill to Campton Road). The notice appeared in the Biggleswade Chronicle on 28 April 2023 and has been posted on the Town Council's social media + displayed in the Town Noticeboard.
The footpath has reopened after the collapsed wall has been removed and a new fence installed. 3

The next Tree Safety Survey is due in September/October 2023.

Following topping up and seeding, the grass in the 'R' section has established well and the area is looking great. As funding allows, another section/row of the cemetery will be topped up, together with individual graves when the weather warms up enough for the grass seed to germinate.

An instruction has been made to 2 Elms of Shefford Garden Services to clear vegetation/weeds from some of the kerbed untended graves in the Q section of the Cemetery. This will include topping up of granite chippings, which have been purchased and stored in the Chapel.

The Clerks have instructed 2 Elms of Shefford Gardening Services to carry out three cuts in May to keep on top of the grass cutting.

Following a presentation from Rachel Macfarlane from the Heritage Lottery Fund at the last ParksEast meeting, local craftsmen have been contacted to explore options for renovating the Chapel, with a view of making an application for a Heritage Lottery grant (an initial project enquiry form will be submitted to see if the restoration would be considered by the HLB) to fund the works. Works would include an upgrade of electrics/lighting/heating, specialist decoration, restoration/manufacture of furniture and flooring, and the installation of solar panels and a compost toilet to bring the Chapel back into use. We are also looking to create three dedicated parking spaces on Campton Road.

Neville Funerals have agreed to donate a dumpy bag of granite chippings for topping up of the untended kerbed graves in the old section of the cemetery.

Following a safety inspection (topple test), where twenty-seven memorials in the new part of the cemetery were found to need repairing/refixing, repairs/refixing of eight unsafe memorials has been completed and a further two memorials have been attended by local Memorial Masons (under warranty). A further seventeen will need repairing/refixing once the grave ownership details have been identified. An initial eight memorials were laid flat as they posed an immediate health and safety risk. Another headstone (in the Q section) had to be laid flat at the SGCG working party as it was deemed dangerous.

Cllrs thanked Gary and Robert for their work on the edging of the memorials.

15/23 CAMPTON BURIAL GROUND:

An order has been raised to Branching Out Tree and Garden Services to carry out the recommendations in the Tree Safety Survey Inspection that was carried out in the Campton Burial Ground and the Churchyard by Maydencroft Ltd in September 2022. Permission was given by CBC, and we now have the permission from the Diocese. We have contacted the Church to discuss possible dates and are awaiting confirmation.

Further to the instruction given by members at the previous committee meeting, Clerks have been seeking further advice. Following a recommendation from Cllr Mark Liddiard, we have contacted a local Architect however he was unable to carry out a full survey due to public liability restrictions. He did however, meet with the clerks to provide informal advice. We met onsite and he suggested we contact a more specialised building contractor to price up the options against restoration and rebuild.

Clerks have met with a specialised contractor, English building and restoration and have received recommendations and a quote. The company recommend raking out the existing mortar to a minimum of 20mm to allow correct bonding from new material to existing. Once raked out the brickwork would be given a gentle wash making sure no dust particles are present in the beds and joints. Repointing with traditional lime-based mortar, replace the works of the bricks with a reclaimed brick that matches the original, support pillars to be added where required. Total for works £7,840.00.

This company has not been recommended so clerks will need to verify them, they have carried out previous work for the Diocese so the clerks will contact the church and if necessary, seek other quotes.

The company will need to dig down to introduce the supports, if human remains are discovered they will stop work and reposition the support in an alternative location.

16/23 AOB

None

17/23 NEXT MEETING

Thursday 7th September 2023, 2pm via Zoom.