



BOX PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CEMETERY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD BY ON 4th MARCH 2024

- 1. Present:** Councillors: M. Tye (Chair); A. Barton; R. Bolton; S. Parker;
B. Walton; T. Walton
Mrs Carey (Clerk)
- 2. Apologies:** Cllr J. Clifford
The apologies were accepted.
- 3. Absent:** Nil
- 4. Public Question Time:** There were no members of the public present.
- 5. Declaration of Interest relating to items on the Agenda:** Nil
- 6. Minutes:** The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th January 2024 were taken as read and were signed as being a true record
- 7. Matters Arising from the Minutes.**
 - a. Lodge Maintenance:**
Replacement windows: On-going. Money added to the budget
 - b. Chapel and Lodge roof:** Continue to monitor
 - c. Survey of top field:** This would be looked at by the Working Group
 - d. Establishment of Friends of Box Cemetery Group:** To be discussed further by the Working Group
 - e. Online History of the Cemetery:** Alan Payne has arranged a series of talks to be given at the Library on 2nd; 9th; 16th and 23rd May. It was suggested that the Swindon and Wiltshire History Centre could include these in their newsletter
 - f. Stone trefoils on Chapel:** Money had been put in the budget for these.
 - g. Security camera:** Cllr Barton to check the card **Action: AB**
- 8. Cemetery Maintenance:**
Issues raised on the walk round:
 - a. Front gates and downpipes:** These need a coat of metal protective paint. Quotations to be obtained
 - b. Dead hedge:** To be built at the bottom of the Cemetery near the site of the shed to Attract slow worms
 - c. Front boundary wall:** Paul Emerson had looked at the wall and assessed the work that needs doing. The laurel has damaged the wall and a section of about one metre will need to be taken down, the laurel removed and stump ground down and the wall rebuilt. He will submit a quotation. Clerk to check if planning permission for the repairs would be required as it is a listed wall.

Part of the wall with the railings forms a bridge. Wiltshire Council has been asked if this is a retaining wall
 - d. Shed:** As this is a monopitch it was suggested that guttering it put on and one of the water butts from the top of the Cemetery is repositioned here.

- e. **Update on Biodiversity Plan:** Revised plans were shown for the various areas

Area 1 – Old Cemetery

1. An area to be cut back and made into a meadow area
2. Brambles to be cut back
3. Planting natural shrubs
4. Make an informal boundary to discourage people going down to the river
5. Install seats
6. An area needs cutting and harrowing - It was agreed to speak to the Cemetery Contractor to do this and item 1

It was reported that rooks are going into a small aperture at the top of the Lodge. Clerk to notify the agents and suggest mesh is put up.

Areas 2 – Avenue to top field

1. Dog wood and hazel have been planted. It was agreed to either extend the hedge or clear out the rubble and sticks. As the area is under a yew tree it was felt that the better option would be to extend an irregular hedge

Area 3 – Secret Garden:

1. There is an area of value in the corner
2. Veteran Scots Pine to be cordoned off
3. Entrance made into field to extend the access for walkers – this would need to be discussed with the tenant of the field
4. Melissa to carry out an assessment of the Corridor and also an assessment of the top field
5. Create a circular path through the hazels. This would involve coppicing a third of the hazels in the Autumn.
6. Thin out some of the hawthorn

Area 4 – Garden of Remembrance

1. Replace the conifers etc with more sympathetic plants
2. The path is being mowed
3. Move memorials to a new site near the mown path by the water butt

Two glass vases had been removed as they were damaged

Area 5 – Top Part of Cemetery

1. Drop down post had been removed – to be replaced by flower boxes to be made out of sleepers to be put either side of the path to prevent vehicles using it.
2. Areas of the path need repairing – It was agreed to ask the Groundsmen if they could patch the concrete
3. Tree Meadow area at the top of the Cemetery

- f. **Access path to top field:** Working party had planted whips to fill the gap

- g. **Grave NG17 Arthur Stewart:** The unsafe headstone had been laid down on the grave

- h. **Grave JB10 – Frayling:** The Holly tree has been removed.

- i. **Update on repairs to standpipe:** The work to repairing the standpipe is being carried out by Wessex Water

9. Items for discussion:

- a. **Revised Cemetery Rules:** These were discussed. It was agreed to add the example of a metal spiked flower container as being acceptable.

It was **recommended** by four votes in favour and one against that the revised Rules be adopted by the Parish Council

- b. **Book of Remembrance – recent damage; repair and how to heat the ante-room:**
The current heater in the cabinet is only heated one corner. It was agreed that a false bottom with insulation be put into the cabinet and then to put a heated mat on top of this with felt over it. It was agreed that a maximum of £200 be spent on this.

There is currently a water mark on the carpet and it was agreed to monitor this.

- c. **Ecological Corridor in Cemetery:** The planning application has been withdrawn.
d. **Working Group:** A working group will be set up to look at the possibility of extending capacity in the Cemetery with the possible reuse of some of the old graves.
g. **Date of next safety check of headstones:** Summer 2024

10. Forward Plan/Risk Assessment and Asset Management:

The Forward Plan will be updated and circulated. A draft Asset Management document had been drawn up.

11. Correspondence:

- a. Letter received from Beech Class of Box C of E School asking if the 29 children in the class could get involved with a biodiversity species count in the Cemetery. It was agreed to extend this to Corsham School Broadwood Sit. Cllr H. Parker to pursue this.

Action: HP

12. Monitoring of budget: This was on line

13. Items of report and future agenda items:

- a. **Seats in the Cemetery:** It was agreed to ask the Groundsmen to power wash the seats

14. Date of next meeting and walkround:

Next meeting - 2nd May 2024

Meeting closed at 8.40 pm

Chair