

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BURIAL GROUNDS AND GARDENS OF REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 1st APRIL 2008 AT 7.00 p.m. AT HARTLEY LIBRARY.**

Present : Cllr Mr A Barnett
Cllr Mrs J Burns
Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby (Chairman)
Cllr Mr B Ramsay

In attendance : Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)

A visual inspection of the Burial Ground, Gardens of Remembrance and the Closed Church Yard was undertaken by Cllrs Mr Barnett, Mrs Burns, Mrs Oxtoby, Mr Ramsay and the Clerk on 1st April 2008 at 6.15 p.m.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Mr J Gaywood, Mr M Harris and Mr J Minns.

2. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Burial Grounds and Gardens of Remembrance Committee held on 29th January 2008 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Financial Report

The Committee examined a financial report indicating the current net position of the Burial Grounds and Gardens of Remembrance Committee as at 31st March 2008.

RESOLVED: That, the financial report, attached as appendix 1 to these minutes, be noted.

5. Burial Ground

(a) The Committee considered matters arising from the visual inspection undertaken before the start of the meeting.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the graves owners of the plots set out below be informed of the Council's intention to turf the graves and arrangements be made with Mr Munday to undertake this work:

Colin Barry Solman (grave no 403)

Frances Mary Rich (grave no 413)

Ethel Vera Robinson and Michael Robinson (grave no 410)

Stephen Anthony Shappard (grave no 409)

William Wilson Brown and Vera Brown (grave no 222)

(2) a quotation be sought for the repair and application of preservative to the shed located in the Burial Ground and,

(3) enquires be made with the grave owner of the late John Elphick and Lilian Elizabeth Elphick (grave no 198) to establish when the leaning memorial would be re-fixed.

(b) It was reported that three panels of the boundary fence between Hartley Burial Ground and Hartley Court had been damaged due to high winds on 10th March 2008.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk's actions to replace three fence panels be confirmed.

6. Garden of Remembrance

The Committee considered matters arising from the visual inspection undertaken before the start of the meeting. It was reported that Mr Munday intended to spray the Garden of Remembrance for the eradication of weeds.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) arrangements be made for the supply, delivery and spreading of 1 tonne of wood chips on the surface of the Garden of Remembrance and,

(2) the expenditure of upto £60 be authorised for the purchase of additional shrubs in the Garden of Remembrance.

7. New Garden of Remembrance

The Committee considered matters arising from the visual inspection undertaken before the start of the meeting. The Committee noted that the plinth in the new Garden of Remembrance would benefit from the provision of a new formal path and that it had been resolved at the previous meeting to seek a quotation to undertake the work.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the sum of £231 .53 from T D Munday to supply all materials and lay a new path of 7 no "Trustone Fellstyle" paving slabs be accepted.

8. Closed church yard

The Committee considered any matters arising from the visual inspection undertaken before the start of the meeting. The Committee noted that most of the spoil had been reinstated in the archaeological excavation next to the west wall of the Church. The Committee expressed some doubt over whether the grass would re-establish itself and considered various options to either reseed or turf the area. .

RESOLVED: That, enquiries be made with the Parochial Church Council to establish how it intends to reinstate the area.

9. Memorial Safety

The Committee examined a draft document in respect of a memorial safety and testing policy in Hartley Burial Ground.

RECOMMENDED: That, the memorial safety programme and testing policy, attached as appendix 2 to these minutes, be approved and adopted by Hartley Parish Council.

10. Exclusion of the press and public

RESOLVED: That, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of

minute item 11 “New Burial Ground”, on the grounds that the likely disclosure of exempt information would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

11. New Burial Ground

The Committee considered a letter dated 27th March 2008 from the Martin Tolhurst Partnership containing legal advice in respect of the Council’s application to the Lands Tribunal for a modification of the covenants at Manor Field.

The Committee noted that the new hedge forming the boundary to the new Burial Ground had been planted. The Committee considered a programme of future works to establish further the new burial ground.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) quotations be sought to:

- (a) plough, harrow and level the ground, including stone burying and the application of herbicide at a suitable time, on the land at Manor Field designated for the new Burial Ground,
- (b) provide new paths in accordance with the planning permission,
- (c) construct a lych-gate to form an entrance to the new Burial Ground and
- (d) supply and plant an avenue of Maple trees in accordance with the planning permission and,

(2) arrangements be made for permanent markers to be installed to indicate the position of the existing water main.

RECOMMENDED: That, legal advice from the Martin Tolhurst Partnership be received and noted, and work continue to prepare an application to the Lands Tribunal for the modification of covenants in relation to land at Manor Field to enable the Council to establish a new Burial Ground .

12. Date of the next meeting

Tuesday 17th June 2008 at 7.00 p.m. in Hartley Library

Visual inspection to be undertaken on Tuesday 17th June 2008 at 6.15 p.m. in Hartley Burial Ground

The meeting closed at 8.00 p.m.

Signed:.....
Chairman

Date:.....

**Hartley Parish Council
Summary of Receipts and Payment
(as at 31st March 2008)
Burial Grounds and Gardens of Remembrance**

Title	Receipts		Payments		Net Position
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Underspend (+) /Overspend (-)
Grass cutting			950.00	918.00	32.00
General maintenance		79.00	600.00	639.47	39.53
Maintenance contract			1,800.00	1,662.00	138.00
Spoil removal			500.00	375.00	125.00
Plinth			500.00	630.00	-130.00
Graves/interments	380.00	1,400.00			1,020.00
Interment of ashes	1400.00	1,125.00			-275.00
Memorials	390.00	340.00			-50.00
Plaques	360.00	320.00			-40.00
New B/G grass cut			125.00	-	125.00
New B/G advance wks			500.00	209.00	291.00
All/St grass cut			700.00	640.00	60.00
All/St gen main			500.00	-	500.00
Health and Safety			250.00	-	250.00
Lay by				-	0.00
Blue Sacks			50.00	70.00	-20.00
NET TOTAL	2,530.00	3,264.00	6,475.00	5,143.47	2,065.53
V.A.T.		0.00		188.14	
GROSS TOTAL		3,264.00		5,331.61	

Hartley Parish Council

Memorial Safety Programme & Testing Policy

Memorial Safety Programme

Pre – Inspection Advice and Information

- 1) The Council will inform all existing memorial owners on the Council's proposals to carry out safety inspections on memorials located in Hartley Burial Ground and advise them on any implications that may arise subsequently. This will be carried out by contacting all last known memorial owners by letter, as identified by the current Burial Ground records, in advance of any formal inspection.
- 2) Early consultation with the local media will be carried out to develop a positive publicity campaign to fully inform the public on the actions being undertaken by the Council. Notices will be published for 2 successive weeks in a local newspaper which the Council considers would secure the best publicity in the area serving Hartley Burial Ground.
- 3) Notices will be placed on site, in the Council's newsletter and on the Council's website, informing the public of works that are to be undertaken and advising on contact details for anyone seeking further advice.
- 4) The Council will consider arranging a public 'open morning' to demonstrate how the memorial safety tests will be carried out, which will be undertaken in advance of the formal inspection.
- 5) The relevant Church Authorities will be informed of the Council's memorial safety programme and testing policy at least 3 months in advance of any formal inspection and the Council will consider any representations.

Memorial Inspection

- 1) The initial inspection and testing programme will be completed within 12-18 months of receipt of any advice to memorial owners, as recommended by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management.
- 2) Quotations will be sought to undertake the inspection and testing regime of the memorials in Hartley Burial Ground, as set out in the Council's adopted Memorial Testing Policy.
- 3) The inspection programme will involve three elements – (a) the initial inspection and testing of memorials; (b) immediate and temporary stabilisation of any memorials identified as unsafe; and, (c) thereafter, the repair/making safe of memorials which have been stabilised temporarily.
- 4) Prior to any inspection the Council will have in place a 'Testing Policy' to establish the method of testing. (See the Council's adopted Memorial Testing Policy).

5) The Council will have a system for assessing the risk posed by unstable memorials and the appropriate choice of remedy to meet the category of risk. (See the Council's adopted Memorial Safety Policy).

6) Subsequent to this initial inspection, the Council will undertake further inspections of the memorials in Hartley Burial Ground at least once every five years, as recommended by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management and the Local Government Ombudsmen. A five year rolling programme for memorial inspections will be developed by the Council.

7) If it is deemed necessary following the initial inspection, more frequent inspections will be undertaken on individual memorials whose conditions require it or where other factors dictate shorter periods, as defined in the Council's adopted Memorial Safety Policy.

Temporary Supporting of Unstable Memorials

1) The 'laying down' of memorials shall only be considered as a last resort. If following the inspection it is deemed necessary to temporarily support any unstable memorials, such works will be carried out as defined in the Council's adopted Memorial Safety Policy whilst appropriate arrangements are put in place for the repair/or otherwise of an identified unstable memorial. This approach is endorsed by both the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management and the Local Government Ombudsman. The Council's duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees or contractors working on behalf of the Council and those visiting Hartley Burial Ground, will remain the Council's highest priority, but any memorial stabilisation work to memorials will be carried out in a sympathetic and sensitive manner.

2) The proposed method of stabilisation will be to support any unsafe memorials with wooden stakes to the rear of the headstone secured by strapping. Notices will be placed on or near to the memorial advising on the current condition of the stone and giving the appropriate Council contact details.

2) Following the identification of any unstable memorials and their subsequent temporary support, the Council will inform the memorial owner by writing to the last known memorial, as identified from Burial Ground records, and by displaying a notice on/near each identified unstable memorial. A list of memorials which fail the test shall be displayed on the noticeboard/s in the Burial Ground and on the Council's website. All public notices shall give the Council's contact details and the period for making contact.

Making good of Unstable Memorials

1) Individual owners contacted following the identification of unstable memorials will be offered the opportunity to rectify any identified problems. Individual owners will be required to ensure all repairs are carried out by an approved mason, in accordance with the National Association of Memorial Masons Code of Practice and as provided in British Standard, BS 8415. Owners will be offered ten weeks to respond.

2) If no/negative response is received from the owner of any memorial, the Council will take a decision as to how the memorial shall be made safe permanently. In doing so, the Council will consider repairing the memorial at the Council's cost, or laying it flat.

Memorial Testing Policy

Any company carrying out memorials inspections will be required to comply with the guidance set out below and to comply with guidance issued by the Institute of Crematorium and

Cemeteries Management. Companies will be required to provide their own risk assessments and method statements for approval prior to engaging in any work.

Generic Memorial Stability Test

- Initial visual inspection will be undertaken from a safe distance from the memorial while the names and details of the interred are recorded.
- If the memorial passes the visual inspection, the memorial will be assessed and approached from the front or a direction that will not place the inspector in danger if the memorial moves.
- An initial hand test inspection will be undertaken, to establish general stability of the memorial.
- A full pressure test as instructed by the National Association of Memorial Masons and Institute of Crematorium and Cemeteries Management will be carried out by using calibrated force measurement equipment to a test force of 35kg on memorials over 500mm. Memorials over 1.5 metres in height should not be subjected to a full pressure test.
- The inspection will be carried out from the front and rear for standard memorials.
- At each stage of the inspection process records will be updated.

Generic Memorial Pitch Measurement

- After the stability test has been carried out and the memorial has passed, at either 1 metre above ground level or the top of the memorial, (whichever is the lowest), a measure of the lean will be undertaken.
- This will be undertaken by measuring the angle in degrees from the vertical, both front/back and side to side angles, with calibrated equipment.
- At each stage of the inspection process records will be updated. Only angles of three degrees and over shall be recorded.

The following additional actions will be carried out as set out below:

Kerb Sets

Kerbs will be inspected, by hand, for stability and secure fitting.

Plinths/Lawn Memorials

Memorials shall be inspected to ensure they are in sound condition and for any trip hazards.

Memorials below 500 mm

A risk assessment should be carried out to assess whether there would be any real benefit in applying full pressure test of 35 kg

Vases

Vases will be inspected by hand for secure fitting.

Inspection Records

Every memorial must be inspected and a record made of the inspection. Records should include information that will assist in locating memorials in future inspections, information on the visual, hand and mechanical tests, and an assessment of the priority and action to be taken in accordance with the ‘Memorial Safety Policy’ adopted by the Council.

MEMORIAL SAFETY POLICY

The memorial safety policy is based on a risk assessment approach. Following the inspection, as defined by the Council’s adopted ‘Memorial Testing Policy’, each memorial will be assigned to one of four categories, as set out below:-

Cat.	Condition	Action
1	Unstable and requires immediate attention and temporary stabilisation is considered inappropriate or unfeasible.	In extreme circumstances of immediate danger to the public or persons working in Hartley Burial Ground, the memorial will be laid down.
2	Unstable and requires immediate attention.	The memorial will be temporarily stabilised by wooden stakes positioned to the rear of the stone and secured with a binder/strap. Care will be taken making sure that no damage is caused to the memorial and all actions will be recorded. A notice will be displayed on/near the memorial warning/advising of its unstable condition. ¹
3	Stable and requires no immediate attention though will require re-inspection prior to next proposed inspection in five years time.	All actions to be recorded and a recommendation will be given on the time scale for re-inspection.
4	Stable and requires no attention.	All actions recorded and will be re-inspected in no more than five years time.

The categorisation of memorials will be established following an independent inspection of each memorial. Inspections will be carried out in line with the Council’s adopted ‘Memorial Testing Policy’

¹ Following temporary stabilisation, action will be carried out in line with ‘Making Good of Unstable Memorials’ as set out in the Memorial Safety Programme.

Footnote:

The following documents were used for reference when preparing the Council’s Memorial Safety Programme, Memorial Testing Policy and Memorial Safety Policy

- (1) Management of Memorials, Summary Version, revised April 2007, published by ICCM
- (2) Management of Memorials – April 2007, published by ICCM
- (3) Advice and guidance from the Local Government Ombudsmen – “Special Report – Memorial safety in local authority cemeteries” – March 2006