

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BURIAL GROUNDS AND GARDENS OF REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 9th FEBRUARY 2011 AT 4.00 p.m. AT HARTLEY LIBRARY.**

Present : Cllr A Barnett
Cllr Mrs J Burns
Cllr R Coates
Cllr J Minns
Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby (Chairman)
Cllr B Ramsay

In attendance : Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)

A visual inspection of Hartley Burial Ground, Gardens of Remembrance and Closed Churchyard was undertaken by Members of the Committee immediately before the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr J Gaywood.

2. Declarations of Interests

Cllr R Coates declared a personal interest under minute item 7 in respect of the new Garden of Remembrance, as his wife's mother and father were interred in the new Garden of Remembrance.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Burial Ground and Gardens of Remembrance Committee held on 1st December 2010 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 3rd February 2011. It was agreed that the legal fees in respect of the new Burial Ground would be re-coded to show in the cost centre relating to the Burial Ground.

RESOLVED: That,

- (1) the financial report, attached as appendix 1 to these minutes, be noted; and
- (2) the legal fees in respect of the new Burial Ground be re-coded to show in cost centre 4 relating to the Burial Grounds.

5. Hartley Burial Ground

(a) The Committee considered matters arising from the visual inspection undertaken before the meeting. The Committee was advised of emergency action taken to cut down a vandalised tree located in the lay-by and to remove damaged branches from a conifer tree located near the pond.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the owner of grave number 379 in respect of the late Maureen Beatrice Irwin be contacted and asked to remove the two wicker reindeer from the grave;

(2) the owner of grave number 386 in respect of the late Carol Elizabeth Daldry be contacted and asked to remove the two baubles from the grave and arrangements be made for the grave to be turfed;

(3) arrangements be made for the graves of the late Peter Roberts (grave number 383) and Frances Mary Rich (grave number 413) to be turfed;

(4) a quotation be sought to repair the chestnut paling fence in the north west corner of Hartley Burial Ground;

(5) the Clerk's actions to make arrangements for the branches overhanging Hartley Burial Ground next to the shed to be cut back be confirmed and the owners of Hartley Court be advised of the action to be taken;

(6) a quotation be sought for repairs to the fence panels and posts in the south east corner of Hartley Burial Ground, on the boundary with Hartley Court; and

(7) the Clerk's actions to make arrangements for emergency action to cut down a vandalised tree located in the lay-by and cut down damaged branches from a conifer tree next to the lay-by be confirmed.

(b) At the last meeting of the Burial Grounds and Gardens of Remembrance Committee held on 1st December 2010 it was noted that new steps had been formed next to the narrower gate leading into Hartley Burial Ground and that it had been resolved enquiries be made with the Church Authorities about the provision of these steps.

The Committee was advised that the steps had been formed in order to prevent people from slipping on the gradient, but could be removed should the Council so require.

RESOLVED: That, the response from the Church Authorities be noted and no further action be taken.

(c) The Committee considered a letter dated 25th January 2011 from the local Member of Parliament regarding fees charged in relation to an interment that had taken place in October 2010. Whilst the Committee sympathised with the issues raised therein, the deceased had not resided in the parish at the time of death and the Council had been advised that the deceased had not done so for at least three years before death. In view of the circumstances the Committee considered that the rules in respect of the interment fees for non residents of the parish should be upheld.

RESOLVED: That, the letter dated 25th January 2011 from the local Member of Parliament be received and noted, and a response sent in line with the views expressed by the Committee.

6. Garden of Remembrance

The Committee considered matters arising from the visual inspection undertaken before the meeting. The Committee had noted that the repairs to the paving slabs had been completed and the new lavender plants had been planted in the Garden of Remembrance. Concerns were expressed about drainage below the water point installed in Hartley Burial Ground by the builders employed to undertake the extension works to the Church.

RESOLVED: That, concerns about the drainage below the water point in Hartley Burial Ground be taken up with the Church Authorities.

7. New Garden of Remembrance

(a) There were no matters arising from the visual inspection undertaken before the meeting.

(b) The Committee was advised of a request to inter the ashes of a husband and wife who had tragically died within days of each other. The family's wishes had been that the ashes be interred, together, in the new Garden of Remembrance at Hartley Burial Ground.

The wife had been a resident of Old Downs Care Home at the time of her death, whilst her husband had resided in Longfield at the time of his death, although he practised his faith at All Saints Church. Under the current charging system, single fees would be due for the interment of the wife and treble fees due for the interment of her husband, as a non resident of the parish.

The Committee noted that the rules relating to the interment of ashes in the new Garden of Remembrance, as approved by the Council on 11th October 2010, stated that interments, "...shall be restricted to residents of the parish, or to those who have had strong connections to the village in the past or to those practising their faith within the parish." and therefore the application to inter the ashes of both the husband and the wife in the new Garden of Remembrance satisfied the Council's rules. The Committee considered whether, under the circumstances, the fees due for the interment of ashes of the husband should be reduced to single fees.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the interment of ashes of the husband and wife who had died within days of each other be permitted in the new Garden of Remembrance, as their circumstances satisfied the rules relating to the interment of ashes in the new Garden of Remembrance as approved by the Council on 11th October 2010;

(2) the rules relating to the interment fees for non residents of the parish be upheld, inasmuch as treble fees be applied to the interment charges in respect of the interment of the ashes for the resident of Longfield, as the deceased had been a non resident of the parish at the time of death; and

(3) single fees be applied to the interment charges in respect of the interment of ashes for the resident of the Old Downs Care Home, as the deceased had been a resident of the parish at the time of death.

8. Closed Churchyard

The Committee considered matters arising from the visual inspection undertaken before the meeting. The Committee noted that the path from the entrance of the Church extension to Hartley Burial Ground beside the Yew tree had not been surfaced. The Committee was advised that the Tree Officer at Sevenoaks District Council would not allow the footpath to be tarmaced, as he believed doing so could harm the roots of the Yew tree.

The Committee expressed differing views on the siting of the Council's noticeboard and questioned the storage of a number of large stones from the Church extension in the closed Churchyard.

RESOLVED: That, a site meeting be arranged with the Church Authorities to discuss matters of concern arising from the extension works to the Church, including discussions over the siting of the Council's noticeboard.

9. Lay-by

The Committee was advised of an insurance claim lodged by a resident with the Council's insurers in respect of damage to a vehicle from timber pegs located to retain timber logs along the earth bank of the lay-by. The matter was being investigated by the Council's insurers.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

10. New Burial Ground

The Committee was advised of the recommendation coming forward from the Finance & General Purposes Committee at its meeting held on 9th February 2011 in respect of the appointment of a property lawyer to prepare the documentation required to formalise the agreement in respect of the modification of the covenants and extension of the right of access at Manor Field for burial purposes.

The Committee was advised that the beating up of the Beech hedge to the new Burial Ground in Manor Field would be undertaken during week commencing 14th February 2011. It was reported that 160 new Beech plants would be planted during the beating up.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

11. Memorial Safety Programme and Testing Policy

At the meeting of the Burial Grounds & Gardens of Remembrance Committee held on 31st August 2010 it had been resolved that memorials on grave no 427 for the late Eleanor Margaret Reid, grave no 421 for the late Gladys Carroll, grave no 254 for the late Elsie Victoria Newson and George Stephen Newson and grave no 146 for the late Elisabeth Anne Beesley be inspected and re-tested in April 2011.

The Committee considered that the company who had been employed to undertake the inspection of memorials last year, Memsafe, should be invited to provide a quotation to undertake the re-inspection, subject to a reasonable quotation being obtained, as they would be best placed to advise the Council whether there had been any significant deterioration in the condition of the memorials since the inspection undertaken on 7th April 2010. The Committee was satisfied that the Council's procedures in respect of contracts had been complied with, as it met the requirements

of Financial Regulation 11.1 (a) (ii) for specialist services and 11.1. (a) (iv) for extensions to existing contracts, and therefore it would not be necessary to seek further quotations at this stage.

RESOLVED: That, a quotation be invited from Memsafe to re-inspect four memorials in Hartley Burial Ground.

12. Date of the next meeting

Wednesday 6th April 2011 at 4.00 p.m.

A visual inspection of the Burial Ground, Gardens of Remembrance and Closed Churchyard would be held before the start of the meeting at 3.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 5.00 p.m.

Signed:.....
Chairman

Date:.....

**Hartley Parish Council
 Summary of Receipts and Payment
 (as at 3rd February 2011)
 Burial Grounds and Gardens of Remembrance**

Title	Receipts		Payments		Net Position Underspend (+) /Overspend (-)
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	
Grass cutting General maintenance			1,050.00	796.00	254.00
Maintenance contract			1,000.00	460.00	540.00
Spoil removal Plinth			1,750.00	1,400.20	349.80
Graves/interments	1,320.00	2,820.00	450.00		450.00
Interment of ashes	1,020.00	1,575.00			1,500.00
Memorials	450.00	725.00			555.00
Plaques	600.00	605.00			275.00
New B/G grass cut			450.00		5.00
New B/G advance wks			6,500.00	100.00	450.00
All/St grass cut			750.00	600.00	6,400.00
All/St gen main			200.00		150.00
Health and Safety Lay by			500.00	580.15	200.00
Blue Sacks			50.00	102.43	-80.15
NET TOTAL	3,390.00	5,725.00	12,700.00	4,038.78	10,996.22
V.A.T.		0.00		136.96	
GROSS TOTAL		5,725.00		4,175.74	