

SWANTON MORLEY PARISH COUNCIL
CHURCHYARD AND BURIAL GROUND MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Churchyard and Burial Ground Management Sub-Committee was held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 20th March 2007. The meeting commenced at 7.30pm.

Present: Mrs M Thomas (Chairman), Mr I Bone and Mrs J Leary

1) Apologies for Absence

Mr C Clegg and Mr R Atterwill

2) Declarations of Interest

None

3) Minutes of the Burial Ground Sub Committee Meeting of 19th February 2007 to be accepted, initialled and signed.

All in favour. Minutes were initialled and signed.

4) Matters Arising

Mrs Thomas reported that she, Mr Bone and Mr Atterwill had formed a working party on 17th March and had cut back all the ivy from the church wall and removed all the suckers. Two beech trees and a yew were identified for needing treatment or removal and the advice of Mr Slater is to be requested.

A potential health and safety issue was identified with the damaged wall not providing any protection from the danger of a fall onto the road. The clerk is to send out tender letters to fencing contractors for the price of 100m of post and two rail fencing.

5) Churchyard Maintenance

a) Rabbit control in the churchyard

The rabbit population in the churchyard remains a problem. Information from the Parish Council's current pest control contractor showed that fencing was the best solution however this was too costly. The clerk is to investigate and report back at the next meeting.

b) To agree a contractor for the removal of sycamore trees

The clerk reported that Mr Carrick had received an extension for his insurance policy to cover Parish Council work and that it was valid until 7th May. It was agreed that work on the trees in the churchyard should be done by a professional contractor and that all trees should be reviewed for potential work prior to completing the faculty and appointing a contractor.

The offer from Mr Wilton to donate ten coping stones to replace some that were stolen is to be gratefully accepted. The clerk is to write to Mr Wilton thanking him for his offer and requesting that they be delivered to Mrs Thomas' address.

6) Burial Ground Maintenance

a) To authorise the stone, kerbing and inscription for K K Bennett

Anglia Memorials had been unable to provide measurements for the kerbing as the size of the grave was not known. Mrs Thomas is to measure the grave and give this information to the clerk. Concern was shown over the fact that the family have apparently requested that the headstone face towards the pathway as it is of their belief that the body was buried this way. Permission is not to be granted until an agreement is made that the stone should face the same way as all others. It was also queried whether the inscription was grammatically correct. The clerk is to write to Anglia Memorials with this decision and the grave measurements.

b) To discuss request for extension of the Burial Ground pathway

The clerk reported that the Bennett family had requested that the pathway be extended to cover the full width of the Burial Ground. All were in favour that this would not be feasible and would potentially destroy the hedges.

c) To update on unauthorised kerbing

Further to the two recent instances of unauthorised kerbing being erected in the Burial Ground, the following decisions had been taken:

- Bennett – As the family have applied for kerbing to be professionally laid, the current kerbing is to be allowed to stand for a maximum time period of six months, by which time the professional kerbing should be installed.

- George – As the family have reported that the kerbing has been cemented in, the decision was taken that to remove the kerbing would potentially cause serious damage to the grave and headstone. The family have been advised that the kerbing is to be allowed to remain as an exception to the rule, but any damage to the area, such as subsidence is to be rectified by the family.

Mrs Thomas requested that the clerk contact May Gurney about weeds that are growing through the pathway by the gate and also by the ash interment area.

7) To Review Regulations and Fees

The clerk is to contact Bartrums to see if the fees for the Burial Ground at Swanton Morley are comparable with similar size parishes. If, as suspected, Swanton Morley's charges are much lower than other parishes then they should be increased. This is because the cost of maintaining the Burial Ground is not even closely covered by the fees received, however it was agreed that charges for infants should remain as nil. It was also discussed, and strongly supported that all burial and memorial fees should be placed in a different account from the rest of the Parish Council business.

The following items in the Regulations were discussed:

- Interment Regulations Item 5 – It was questioned whether a minimum depth of 3ft for any part of a coffin to be buried was sufficient. Mr Bone confirmed that this was based on the model regulations from the confederation of burial authorities.
- Exclusive Right of Burial Item 9 – That the fees should be reviewed more strictly on an annual basis.
- Exclusive Right of Burial Item 12 – The planting of small perennials is not in keeping with the model regulations of the confederation of burial authorities and should be removed. Should families wish to plant a rose for their loved ones then this should be done in the forthcoming memorial garden and a separate section of rules and regulations are to be created for this.
- Memorial Regulations – All items relating to the permitting of kerbing are to be removed. An extra regulation is to be placed stating that that kerbing is no longer to be permitted. This is to take effect after the current row of burials is finished.

8) Garden of Remembrance in Churchyard

The clerk reported that the Parish Council had voted against ash interments in the closed part of the churchyard. The Parish Council had requested further clarification of ash interments in the open part of the churchyard, and the clerk is to ensure that the PCC have a letter to this effect prior to their meeting on 28th March.

9) Memorial Garden

Mrs Thomas reported that the working party had been unable to mark out the memorial garden on the 17th due to lack of time, but a small group of volunteers had already been recruited for creation and maintenance of the garden.

10) Any items to be considered and approved by full Parish Council

- To obtain Parish Council permission to the resetting of 6 headstones (two in their original place and four to be re-sited).
- Review of regulations

11) Any item to be reported for next meeting

- Report from the clerk on rabbit control
- Update on fees

12) Date & time of next meeting

To be agreed

The meeting concluded at 8.50pm

_____ (Mrs Marilyn Thomas, Chairman) _____ Date