

Report: Parish Council Churchyard Extension Working Group Meeting

Meeting Date: 4th February @ 7pm

In attendance

- Liz Hart
- John Merchant
- Simon Harris
- Billie Minshall

Meeting Overview

The working group convened to review the objectives, scope, and membership of the churchyard extension project. Additionally, the ownership of the surrounding land parcels was discussed. The following points summarise the outcomes and recommendations from the meeting.

Object, Scope, and Membership

The group reviewed and reaffirmed the objectives and scope of the churchyard extension project as defined in the terms of reference. Although the parish council has no duty to provide cemetery space it was felt important that there is enough space to meet the needs of the community in the future. It was noted that there is a trend towards more cremations than burials but that burials are more than norm in Helmdon churchyard.

Ownership of Surrounding Land

The ownership status of the land parcels close to the churchyard was reviewed. It was determined that there were no immediate opportunities or needs to acquire additional land at this time.

Current Capacity

The discussion highlighted that there is no urgent need to progress with the new extension due to the ample space currently available. The church has confirmed there is currently in excess of ten-fifteen years of capacity. However, it was noted that some portions of the available space might be unusable.

Recommendations

- Continue to ring-fence funds amounting to £14,000 for a cemetery extension, noting that the cost of obtaining planning permission would be substantial and that a minimum of an additional £500 per year should be budgeted to be added to the designated reserves

- Deposit the ring-fenced funds in a high-interest account, given the lack of urgent expenditure needs.
- Continue to monitor the potential availability of neighbouring land parcels with a view to future purchase.