

CREWKERNE AND WEST CREWKERNE
JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Joint Burial Committee held on Tuesday 3 June 2025 at 18.45 in the Cemetery Chapel, Townsend Cemetery, Mount Pleasant, Crewkerne.

PRESENT:

Cllrs. M. Best, J. Borland (Chair), C. Broom, N. Draycott, J. Holt, C. Rawe, A. Samuel, and A. Stuart.

Also in attendance: K. Sheehan (Town Clerk), P. Hewitt (Finance Officer).

001 TO ELECT A CHAIR

25/26

Cllr. Borland was elected as Chair for 2025/26.

002 REPORT FROM THE RETIRING CHAIR

25/26

Cllr. Best read a report, noting:

- The past year had been a successful one, with important improvements being made, including external works to the Cemetery Lodge, path upgrades, and internal works to the workshop chapel.
- He noted that it was important to keep this momentum going and strive for continuous improvements to be made, as many compliments had been received about the cemetery.
- He felt that Joint Burial Committee councillors should be proud of these compliments which reflected the time and the care they gave to the cemetery.
- The War Graves information board had been a welcome addition.
- It was still hoped that the Spitfire commemorative plaque would be installed in the future.

003 TO ELECT THE VICE CHAIR

25/26

Cllr. Best was elected as Vice Chair for 2025/26.

004 TO CONFIRM THE APPOINTMENTS BY CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL AND WEST CREWKERNE PARISH COUNCIL OF COUNCILLORS TO THE JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

25/26

The Town Clerk confirmed the following Councillors had been appointed from Crewkerne Town Council: Cllr. Best, Cllr. Draycott, Cllr. Rawe, Cllr. Samuel and Cllr. Stuart.

Cllr. Borland confirmed that the following Councillors had been appointed from West Crewkerne Parish Council: Cllr. Borland, Cllr. Broom and Cllr. Holt.

005 TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

25/26

All Councillors were present.

006 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

25/26

in items on the agenda

No declarations of interest were made at this point.

007 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 APRIL 2025

25/26

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 April 2025 were APPROVED.

008 OPEN FORUM

25/26

No members of the public were in attendance.

009 CLERK'S PROGRESS REPORT

25/26

The Clerk reported that the paths being upgraded in the new section had now all been edged, and would be surfaced later in the month. The lime plaster in the chapel was still not dry, and the final skim remained outstanding.

010 FINANCIAL MATTERS

25/26

To receive the financial update reports

The 24/25 year-end report and 25/26 year to date financial report were noted. The Finance Officer reported that West Crewkerne Parish Council's portion of reserves had now been returned to WCPC, and going forward Crewkerne Town Council would simply invoice WCPC for 7% of net cemetery expenditure at year end.

011 ANNUAL CEMETERY WALKAROUND

25/26

To confirm actions arising

The Clerk summarised the following actions arising from the annual walkaround conducted by the members of the Joint Burial Committee:

- Turning circle tree is overgrown and mesh to be installed inside the tree guard.
- The Queen Elizabeth II memorial plaque is not weathering well and needs attention.
- Grass on headstones to be brushed off (if possible in weather conditions).
- Sinking graves in both old and new sections to be backfilled with soil when available.
- Town Clerk to ask masons if there is a way to fix memorials to counteract future sinkage.
- New trial path in old section to be extended to end of path, but using a better-quality weed barrier.
- Yew wiring remains outstanding.
- Graves to be sprayed for weeds.
- Town Clerk to seek arborist input on trees #39 and #50 (both looking unhealthy).
- Two trees have overhanging branches in NE corner – quote to be obtained for removal of branches.
- Mature trees to be planted in gaps along A30 where Taylor Wimpey have commenced works and a post and rail fence with stock fencing to be erected along eastern boundary with the development site, and holly to be planted inside this fence.
- Dead Holly tree along this boundary (marked with blue spot) to be removed.
- Tree #2457 (also dead) to be removed.
- Woodland grass in centre bed to be removed.
- Memorial tree guard in newest graves section to be relocated and a different tree type to be replanted.
- Graves to be remarked in this section.
- Grave on path back up to chapels to be filled.
- Town Clerk to speak to contractor about mowing patterns.

012 TREE TESTING REPORTS

25/26

To receive reports from recent tomographic testing and determine the way forward

Tomographic reports for trees T011, T012, T018, T020, T056, T060, T074 and T075 were received and noted. The testing had been conducted at the end of March, and the most significant

recommendation was to fell T020 due to extensive internal decay. An initial quote had been sought which had included a fee for traffic management along the A30. It was not clear whether traffic management would definitely be required, and the Clerk was asked to seek further clarification. The Clerk reiterated that the report highlighted the tree to be a significant risk due to its size and location, however councillors felt that a second quote would be worth getting if possible. Therefore, it was AGREED to delegate the decision to proceed to the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee.

013 MEMORIAL TREE WITH INSCRIBED LEAVES

25/26 To receive a report from Cllrs. Best and Samuel and consider the purchase of a memorial tree

Cllrs. Best and Samuel reported back from recent visit to a crematorium which had purchased such a tree and installed it in their grounds. After consideration it was AGREED not to proceed with purchasing the tree but instead make enquiries about alternative ways to display memorial plaques, rather than construct another wall. Cllr. Best agreed to speak to a local company about designing something similar to the memorial tree.

014 INSPECTIONS

25/26 To make arrangements for inspections ahead of the next meeting

All councillors would visit the cemetery before the next meeting and report back.

015 TO APPROVE THE APPLICATIONS, MEMORIALS AND TRANSFERS RECEIVED

25/26

The applications, memorials and transfers received were APPROVED.

016 MATTERS OF REPORT

25/26

It was noted that plans were underway for the cemetery open day in September and that further details would follow.

017 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

25/26

Tuesday 7 October 2025 at 18.45 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne.

The meeting closed at 19.23.

Signed.....

Dated.....

JBC3June2025