

CREWKERNE AND WEST CREWKERNE
JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Joint Burial Committee held on Tuesday 2 June 2026 at 18.45 in the Cemetery Chapel, Townsend Cemetery, Mount Pleasant, Crewkerne.

PRESENT:

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

Also in attendance: G. Hughes, Town Clerk

001 TO ELECT A CHAIR

26/27

Cllr. Best was elected as Chair for 2026/27.

002 REPORT FROM THE RETIRING CHAIR

26/27

Cllr. Borland read a report, noting:

- Plot purchases increased significantly from £7,150 (2024–25) to £11,480 (2025–26), with burials already taking place in the newest cemetery section.
- Grounds maintenance standards have been challenging due to climate impacts and a change in contractor following tendering. Ongoing discussions are taking place to address issues including mowing consistency, trimming, and weed control.
- Sinking graves remain an issue across old and new sections; affected graves are being backfilled as materials become available. Faster coffin decomposition may be contributing to the problem.
- Grave diggers have been reminded to use designated spoil areas appropriately.
- Queen Elizabeth II memorial tree relocated from the turning circle to the Cemetery Lodge area and the replacement tree is established and growing well.
- Several trees have required felling due to internal decay, and ageing Victorian-era trees are expected to need replacement over time.
- Box bushes have suffered significant caterpillar damage and require attention.
- The memorial post box near the chapel was well used over Christmas/New Year; contents were transferred to Yeovil Crematorium for burning, unread.

003 TO ELECT THE VICE CHAIR

26/27

Cllr. Borland was elected as Vice Chair for 2026/27.

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

26/27

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

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

26/27

Cllr. Broom (personal).

006 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

26/27 in items on the agenda

No declarations of interest were made at this point.

007 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 APRIL 2026

26/27

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2026 were APPROVED.

008 OPEN FORUM

26/27

No members of the public were in attendance.

009 CLERK'S PROGRESS REPORT

26/27

The Clerk reported that:

- The 'Mary' grave has been repaired, the Grounds Team have dug the plot and are awaiting for granite chippings to be delivered.
- The bench in the old section just in front of 'Mary' has been replaced with a surplus one and the plaque moved across
- TPO's have been applied for on the trees on the Taylor Wimpey boundary of the new section

010 FINANCIAL MATTERS

26/27 To receive the financial update reports

The 25/26 year-end report and 26/27 year to date financial report were noted.

011 TOWNSEND CEMETERY CHAPEL

26/27 To review the hire period

Councillors agreed to amend the booking arrangements so that the £100 fee covers a maximum period of three hours, replacing the previous arrangement under which no time limit applied.

012 TOWNSEND CEMETERY CHAPEL

26/27 To approve an advertising flyer

Councillors approved the flyer and asked the Clerk to give copies to the local funeral directors.

013 BENCHES

26/27 To review cemetery benches, consider capacity and agree a future approach to additional requests

Councillors agreed that additional benches could be accommodated in the old section of the cemetery, but that the new section was at capacity. The matter will be reviewed at the annual cemetery walkaround in 2027.

014 ANNUAL CEMETERY WALKAROUND

26/27 To confirm actions arising

The Clerk summarised the actions arising from the annual cemetery walkaround undertaken by members of the Joint Burial Committee. Several sinking graves were identified, and arrangements will be made for the necessary repairs. The Clerk was requested to obtain

quotations for an inspection of the chapel roof and for the removal of the large dead tree at the end of the drive.

015 CEMETERY INSPECTIONS

26/27 To receive feedback

Councillors noted that the matters arising from the cemetery inspections had been covered under the previous agenda item and no further issues were raised.

016 TO APPROVE THE APPLICATIONS, MEMORIALS AND TRANSFERS RECEIVED

26/27

The applications, memorials and transfers received were APPROVED.

017 MATTERS OF REPORT

26/27

The Clerk was asked to cancel the Cemetery Open Day and withdraw from the Cemetery of the Year Competition due to the current condition of the grounds. Councillors noted that the ashes scattering area was looking good.

018 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

26/27

Tuesday 6 October 2026 at 18.45 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne.

The meeting closed at 19.08.

Signed.....

Dated.....

JBC2June2026