

Minutes of a meeting of the Bures Joint Cemetery Authority held at Bures Community Centre on Monday 13th January 2025 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr J Aries (Chair), Mrs J Wright (Clerk)

Bures St. Mary Parish Council: Cllr J McCrory

Bures Hamlet Parish Council: Cllr J Chambers, Cllr S Manning, Cllr K McAndrew, Cllr M Elder

1/01/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies put forward.

2/01/25 REGISTER OF INTERESTS & DISPENSATION REQUESTS

To declare any 'Pecuniary' or 'Non-Pecuniary' interests and dispensation requests.

No Register of Interests declared and no Dispensation requests put forward.

3/01/25 MINUTES

Minutes of the previous meeting of 9th September 2024 (previously circulated) were duly approved and signed as a correct record.

4/01/25 PUBLIC FORUM – 15 minutes maximum public participation

3 minutes for individual contributions unless agreed by the Chair

No members of the public present.

5/01/25 INSPECTOR'S ASSET & RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT

a) Wildlife Boxes Checklist: Cllr Chambers presented her report. Checklist to be held on file. Bird box on the Red Oak has been re-fixed in place. One Bat box reported damaged, currently fixed in the Sequoia at top of main drive. Clerk to follow up.

b) Risk Assessment Checklist: Cllr Chambers presented her report to the meeting. Checklist to be held on file. Front gate needs cleaning and painting with Hammerite when weather improves. Bench near shed has been repaired but needs a re-varnish. Remaining benches to be re-varnished in the spring. Shed to be re-treated in the spring. Maps fading – protection to be sought. Old wooden crosses to be removed following prior agreement from bereaved relatives. Laurel hedge along St Edmunds Lane extension boundary needs 'topping'. Litter cleared plus fallen small tree branches. Overhanging ivy at front gate area may need clearing in the spring. Clerk to follow up on all items raised.

c) Memorial Stability Checklist: Cllr Chambers presented her report to the meeting. Checklist to be held on file. All memorials checked for stability. Any memorials found to be seriously unstable are to be laid down for safety reasons. Fairless and Baxter memorials repaired by contractor. Two memorials, both in the older section have been laid down – Matthews and Gilbert. Memorials identified as needing attention – Horne, Alleston, Perry, Gilbert (new section), Dansie, Holt and Power. Clerk and Chair to follow up with the contractor. **Next Inspector:** Cllr Elder.

6/01/25 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Tree Condition Report: As per agreed quotation from Blake Tree Care Ltd the following works have been completed in November - Items G8, T11, G15, T23, T28 and G31 plus laurel hedge along older section of St Edmunds Lane boundary. Items G12, T10, T11, T24 and T28 of the report to be considered at the September 2025 meeting. Lime tree suckers have been removed by JPB Landscapes via the winter maintenance budget. Laurels along boundary of St Edmunds Lane extension area still to be trimmed and tidied by JPB Landscapes.

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b) Rear fence repair: Angle irons have been installed to stabilise the fence. Clerk has ordered 50 chestnut stakes from Guy Jones to replace the near perished stakes along the rear fence at a cost of £2 per stake. Cllr McAndrew will replace the old with new when received. Clerk has spoken with Guy but stakes are still not ready for collection.

c) Map replacements: Cllr Aries reported that the weather remained too damp at the moment to replace the faded maps. She would replace the maps and cover the inside of the glass cabinet with UV protection in the spring. The map in St Mary's Church was also in need of updating.

d) Bench repairs: Dean Manning had kindly repaired one bench plus one bench has been re-treated. Remaining benches - Warden bench along the rear fence and benches along the the main drive to be re-treated in the spring. Cllr Aries kindly following up.

e) Boundary verges: Following issues with debris and cuttings being strewn along the roadside boundary verge of St Edmunds Lane by persons unknown, contractor Nigel Norton had been asked to trim the full length of verge – cost £180. Mulch on order from Blake Tree Care Ltd to be spread around the saplings along the wood yard boundary. Overgrowth tidied around the saplings and debris kindly removed by contractor.

f) Wildflower meadow: The meadow has been cut. However may take several years to fully establish. Further wildflower seeds in hand for when weather improves to continue with cultivation of the meadow.

g) Contractor works: (see attached) – all noted. Cuttings being collected by a Grass Collector in new section. Weeds in the gravel grid at top section to be cleared. Graves to be turfed – Synnak, Boyce, Harrod, Burbidge and O'Grady. The grave of the late Elizabeth Pilgrim needs infilling and turfing. Daniels wooden marker cross removed – Clerk has informed family. Glass vases and trinkets continue to be removed from several graves in line with the Cemetery Conditions.

7/01/25 AUDIT MATTERS

a) Internal Audit Review held on 7th October 2024 – Mrs J Wright (BHPC Clerk), Mrs G Turner (BSMPC Clerk), Cllrs Aries, McCrory, Keeble-Fox and Welch attended the meeting. Following some issues raised by Internal and External Auditors both parish councils reviewed their respective Financial Regulations. The following areas for development to be considered by all members prior to the next review:

To explore savings provision, provide a policy for press releases (this has since been presented to both parish councils and agreed) plus to actively look at using a .gov.uk domain. It was also noted that a review of the Dropbox subscription remains to be actioned. Notes from the meeting circulated to all members.

b) Letter of Engagement from BB Business Associates accepted and duly signed by the Clerk/RFO for the completion of an internal audit for year ending 2024/25.

c) It was agreed to revert back to holding an External Audit Review for 2024/25. Clerk to inform PKF Littlejohn LLP.

8/01/25 FINANCE

Business Access A/C balance: £15,953.94 Community A/C balance: £3,182.21

a) Finance & Budget Monitoring Report – circulated, noted and attached.

Following the decision of the Joint Sportsground Committee to reduce its 2025/26 precept request to the parish councils from £8,000 to £7,500 it was considered prudent for the Joint Cemetery Authority to reconsider its precept request. Members unanimously agreed to leave its precept request set at £5,500 as per the previous year.

b) Bank Reconciliation dated 29th December 2024 circulated, noted and attached.

Corresponding bank statements circulated, noted and attached and duly signed by the Chair and a non-signatory member.

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c) NALC Clerk's National Salary Award for 2024/25 accepted. Clerk's salary to be adjusted in line with the Award.

d) Lloyds Bank advised of changes to the Community Account commencing January 2025. Key changes being £4.25 monthly fee to be applied plus fees for electronic payments, DD, cash and cheque payments.

e) Business Banking Resolution Service to close – noted.

f) Midyear VAT claim processed and received.

9/01//25 CORRESPONDENCE

Gary Smith Garden Services Ltd Certificate of Employers Liability received and held on file.

JPB Landscapes Certificate of Employers Liability received and held on file.

Transfer of the grave deed of the late John and Rebecca Bunch duly processed.

10/01/25 INTERMENTS/ASHES INTERMENTS/MEMORIAL APPLICATIONS

Interment of the late Leslie Saer

Ashes interment of the late Brian and Myra King

11/01/25 BRIEF INFORMATION & EXCHANGE

To consider increasing Clerk's hours per week at next meeting.

12/01/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Monday 10th March 2025 at Bures Community Centre, Nayland Road at 7.30pm.

Future dates agreed 2025: 9th June, 8th September.

Site meeting arranged for Saturday 7th June 2025 at 10am.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

Signed:

Authority Chair:

Date: