

Minutes of a meeting of the Bures Joint Cemetery Authority held at Bures Community Centre on Monday 8th September 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 Child, Cllr J Chambers, Cllr S Manning.

1/09/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllr M. Elder (family commitment).

Apologies accepted by those members present.

2/09/25 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.

3/09/25 MINUTES

Minutes of the previous meeting of 9th June 2025 (previously circulated) were duly approved and signed as a correct record.

4/09/25 PUBLIC FORUM – 15 minutes maximum public participation

3 minutes for individual contributions unless agreed by the Chairman

No members of the public present.

5/09/25 INSPECTOR'S ASSET & RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT

a) Wildlife Boxes Checklist: Cllr McCrory presented her report. Checklist to be held on file. Wildlife boxes located and intact. Blake Tree Care had installed the 2 bat boxes and one Bluetit box.

b) Risk Assessment Checklist: Cllr McCrory presented her report to the meeting. Checklist to be held on file. All in good order.

c) Memorial Stability Checklist: Cllr McCrory 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. Contractor has repaired those memorials previously identified in need of repair – Kemp, Collar, Anderson and Crossman.. 3 headstones stacked along the wood yard fence have been laid flat with inscriptions uppermost. Dansie headstone stood upright with soil surround – to be monitored. Alleston memorial in L section still to be bedded into ground. Crosses of Corbett and Jarvis to be checked to see whether they can be repaired or need to be laid down.

Next Inspector: Cllr Aries.

6/09/25 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Tree works: Blake Tree Care has completed the pruning back of a Hawthorn and reduced height of a Yew to the rear of No. 14 Cuckoo Hill as per accepted quotation £990 + VAT. BTS has trimmed back the trees in the new section which overhung the power lines.

b) Tree Condition Report June 2024: Members agreed a quotation should be sought from Blake Tree Care for the remaining tree works listed on the Tree Condition Report of June 2024 - T23, T24, T28, G12, G15, G31, G8, T10 and T11. Next visual tree inspection due 2026 and the next full tree inspection due 2027.

c) Rear fence repair: JPB Landscapes had submitted 2 quotations, one to repair and one to replace the rear cemetery fence. It was agreed to accept the quotation to supply and install new chestnut palings, round posts and square rails plus remove all waste - £2,722.82 + VAT.

d) Map replacements: The UV protection film to cover the inside of the map casing had been unsuccessful. It was agreed to investigate costs for new glazing with UV protection to prevent moisture getting in the casing. Updated maps to be inserted in the casing when new glazing in place. The map in St Mary's Church also to be updated.

e) Bench repairs: The Warden memorial bench along the rear fence and 3 benches along the main drive to be re-treated. Cllr Aries, Chambers and Elder kindly agreed to follow up when weather suitable.

f) Shed treatment: Cllrs Aries, Chambers and Elder agreed to meet and re-treat the shed when weather suitable.

g) Wildflower meadow: Contractor to be asked to cut and collect the grass during September. Cllr Aries reported that a number of wild flowers are emerging which were not planted in the meadow.

h) Contractor works: (see attached) – all noted. Graves still to be levelled and turfed in the autumn – see contractor works list. Owing to the constant dry weather it was agreed not to ask the contractor to infill any further graves for the time being. Some paths still required edging - Cllr Aries to check. Main driveway needed weed spraying. A 10mm shingle layer had been applied to the rear gravel grids – cost £308 + VAT. Ivy at height still to be cut back from trees – BlakeTree Care. Members agreed no grass cuts should be required over the summer of 2026 if a further hot season occurs. Cllr Aries has cleared the bulk of the leaf fall. Clerk to ask JPB Landscapes to clear remaining leaf fall. Cllr Aries has kindly cleared the crab apples falling from a neighbouring tree at the front entrance. She will clear any remaining to avoid a slip hazard at the front gate.

7/09/25 DRAFT BUDGET

Although the Cemetery Authority had requested £6,000 annually from both Bures Hamlet and Bures St Mary Parish Councils for year ending 2024/25 this had subsequently been reduced to £5,500. Therefore members had agreed at that time to budget the same for 2025/26 - £5,500 annually from each parish council. However owing to the continuing lack of burial fees and with no other income apart from the precept, members agreed the Cemetery Authority draft budget 2026/27 should reflect these continuing financial issues. The minimum 25% retention of funds would be held at £3,000. The proposed 2026/27 draft budget was agreed by all members present, reflecting a request of £6,000 from each parish council, this being a minimum increase of £500 per parish council. However it was also agreed to request the parish councils to consider a further £500 each to ease the financial constraints of the Cemetery Authority. Unanimously agreed by all members present.

8/09/25 AUDIT MATTERS

a) An Internal Audit Review arranged for Monday 6th October at 6pm via Zoom – Clerk, Cllr Aries and Cllr McCrory to attend.

b) All policies have been checked for neutral gender nouns and updated as required.

c) .gov.uk domain has been adopted by the two parish councils. The Clerk/RFO is required to have a .gov.uk email address and this is now in place. - Clerk@bureshamlet-pc.gov.uk
The Chairs and Vice-chairs for both parish councils also have .gov.uk email addresses to comply with the AGAR requirements for the 2026 Audits. Assertion 10 guidance for remainder of Councillors' email addresses states that Parish Councillors are not required to have .gov.uk emails at this time but they must have an email address solely for Parish Council business.

9/09/25 FINANCE

Instant Access A/C balance: £13,303.78 Community A/C balance: £2,687.36

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

b) Bank Reconciliation dated 25th August 2025 circulated, noted and attached.

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

c) NALC Clerk's salary pay award 2025-26 confirmed and back dated to 1st April 2025.

d) 2nd half year precept requests to BHPC and BSMPC presented and confirmed.

e) Mid year VAT claim submitted – noted.

f) 2024/25 HMRC Clerk's salary & tax completed – noted.

10/09//25 CORRESPONDENCE

Perished marker cross replaced on the grave of the late F & G Smith – noted.

11/09/25 INTERMENTS/ASHES INTERMENTS/MEMORIAL APPLICATIONS

Additional inscription of the late John Synnak.

12/09/25 BRIEF INFORMATION & EXCHANGE

None raised.

13/09/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Monday 12th January 2026 at Bures Community Centre, Nayland Road at 7.30pm.

Future dates agreed 2026: 9th March, 8th June, 7th September

The meeting closed at 8.42pm

Signed:

Authority Chair:

Date: