

Estates Working Party

Report of the Estates Working Party meeting held on 10th March 2025.

Present: Cllrs M Gillespie, S Burditt, C Ibbotson, P Mount and J Thacker.

Parish Council Manager: Miss J Leech

Assistant Parish Council Manager: Miss E Frost

Head Groundsperson: Mr P Clarke

The meeting was chaired by Cllr M Gillespie.

1. To receive apologies for absence, if any
Apologies were received from Cllrs V Armstrong and S Kinvig.
2. To receive disclosures of interest
Cllr M Gillespie declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 7, St Andrews Church.
3. To receive the Head Groundsman's report
 - a. Projects programme update
The Head Groundsman reported that all projects for 2024/25 had now been completed, including the installation of the planter on The Centenary Paddock.
 - b. Routine maintenance programme
The Head Groundsman reported that grass cutting season was now underway.
4. To discuss the Cemetery, including
 - a. Cemetery (A) and (B)
It was noted that there had been an incident regarding the interment of an oversized coffin. Both the funeral director and grave digger had been contacted to reiterate that the Parish Council must be informed if a coffin is oversized.

It had been reported that there was an increase in the amount of dog waste being discarded of in the waste bin located at the Cemetery. This would continue to be monitored with additional bin emptying being undertaken as required as well as the installation of additional bins to be considered when the layout of cemetery B is further discussed.
 - b. Cemetery B layout
A site visit would be scheduled within the next few months to consider locations of benches, scattering section/s, memorial section/s, waste bins and additional memorial trees as it is likely that burial and cremation plots will soon need to be offered in the new cemetery.
5. To consider any maintenance issues
It was noted at a recent meeting of the Village Hall Management Committee that the Countesthorpe Village Hall Charity was offering the current sums from its bank account to the Parish Council for carrying out improvements to the Village Hall, which could include tree works.

It was noted that a property adjacent to the open space on Skye Way had installed a pathway from the rear of their property into the open space using slabs. These, along with other items had been removed by the Parish Council and treated as flytipping.

It was reported that Beddows Tree Specialists were scheduled to complete works on the Cedar Tree in The Centenary Paddock towards the end of March.

Following the installation of the planter on The Centenary Paddock, Birkett House Special School would be asked whether they would like to plant some pansies as a finishing feature.

Recommended for approval

To proceed with purchasing godfather posts and post mix to repair the fence at Dale Acre Play Area at a cost of £207.36.

To proceed with replacing damaged wood on an item of play equipment at Dale Acre Play Area at a cost of up to £250.

6. Memorial bench at The Spinney

It was reported that Active Arts had selected a memorial bench to be purchased via the Parish Council and a site meeting would now be arranged to select a location on The Spinney for its installation.

7. Closed Churchyard pathway

Advice had been sought on alternative materials for repairing the damaged pathway at the closed churchyard, however it was advised that a like for like concrete would be the most cost effective method and therefore a quote is being awaited. Due to the material and its appearance being the same as has been used before, further confirmation would be sought as to whether faculty and planning applications are required to be submitted.

8. Section 106 monies

There was nothing to report.

9. Dog waste bins

It was noted that there was ongoing correspondence between the Parish Council Manager and Blaby District Council regarding the removal and reinstallation of dog waste bins. Currently, the Parish Council is awaiting a response regarding Stroma Way.

10. To discuss the footpaths at The Spinney

Recommended for approval

To obtain quotations for options of suitable alternatives for replacing the pathway on The Spinney, and also areas of the cemetery pathway.

11. To consider applications for use of The Centenary Paddock

Further to the below applications being considered, The Centenary Paddock's Hire Agreement would be reviewed at a future meeting of the Estates Working Party.

a. St Andrews Church

Recommended for approval

To reconfirm the approval previously granted in principal but to draw the hirers attention to conditions regarding the maximum number of vendors, parking provisions, PA system restrictions and rules regarding advertising banners.

b. Countesthorpe Scouts

Recommended for approval

To reconfirm the approval previously granted in principal but to draw the hirers attention to conditions regarding noise levels, parking provisions and rules regarding advertising banners as well as requesting a copy of the fire risk assessment.

12. To receive any correspondence

There was no correspondence.

13. To consider matters raised to the attention of the Estates Working Party by non-member Councillors

Further to reports of issues regarding parking on Main Street near the Bulls Head, Leicestershire County Council had agreed to organise an out of hours parking warden patrol. Additionally, the request from residents to install bollards had been forwarded to Leicestershire County Councillor, Les Phillimore, for consideration and posters regarding parking alternatives would be sent to the Bulls Head.

14. To receive matters arising for information purposes

It was noted that Leicestershire County Council now charge £235 for applications to put items on the highway.

A response had been received regarding the replacement speed humps recently installed along Winchester Road to advise that their size is commonly used and it is the responsibility of the driver to slow down while crossing them.

Correspondence had been received from Blaby and Whetstone Football Club advising that they had been offered a 32ft x 10ft cabin which they would like to install on the car park of Willoughby Road Playing Fields. More information would be obtained regarding the request before being discussed at the next meeting of the Estates Working Party.

Recommended for approval

To contact Brook Court Care Home to enquire as to whether they would be willing to receive a memorial bench donation from a resident to replace the damaged bench currently on site.

To remove the bench located on Foston Road ahead of works being started on the development of the new housing estate.

15. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for 7th April 2025.