

Estates Working Party

Report of the Estates Working Party meeting held on 9th June 2025.

Present: Cllrs V Armstrong, M Gillespie, C Ibbotson, S Kinvig, P Mount and J Thacker

Parish Council Manager: Miss J Leech

Assistant Parish Council Manager: Miss E Frost

Head Groundsperson: Mr P Clarke

1. Election of Chairman

It was resolved to elect Cllr V Armstrong as Chairman.

2. To receive apologies for absence, if any

There were no apologies for absence.

3. To receive disclosures of interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

4. To review the Terms of Reference

The terms of reference were amended following review and would be recommended to the Parish Council for adoption.

5. To receive the Head Groundsman's report

a. Projects programme update

The Head Groundsman reported that the repointing work to the chapel of rest is still ongoing with the guttering replacement to be completed immediately after.

It was also reported that the installation of the memorial bench for Active Arts on The Spinney would be completed imminently. The existing bench on The Spinney would also be upgraded.

b. Routine maintenance programme

The Head Groundsman reported that routine maintenance jobs were ongoing, weather permitting.

It was reported that a tree fronting the cemetery had dropped a limb and had consequently required works to be undertaken by Beddows Tree Specialists at a cost of £120. This was completed alongside works to cut back a tree which was overhanging signage, at a cost of £40.

It was noted that the grass on The Square would need topping up later in the year, quotes would be obtained ahead of the next meeting.

There was discussion regarding an item of play equipment on Dale Acre, perceived to be reaching the end of its life. This would be further discussed with the playground inspector during their next visit prior to any consideration regarding replacement items taking place.

An enquiry had been received regarding a plaque which was missing from one of the benches located on The Square. Should the enquiry be followed up, additional information and costings would be sought.

Recommended for approval

To approve the request of Messy Church (located at St Andrews Church) to use temporary spray in St Andrews Churchyard for activities with the children, providing that the spray which is to be used is first authorised by the Parish Council as being appropriate so as not to cause any permanent damage to the grass.

To cut back and weed kill the wildflower area for the next two years, should it still be overrun with thistles after this summer's growth. Also, to consider another location within the new cemetery area to be made into a wildflower area.

6. To discuss the Cemetery, including

a. Cemetery (A) and (B)

It was reported that two oak sleepers which form the semi-circle cremation area had rotted and would be replaced with stock already held by the Parish Council.

Recommended for approval

To reposition one of the bins within the cemetery to the top, near Foston Road, as there is not currently one there and a number of plots have now been sold and reserved within that area.

To allow self-setting Maple and Oak Trees within the semi-circle to continue growing to fill the area out. These would be monitored and thinned out as required.

To approve the request from a resident for two existing memorial plaques to be relocated with three new ones being purchased. However, for the resident to be made aware that there would be a requirement for them to cover the cost to purchase two blanking plates to replace those which were being removed and that, should any damage be incurred to the existing plaques as a result of them being removed, the Parish Council would not be liable.

b. Cemetery B layout

A site meeting was scheduled to discuss the layout of the new Cemetery area, including memorial and scattering areas, bench locations, future plantings and the location of first interments.

c. Memorial Inspections

It was reported that the memorial inspection would be undertaken by Memsafe in July.

Although the specific date has not yet been confirmed, the notices of inspection were now being displayed within the cemetery and online.

7. To consider any maintenance issues

It was reported that the overhead barrier on Central Street was damaged. Quotations for repair options would be obtained ahead of the next meeting of the Estates Working Party.

8. To discuss the footpaths at The Spinney

It was noted that meetings had taken place with two contractors and that, to date, one quote had been received. Additional quotes would be sought ahead of the next meeting of the Estates Working Party.

9. Annual Play inspection

Recommended for approval

To accept the quotation from Online Playgrounds of £324 for the annual play inspection. Also, to postpone making any non-safety related purchases for play equipment repairs until the play inspection had been completed.

10. To discuss School Streets Scheme

It was noted that the School Streets Scheme was now closed for further applications for the current year, however, the County Council would be willing to make a note of our interest for the future. In the meantime, they would be happy to discuss the issue further.

Recommended for approval

To contact Greenfield School regarding the response which had been received from Leicestershire County Council's Safe and Sustainable Travel Team in which they offered to meet and discuss the school's issues and assist with devising initiatives in the hopes of alleviating them.

11. To receive any correspondence

a. Leicestershire County Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Recommended for approval

To forward correspondence received from Leicestershire County Council regarding a consultation on its Rights of Way Improvement Plan to all Councillors as well as the local walking groups.

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

There were no matters raised.

13. To receive matters arising for information purposes

There were no matters arising.

14. Date of next meeting

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