

Estates Working Party

Report of the Estates Working Party meeting held on 11th August 2025.

Present: Cllrs V Armstrong, M Gillespie, 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

1. To receive apologies for absence, if any
Apologies were received from Cllr S Kinvig.
2. To receive disclosures of interest
There were no disclosures of interest.
3. To receive the Head Groundsman's report

- a. Projects programme update

The Head Groundsman reported that the repointing and guttering replacement had now been completed on one side of the chapel of rest. Works would continue on the other side at a suitable time, dependant on weather and other work commitments.

- b. Routine maintenance programme

It was reported that, unfortunately, the planters located around the village had suffered during the recent bout of hot weather and, as such, would be emptied and remain empty until the winter plants could be planted.

Other works currently being undertaken whilst the hot weather prevents grass cutting were noted to be raking out of the joints in the pathway at The Square and pressure washing the block paving at the Village Hall.

4. To discuss the Cemetery, including

- a. Cemetery (A) and (B)

Given that hedges in the Cemetery were suffering due to box blight, potential alternatives were discussed. However, it was noted that some of the box hedging appeared to be recovering. This would continue to be monitored for another month and discussed further at the next meeting of the Estates Working Party.

Quotes were currently being sought for replacement plants for the planters on The Square and would be brought back to a future meeting of the Estates Working Party once received.

Recommended for approval

To accept the request from The Commonwealth War Graves Commission for the installation of a war grave for Herbert Swann in Countesthorpe Cemetery and to waive any fees which would usually be applicable.

- b. Cemetery B layout

There was nothing to discuss.

- c. Memorial inspections

It was noted that the memorial inspections were scheduled to take place from Monday 18th August.

5. To consider any maintenance issues

It was noted that the hedgerow at St Andrews Churchyard had been trimmed, however, would be given a large cut back in September.

Recommended for approval

To proceed with purchasing the required materials, at a cost of £260, to tidy up the area surrounding the second bench on The Spinney. This recommendation would be referred to the Finance Working Party for consideration.

To wait until an official request is received regarding the installation of an additional dog waste bin on Larchwood, before considering it further.

6. Projects and works lists for prioritising

Recommended for approval

To refer to the Finance Working Party, the list of pending projects which had been reviewed and prioritised based on health and safety, timescales and budget, for consideration. Any projects approved by the Parish Council would be included in the schedule of works accordingly.

To obtain a quote for a replacement overhead barrier for Central Street car park with a warning chain to alert drivers to the potential impact with the overhead barrier before it happens.

7. To discuss the footpaths at The Spinney

An additional quotation had been obtained for the remedial works to The Spinney pathway. After considering the quotations it was:-

Recommended for approval

To refer to the Finance Working Party for consideration, the recommendations for resurfacing works on pathways on The Spinney, in order of preference, as agreed by the Estates Working Party (note: the works are referred to in the Project list reviewed in the previous item):

- 1. Resurface the 55m pathway only, with tarmac, by E L Midlands Ltd, at a cost of £7,900*
- 2. Resurface the 55m pathway only, with like-for-like Breedon gravel, by E L Midlands Ltd, at a cost of £5,670*

8. Annual play inspection

It was noted that the annual play inspection had now been completed, however the report had not yet been received. Advice had been sought from the Play Inspector as to whether remedial works to an item of equipment on Dale Acre would be satisfactory, however, the advice was that any amendments from the manufacturer's original design may be difficult for the Parish Council should there be an incident on the play equipment.

Recommended for approval

Based on the advice of the Play Inspector, to consider removal of the item of equipment at Dale Acre with a longer term view to replacing. Advice to be sought with regard to s106 funding for items of equipment, though the Parish Council would need to cover the cost of removing the item of equipment at an estimated cost of £2000. This recommendation would be referred to the Finance Working Party for consideration.

9. Hanging baskets

It was noted that, once the hanging baskets had been taken down later in the year, brackets from those lampposts which were no longer agreed to house hanging baskets would be removed to prevent any mistakes occurring next year. Additionally, those brackets on the lampposts on Leicester Road would be removed in anticipation of the scheduled works to the highway associated with the Foston Road housing development. These would be re-sited as appropriate.

10. To receive any correspondence

- a. It was noted that correspondence had been received from a resident regarding the issue of e-bikes and e-scooters on the Country Park. This would be forwarded to the local PCSO.

b. Recommended for approval

Following a response having been received from The Scouts regarding the recent Gala and issues reported with the level of volume amplified throughout the event, to follow up with them and request that, prior to any application being submitted and approved for next years Gala event, that a representative from the Parish Council meet with the Scout Leader to agree an acceptable level of volume.

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

It was noted that the local PCSO had communicated to the Parish Council that there were ongoing issues with nuisance vehicles on Willoughby Road. Additionally, that it was believed there were drugs related activities taking place within the Cemetery car park. Should there be evidence of drugs dealing on any of the open spaces, this would be reported to the PCSO.

12. To receive matters arising for information purposes

There were no matters arising.

13. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for 8th September 2025.