

ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL CEMETERY WORKING GROUP
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 28th May 2026
at Ellesmere Town Hall.

Members Present:

Chair: P. Goulbourne

V. Chair: K. Egerton

Councillors: A. Wignall, N. Proffitt, S. Jackson, J. Gargiulo, G. Elner, G. Hutchinson.

Officers: Andy Chatting, (CCO).

CWG 05/26/01 To receive apologies and reasons for absence.

Apologies were received from:

Cllr Howard (previous commitment)

Cllr Richardson (resigned).

Proposed for acceptance by Cllr Elner and seconded by Cllr Hutchinson.

Accepted unanimously by the other members of the CWG.

CWG 05/26/02 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests. To receive declarations under consideration on this agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 s32 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Members are reminded that they are required to **leave** the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the register of members' interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

No disclosures were made.

CWG 05/26/03 Grant Dispensations. In pursuance of the Localism Act 2011, s31 (4) to report on any dispensations requested/granted.

None requested.

CWG 05/26/04 Minutes. To read and confirm the minutes of the Cemetery Working Group Meeting held on Thursday 26th March 2026

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 26th March 2026 be signed as a true and accurate record.

Proposed by Cllr Hutchinson and seconded by Cllr. Proffitt. Accepted unanimously by the other members of the CWG.

CWG 05/26/05 **Finance.**

(a) CWG Payments. To note payments made during March and April 2026.

These items were noted.

CWG/05/26/06 **Cemetery Report.**

The contents were noted.

CWG 05/26/07 **The Excell + Woosnam revised quotes.** [See CCO report].

This was also noted.

CWG 05/26/08 **To consider the future of the Leylandii hedge at the bottom of the cemetery before the area is developed for new burial/internments.** To discuss as per CCO report.

Having read the report about possible removal of the leylandii hedge to obtain maximum future interment space and reduce the on-going cost of hedge maintenance the CCO explained that the CWG might be minded making any recommendations to Council early for the following reasons:

- 1) Because opening the new area was an opportunity to gain the most available space and the hedge itself and its continued maintenance would limit that somewhat.
- 2) That to make recommendations either way (removal or not) might need to be documented looking at the future if the question was asked about why this idea wasn't considered when the new area was first being developed. (And likely at the time when Swan Hill reached capacity and no alternative burial space had been found).

The CCO suggested that whatever the recommendations were there would be an environmental/aesthetic impact that would be likely a significant topic of debate; not just in terms of the people living close to the cemetery but from the cemetery users and the wider community.

Cllr Egerton proposed that the idea of removing the hedge be taken forward because the Council had spent time and money getting to the point where the land adjacent could be used for burial and that as much of it should be used as possible. Cllr Goulbourne also felt this should be explored.

Cllr Wignall expressed concerns about privacy and suggested that any plans to remove the hedge should be considered after the space in the new area was getting towards capacity.

Cllr Proffitt suggested that whatever any recommendations to Council might look like it was a matter that would likely require public consultation.

After some debate with all members offering their suggestions the CWG asked that the CCO apply himself to the following course of action.

- 1) To obtain quotes for the removal of the hedge.

- 2) To obtain quotes for the repair of the original retaining wall and railings now concealed by the hedge.
- 3) To look to see if a new fence would be required.

These three steps would need to be explored though only **after** the CCO had carried out a basic survey of the space to establish:

- How many spaces would be available **without** the hedge being removed.
- How many additional spaces might be gained if it was removed.
- Estimated income from the spaces with the hedge remaining.
- Estimated additional income if the hedge was removed.

The CCO was asked to report back to the Committee at the next CWG meeting with these estimates.

CWG 05/26/09 **Bowens Lodge inspection comments.** To discuss as per CCO report + supplied documents.

Noted; with the CCO being asked to make sure that the points raised by Bowen's were resolved to ensure that the Cemetery Lodge was compliant with letting regulations.

CWG 05/26/10 **CWG to discuss the plots that need attention.** [The 1st of May 2026 deadline for owners with non-compliant plots has passed]. To discuss.

This issue was discussed with the CCO reporting that he had not received any additional contact from the owners of plots that had been identified in the past and to whom he had sent letters twice.

Cllr Proffitt suggested putting signs on the graves in question to ask the owners/families to contact the CCO.

Some of the Councillors believed the Cemetery Regulations should be adhered to and others thought that the regulations lacked empathy. The issue around enforcement of the regulations was discussed and it was decided to re-visit the plots that had been identified as needing attention during the July cemetery visit.

CWG 05/26/11 **Standing item on the agenda relating to the acquisition of new land.** To note.

The CCO was asked to find out if the last piece of land suggested for possible development was still available.

CWG 05/26/12 **Future Agenda Items.**

None proposed.

The next meeting of the CWG will be on Thursday 23rd July 2026 (provisionally set for 18:30 at Swan Hill but now set **for 18:00** that day at the same location).

The meeting closed at 20:18 hrs.

Chair.....

Date.....