



Saltash Town Council

Konsel An Dre Essa



*The Guildhall
12 Lower Fore Street
Saltash
PL12 6JX
Telephone: 01752 844846
www.saltash.gov.uk*

19 September 2023

Dear Councillor

I write to summon you to an **Extraordinary Burial Authority Committee meeting** to be held at the Guildhall on **Monday 25th September 2023 at 6.30 pm**.

The meeting is open to members of the public and press. Any member of the public requiring to put a question to the Town Council must do so by **12 noon the day before the meeting** either by email to enquiries@saltash.gov.uk or sent to The Guildhall, 12 Lower Fore Street, Saltash PL12 6JX. Please provide your full name and indicate if you will be present at the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Dent
Chairman of Burial Authority

To:

Essa	Tamar	Trematon
R Bullock J Foster M Griffiths S Lennox-Boyd	J Dent (Chairman)	S Miller (Vice-Chairman)

Agenda

1. Health and Safety Announcements.
2. Apologies.
3. Declarations of Interest:
 - a. To receive any declarations from Members of any registerable (5A of the Code of Conduct) and/or non-registerable (5B) interests in matters to be considered at this meeting.
 - b. The Town Clerk to receive written requests for dispensations prior to the start of the meeting for consideration.
4. Questions - A 15-minute period when members of the public may ask questions of Members of the Council.

Please note: Any member of the public requiring to put a question to the Town Council must do so by 12 noon the day before the meeting.
5. To receive and approve the minutes from the Burial Authority meeting held on 23rd May 2023 as a true and correct record. (Pages 3 - 8)
6. To receive the Burial Authority Committee budget statement and recommendation from the Policy and Finance Committee and consider any actions and associated expenditure. (Pages 9 - 10)
7. To receive a report on Churchtown Cemetery Management Policy and Regulations and consider any actions and associated expenditure. (Pages 11 - 13) **(Pursuant to BA held on 23.05.23 minute nr. 12/23/24)**
8. To receive a request from Anthony Estates for the use of Churchtown Cemetery and consider any actions and associated expenditure. (Pages 14 - 18)
9. To confirm any press and social media releases associated with any agreed actions and expenditure of the meeting.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 24 October 2023 at 6.30 pm

SALTASH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Burial Authority Committee held at the Guildhall on Tuesday 23rd May 2023 at 6.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors: R Bullock, J Dent (Chairman), S Lennox-Boyd and S Miller (Vice-Chairman).

ALSO PRESENT: R Lumley (Assistant Town Clerk) and F Morris (Planning and General Administrator).

APOLOGIES: J Foster and M Griffiths.

1/23/24 TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN.

It was proposed by Councillor Bullock, seconded by Councillor Lennox-Boyd to nominate Councillor Dent.

There were no other nominations.

Following a vote it was **RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Dent as Chairman.

Councillor Dent in the Chair.

2/23/24 TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN.

It was proposed by Councillor Dent seconded by Councillor Bullock to nominate Councillor Miller.

There were no other nominations.

Following a vote it was **RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Miller as Vice Chairman.

3/23/24 HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Chairman informed those present of the actions required in the event of a fire or emergency.

4/23/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

a. To receive any declarations from Members of any registerable (5A of the Code of Conduct) and/or non-registerable (5B) interests in matters to be considered at this meeting.

None.

b. The Town Clerk to receive written requests for dispensations prior to the start of the meeting for consideration.

None.

5/23/24 QUESTIONS - A 15-MINUTE PERIOD WHEN MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ASK QUESTIONS OF MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

None.

6/23/24 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE BURIAL AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 1ST NOVEMBER 2022 AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD.

Please see a copy of the minutes on the STC website or request to see a copy at the Guildhall.

It was proposed by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Bullock and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Burial Authority Committee held on 1st November 2022 were confirmed as a true and correct record.

7/23/24 TO RECEIVE THE BURIAL AUTHORITY COMMITTEE BUDGET STATEMENT AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.

The Assistant Town Clerk informed Members that some budgets may look overspent due to accruals and prepayments not yet finalised at year-end.

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

8/23/24 TO CONSIDER HEALTH & SAFETY REPORTS AS MAY BE RECEIVED.

Nothing to report.

9/23/24 TO CONSIDER RISK MANAGEMENT REPORTS AS MAY BE RECEIVED.

Nothing to report.

10/23/24 TO NOTE THAT PENGELLY FUNERAL SERVICE APPROVED CHURCHTOWN CEMETERY QUOTE FOR WORKS.

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

11/23/24 TO RATIFY THE AMENDMENT TO CHURCHTOWN FEES AND CHARGES AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.

It was proposed by Councillor Lennox-Boyd, seconded by Councillor Dent and resolved to **RECOMMEND** to the Policy and Finance Committee to ratify the Town Clerk's amendment to Churchtown Fees and Charges.

12/23/24

TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON CHURCHTOWN CEMETERY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND REGULATIONS AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.

1. It was proposed by Councillor Bullock, seconded by Councillor Lennox-Boyd and **RESOLVED** to defer the question of maintenance at Churchtown Cemetery to the next meeting of The Burial Authority Committee on 7th November 2023. Maintenance to be discussed in conjunction with the review of Fees and Charges for Churchtown Cemetery.
2. It was proposed by Councillor Dent, seconded by Councillor Bullock and resolved to **RECOMMEND** to Policy and Finance to approve the following additions to the Churchtown Cemetery Management Policy and Regulations in regard to grave markers as follows:

Additional sections 4.3.5., 4.3.6. and 4.3.7. Management Policy and Regulations:

4.3.5. Grave markers such as wooden crosses with plaques may be placed on a grave or cremation plot at the time of an interment at the discretion of the Town Council. Such markers are temporary and are allowed in the interval between the interment and the installation of a memorial, which would normally take place within 12 months.

4.3.6. If there are no family members remaining, the person arranging the interment may also organise for a marker to be placed on the grave or cremation plot. Thereafter however, only the Town Council or the owner of the EROB may authorise work in connection with markers. Only the owner of the EROB may authorize the installation of a permanent memorial.

4.3.7. Usually, the Town Council would not remove a marker after 12 months should there be no memorial stone. However, the Town Council may remove it if they so wish.

13/23/24

TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE SERVICE DELIVERY DEPARTMENT AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

14/23/24 **TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON A LETTERS TO HEAVEN CONCEPT AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

Members considered the installation of a post box at Churchtown Cemetery to support loved ones coping with grief by writing letters to heaven.

It was proposed by Councillor Dent, seconded by Councillor Lennox-Boyd and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Procure a post box mentioned in example three at a cost of up to £130 +VAT from budget code 6073 BA EMF Memorial Garden current available budget £4,200.
2. Promote the Service via social media, notice boards and the Town Council website.
3. The Service Delivery Department to empty the post box as required.
4. Letters to be shredded and included in the Town Council's green waste process for disposal.
5. Service Delivery Manager to include the Service in future Service Delivery reports to be received at future Burial Authority meetings.
6. Signage to be installed on the post box stating 'letters only in a sealed envelope to be placed in the letter box'.
7. The letter box to be installed on the Churchtown Cemetery hut located in the Cemetery car park.

15/23/24 **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960:**

To resolve that pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press leave the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. (As required or if necessary).

16/23/24 **TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS REFERRED FROM THE MAIN PART OF THE AGENDA.**

None.

17/23/24 **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960:**

To resolve that the public and press be re-admitted to the meeting.

18/23/24 TO CONSIDER URGENT NON-FINANCIAL ITEMS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN.

None.

19/23/24 TO CONFIRM ANY PRESS AND SOCIAL MEDIA RELEASES ASSOCIATED WITH ANY AGREED ACTIONS AND EXPENDITURE OF THE MEETING.

It was proposed by Councillor Bullock, seconded by Councillor Lennox-Boyd and **RESOLVED** to issue the following Press and Social Media release:

1. A press release regarding Letters to Heaven to be released once installation has been completed and all promotional material available.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 7 November 2023 at 6.30 pm

Rising at: 7.35 pm

Signed: _____
Chairman

Dated: _____

Agenda Item 6

Burial Authority Committee - Burial Authority Budget 2023-24

Saltash Town Council

For the 5 months ended 31 August 2023

Account	Actual 2022/23	EMF Balances B/F 2022/23	To/From Reserves & Budget Virements 2023/24	Budget 2023/24	Actual YTD 2023/24	Budget Available 2023/24	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	Budget 2026/27	Budget 2027/28
Operating Income										
Burial Authority Income										
4612 BA Cemetery Fees (Churchtown)	16,411	0	0	21,862	5,043	16,819	24,070	26,501	29,177	32,124
4614 BA Memorial Bench Income (Churchtown)	583	0	0	1,000	700	300	1,101	1,212	1,335	1,469
Total Burial Authority Income	16,994	0	0	22,862	5,743	17,119	25,171	27,713	30,512	33,593
Total Operating Income	16,994	0	0	22,862	5,743	17,119	25,171	27,713	30,512	33,593
Operating Expenditure										
Burial Authority Expenditure										
6000 BA Petrol	126	0	0	378	25	354	416	458	504	555
6001 BA Machinery Maintenance Costs	0	0	0	275	0	275	303	334	367	404
6003 BA Health & Safety	0	0	0	55	0	55	61	67	73	81
6004 BA General Site Maintenance	557	0	0	613	642	(29)	675	744	819	901
6005 BA Fire Extinguishers	41	0	0	90	0	90	99	109	120	133
6008 BA Tree Survey & Tree Maintenance	818	0	0	791	0	791	870	958	1,055	1,162
6009 BA Electricity Costs	230	0	0	690	44	646	760	836	921	1,014
6010 BA PWLB Loan Repayment & Interest	21,385	0	0	21,385	10,692	10,693	21,385	23,545	25,923	28,541
6011 BA Water	0	0	0	364	0	364	401	442	486	536
6012 BA Memorial Bench (Expenditure)	147	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6013 BA Security Alarm Maintenance	159	0	0	173	124	49	190	210	231	254
6014 BA Cemetery Software Subscription	288	0	0	329	377	(48)	362	399	439	484
Total Burial Authority Expenditure	23,753	0	0	25,143	11,903	13,240	25,522	28,102	30,938	34,065
Burial Authority Staffing Expenditure										
Burial Authority Staffing Expenses	62	0	(296)	296	0	0	326	359	395	435
6666 ST BA Staff Training (Churchtown)	0	0	(227)	227	0	0	250	275	303	333
Burial Authority Staffing Costs	7,494	0	(8,949)	8,949	0	0	9,853	10,848	11,944	13,150
Total Burial Authority Staffing Expenditure	7,556	0	(9,472)	9,472	0	0	10,429	11,482	12,642	13,918
Total Operating Expenditure	31,309	0	(9,472)	34,615	11,903	13,240	35,951	39,584	43,580	47,983
Total Burial Authority Operating Expenditure	31,309	0	(9,472)	34,615	11,903	13,240	35,951	39,584	43,580	47,983
Total Burial Authority Operating Surplus/ (Deficit)	(14,314)	0	9,472	(11,753)	(6,160)	3,879	(10,780)	(11,871)	(13,068)	(14,390)
Burial Authority EMF Expenditure										
6070 BA EMF Churchtown Cemetery Capital Works	1,464	6,204	0	0	0	6,204	0	0	0	0
6071 BA EMF Replace Machinery & Equipment	0	14,967	0	0	0	14,967	0	0	0	0
6073 BA EMF Memorial Garden	800	4,200	0	0	250	3,950	0	0	0	0
6692 ST BA EMF Staff Contingency (Churchtown)	0	1,200	(1,200)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Burial Authority EMF Expenditure	2,264	26,571	(1,200)	0	250	25,121	0	0	0	0
Total Burial Authority Expenditure (Operational & EM)	33,573	26,571	(10,672)	34,615	12,153	38,361	35,951	39,584	43,580	47,983
Total Burial Authority Budget Surplus/ Deficit	(16,578)	(26,571)	10,672	(11,753)	(6,410)	(21,242)	(10,780)	(11,871)	(13,068)	(14,390)

To/From Reserves & Budget Virements 2023/24

- Virement from General Reserves to Burial Authority Staffing Costs - £56 - PE 99/22/23
- Virement from General Reserves to 6692 ST BA EMF Staff Contingency (Churchtown) - £2,874 - FTC 58/23/24
- Virement from 6615 ST BA Cemetery Warden Gross Pay to 6618 ST SE Services Delivery Gross Pay - £7,038 - TBC
- Virement from 6616 ST BA Cemetery Warden Empers NI to 6619 ST SE Services Delivery Empers NI - £595 - TBC
- Virement from 6617 ST BA Cemetery Warden Empers Pension to 6620 ST SE Services Delivery Empers Pension - £1,372 - TBC
- Virement from 6663 ST BA Cemetery Staff Clothing (Churchtown) to 6673 ST SE Services Delivery Clothing - £59 - TBC
- Virement from 6664 ST BA Cemetery Staff Mobile Phones (Churchtown) to 6674 ST SE Services Delivery Mobiles - £203 - TBC
- Virement from 6665 ST BA Staff Travelling Costs (Churchtown) to 6675 ST SE Services Delivery Staff Travelling Expenses - £34 - TBC
- Virement from 6666 ST BA Staff Training (Churchtown) to 6676 ST SE Services Delivery Staff Training - £227 - TBC
- Virement from 6692 ST BA EMF Staff Contingency (Churchtown) to 6700 ST SE Services Delivery Staff Contingency - £4,074 - TBC

Policy and Finance held on 12.09.23

65/23/24 TO RECEIVE THE CURRENT STC AND COMMITTEE BUDGET STATEMENTS AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.

The Finance Officer informed Members on the report received and contained within the circulated reports pack.

It was proposed by Councillor Bullock, seconded by Councillor Miller and resolved to **RECOMMEND:**

1. To the Burial Authority to review budget code 6004 BA General Site Maintenance and 6014 BA Cemetery Software Subscription due to an overspend for the year 2023/2024.
2. To the Joint Burial Board to review budget code 6170 BB EMF Repairs to Cemetery Wall due to an overspend for the year 2023/2024.

To receive and review the Management Policy and Regulations

Maintenance Responsibility at Churchtown Cemetery

Following the Burial Authority Committee meeting held on 23rd May 2023 pursuant to minute nr.

12/23/24 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON CHURCHTOWN CEMETERY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND REGULATIONS AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.

1. It was proposed by Councillor Bullock, seconded by Councillor Lennox-Boyd and **RESOLVED** to defer the question of maintenance at Churchtown Cemetery to the next meeting of The Burial Authority Committee on 7th November 2023. Maintenance to be discussed in conjunction with the review of Fees and Charges for Churchtown Cemetery.

Information:

A Funeral Director asked if owners of the Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB) are charged maintenance fees at Churchtown Cemetery. This is not the case. However, this request prompted an investigation into the wider maintenance responsibilities of both the Town Council and owners of EROBs at Churchtown Cemetery.

Subsidence:

Extract from STC Management Policy and Regulations:

4.1.8. The Council or its contractors will make good any subsidence within the grave at any time after the funeral.

The Service Delivery Manager does not agree that the Town Council should be responsible for subsidence within the grave.

ICCM advice:

The ICCM state that:

‘The wording in the Town Council’s regulations is not completely clear. As an authority the Town Council would be responsible for any **topping up of graves** – usually after a burial and especially within the first 12 months when graves sink a lot’.

‘Once a memorial has been placed the **re-levelling** of a grave would normally be the responsibility of the grave owner to pay for usually carried out by a suitably qualified mason’.

Comparison

<p>Saltash Town Council (Current Management Policy & Regulations)</p>	<p>The Council or its contractors will make good any subsidence within the grave at any time after the funeral.</p>
<p>Duchy Cemeteries Ltd.</p>	<p>Duchy Cemeteries will on average top up graves when they need topping up – up to 2 years after the interment. This would be free of charge to the owner of the EROB/Town Council.</p> <p>However, it is the practice of Duchy Cemeteries to top up graves up to 3 or 4 years as needed when at Churchtown Cemetery. Surplus top soil would be taken from a new interment and placed on the sunken grave. Grass seed would then be applied. Again, at no cost to the owner of the EROB/Town Council.</p> <p>Duchy Cemeteries would top up graves even after 4 years at no cost to the owner of the EROB/Town Council. In their experience, it would be unusual for graves to sink after 5 or 6 years.</p> <p>(There is no formal agreement in place for this service between Duchy Cemeteries Ltd and the Town Council).</p>
<p>Cornwall Council (Updated information since the report received at the Meeting of The Burial Authority on 23.05.2023).</p>	<p>Cornwall Council (via Cormac) will top up any subsidence in any of their cemeteries during the first 12 months following an interment, following natural settling of the soil. Towards the end of that first 12 months the grave will be levelled with top soil and grass seeded.</p> <p>After 12 months the family will be responsible for any maintenance to the grave, including subsidence. They can do this themselves or employ a grave digger to carry out the work.</p> <p>Only following contact suggesting the possibility of a dropped grave having become a Health and Safety trip hazard, (any drop greater than 12”), the team will visit and assess the reported grave and if deemed necessary, the grave will be topped up and levelled. Cormac may carry out this work free of charge.</p>
<p>Plymouth City Council (Updated information since the report received at the Meeting of The Burial Authority on 23.05.2023).</p>	<p>New graves: The first year is the responsibility of PCC. As the grave settles PCC would top up the level until the settling period stops. The grave will then be turfed (March and then again in October).</p> <p>Once the above has been completed it's the deed holder's responsibility for maintenance of that grave from then on.</p> <p>PCC do not offer a grave maintenance plan going forward, they just give the customer details of PCC's masons and they will charge the deed holder direct. PCC have no part of this arrangement.</p> <p>Older subsided graves: If digging close to these graves PCC will top them up with unneeded spoils and then grass seed them. However, this is to help PCC by losing the unwanted spoils and is not a service provided to customers</p>

Proposal:

Members to consider replacing the following sentence in the Management Policy and Regulations, recommending to the next Policy and Finance Committee Meeting.

From:

4.1.8. The Council or its contractors will make good any subsidence within the grave at any time after the funeral.

To:

4.1.8. The Council or its contractors will make good any subsidence within the first 12 months after the funeral. Thereafter, the need to make good and pay to correct any subsidence will be the responsibility of the owner of the EROB.

Once a memorial has been placed the re-levelling of a grave will be the responsibility of the owner of the EROB to pay for to be carried out by a suitably qualified mason.

Burial Authority - Churchtown Cemetery

Fees and Charges

Description	2022/2023 (As of 1st April 2022)	2023/2024 (As of 1st April 2023)
<u>Interment Fees</u>		
Interment under the age of 18 years - (Saltash residents only)	No Charge	No Charge
1st Interment over the age of 18 years - (triple depth plot)	£700	£700
2nd & 3rd Interment over the age of 18 years - (ERB determined)	£700	£700
1st Interment of ashes in a casket - (double depth plot)	£333	£333
2nd Interment of ashes in a casket - (ERB determined)	£333	£333
1st Interment of loose ashes - (double depth plot)	£167	£167
2nd Interment of loose ashes - (ERB determined)	£167	£167
Interment of ashes in Garden of Remembrance	£333	£333
	No Charge	No Charge
Service Men and Emergency Service Personnel killed in active service - Saltash Residents Only.		
<u>Exclusive Right of Burial including Plot Deed (Exclusive Right of Burial must be purchased with 1st Interment) - Length of Exclusive Right of Burial - 10 Years</u>		
Exclusive Right of Burial under the age of 18 years	No Charge	No Charge
Exclusive Right of Burial 1st Interment over the age of 18 years	£333	£333
Exclusive Right of Burial 1st Interment of ashes in a casket	£111	£111
Exclusive Right of Burial 1st Interment of loose ashes	£111	£111
Service Men and Emergency Service Personnel killed in active service - Saltash Residents Only.		
	No Charge	No Charge
<u>Memorial Permissions - Length of Right to Erect a Memorial - 10 years</u>		
Permission to erect headstone including first inscription	£111	£111
Additional inscriptions	£56	£56
Permission to place cremated remains tablet	£56	£56
Renewal of Grant of Right to Erect a Memorial	£28	£28
Permission to erect/place monument CWG/MOD	No Charge	No Charge
Cremation foundation slab and tablet to be supplied by ERB owner		
Removal of Headstones & Cremation Tablets other than for an additional inscription		£56
<u>Renewal of Exclusive Rights of Burial - Length of Exclusive Right of Burial - 10 Years</u>		
Single grave for the interment under the age of 18 years - (Saltash resident only)	No Charge	No Charge
Second and third interment admin fee (ERB must be determined)	£28	£28
Renewal of Exclusive Rights of Burial	£28	£28
Renewal of Exclusive Rights of Cremated Remains	£28	£28
Issue & registration of duplicate deed of grant of grave space	£28	£28
Inspection of Burial Register	£28	£28
Transfer of ERB certificate up to a maximum of 2 hours, and then charged on an hourly basis at £25 per hour	£51	£51
Transfer of ERB certificate by Statutory Declaration up to a maximum of 2 hours, and then charged at an hourly basis at £25 per hour	£84	£84
Permission of right to CWG Commission or MOD	No Charge	No Charge
Permission to place a war grave marker	No Charge	No Charge
Exhumations of coffins or cremated remains casket/loose ashes	Price on Application	Price on Application
Search of Registers by our staff (per search)	£28	£28
Search of Registers by our staff (non resident)	£56	£56
Double standard fees apply to non Saltash residents, except those who were resident until 2 years prior to their death. (Non-resident fees are at the discretion of the Chairman of the Burial Authority Committee)		
	All Fees Double	All Fees Double
<u>Benches & Other Memorials - 10 Years Lease (Residents & Non Residents) (VARIABLE)</u>		
Rose Bush - Permission to place a rose bush and memorial plaque at Churchtown Cemetery in the memorial garden	£100	£100
Memorial Plaque on a bench at Churchtown Cemetery	£350	£350



Proposed natural burial site at Churchtown Farm, Saltash and proposal for shared facilities

1. Summary

The following is provided for the consideration of the members of Saltash Town Council. The purpose is to explain the proposal for a natural burial ground and to seek an agreement with the Town Council, subject to contract and subject to planning permission, for a shared arrangement for parking and for a site for a hut.

2. What is natural burial

The concept of natural burial started in the 1990's and is increasingly popular, with over sites 270 in the UK currently. It is popular with people of all religions and none.

Natural burial means being buried in a natural environment in a manner that does not inhibit decomposition but allows the body to be naturally recycled. Bodies are buried at a shallow depth of 2 to 2½ feet in a biodegradable casket made of a material such as willow or cardboard. Graves are dug by hand to ensure minimum impact upon the environment.

A natural burial site creates habitat for wildlife or preserves existing habitats which are rich in flora and fauna. These habitats include woodland, species-rich meadows, orchards, and sustainably managed farmland.

There are no standing headstones but sites provide a variety of ways of remembrance, including smaller flat stones laid flush with the ground (so as not to inhibit mowing), memorial tree planting and planting of wildflower mixes. The location of all burial plots is accurately recorded by GPS.

Families may employ the services of a funeral director but there is no compulsion to do so. A warm, welcoming and organised manager is essential however, as is well controlled management, for instance the provision of approved trees and wildflower mixes and arrangements for their establishment and future management.

Further information is available from the Natural Death Centre with whom we have consulted closely. See <http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk>

3. The proposed site

The proposed site is shown below and in more detail on the plan in the appendix.



The site is ideally situated:

- It is exceptionally beautiful, with views over the River Lynher which are already enjoyed by many, who may in the future wish for themselves or their loved ones to be buried here.
- It is adjacent to the existing cemetery.
- It is easily accessible for people in Saltash.
- It is within an area already managed for conservation and Cornwall Wildlife Trust (as the farm tenant) have said they would be in favour of the proposal because it complementary to the conservation management of the site.

We recognise that Churchtown Farm is a popular and much-loved place for local people to walk. The proposed site will take only part of one field which avoids the most used path which runs diagonally over the field.

There is no landscape impact because the only visible change will be a wildflower meadow and a hedge and fence (see landscape pan in the appendix).

4. How it will operate

The area totals 1.8 acres, with the area available for natural burial plots being approximately 1.4 acres. It allows eventually for about 1,000 natural burial plots of 3.0 x 1.7 metres.

Burial plots will be planted with a wildflower mix to be supplied by the manager of the site to ensure consistency, so that the whole site gradually becomes a wildflower area. It will continue to be maintained as such, and as the site gradually fills the mowing regime will encourage existing wildflowers in the soil to grow here.

A small stone memorial may also be laid on each plot. This will be flush with the ground (1" below turf level to avoid mower damage) rather than being upright. The stones, which will be locally sourced, will be provided as part of the service and this will ensure consistency and quality.

A low, circular Cornish hedge with pedestrian gaps on each side will provide an entrance. Otherwise the boundary with the remainder of the field will consist of a short section of planted hedgerow (which will help provide a sense of enclosure when first entering the site) and a stockproof fence, probably post and rail, for the remainder of the length. This will help maintain the open aspect of the burial ground.

A small number of wooden benches will be provided near the top boundary. The existing hedge/tree boundary will be supplemented with additional planting but otherwise the intention is retain the open nature of the site, the views from which are its main attraction.

Access to the site will for the most part be pedestrian, with the caskets being carried on a funeral bier from the hearse or possibly from the church for church funerals. Access to the field entrance will be needed for hearses, close family members and those with limited mobility.

The natural burial site will either be managed by Antony Estate directly or via a lease or joint venture agreement with a suitable operator.

5. Current position

We have:

- Progressed our plans as far as shown on the attached.
- Spoken to Cornwall Wildlife Trust who are positive about the proposal.

- Had a preliminary site investigation from an environmental consultant who has advised there are unlikely to be any groundwater issues. The next step will be an on-site investigation with trial holes.
- Taken initial advice from an ecologist, with an ecological appraisal to follow.
- We will be engaging with Friends of Churchtown Farm.

Our next step beyond this will be to apply for planning permission, but before doing so there are the following matters which we seek to discuss with Saltash Town Council.

6. What do we seek from Saltash Town Council?

- a. The one essential thing the site lacks is parking. We seek an agreement with the Town Council for a shared parking arrangement in the existing cemetery carpark.

It is anticipated that there is likely to be around one funeral per fortnight. This is based on advice from the Natural Death Association who are the main body of expertise and have a wealth of experienced. We would envisage the use of the car park being via a booking system to ensure there is no overlap in use. We propose that the Town Council is paid an agreed sum per use.

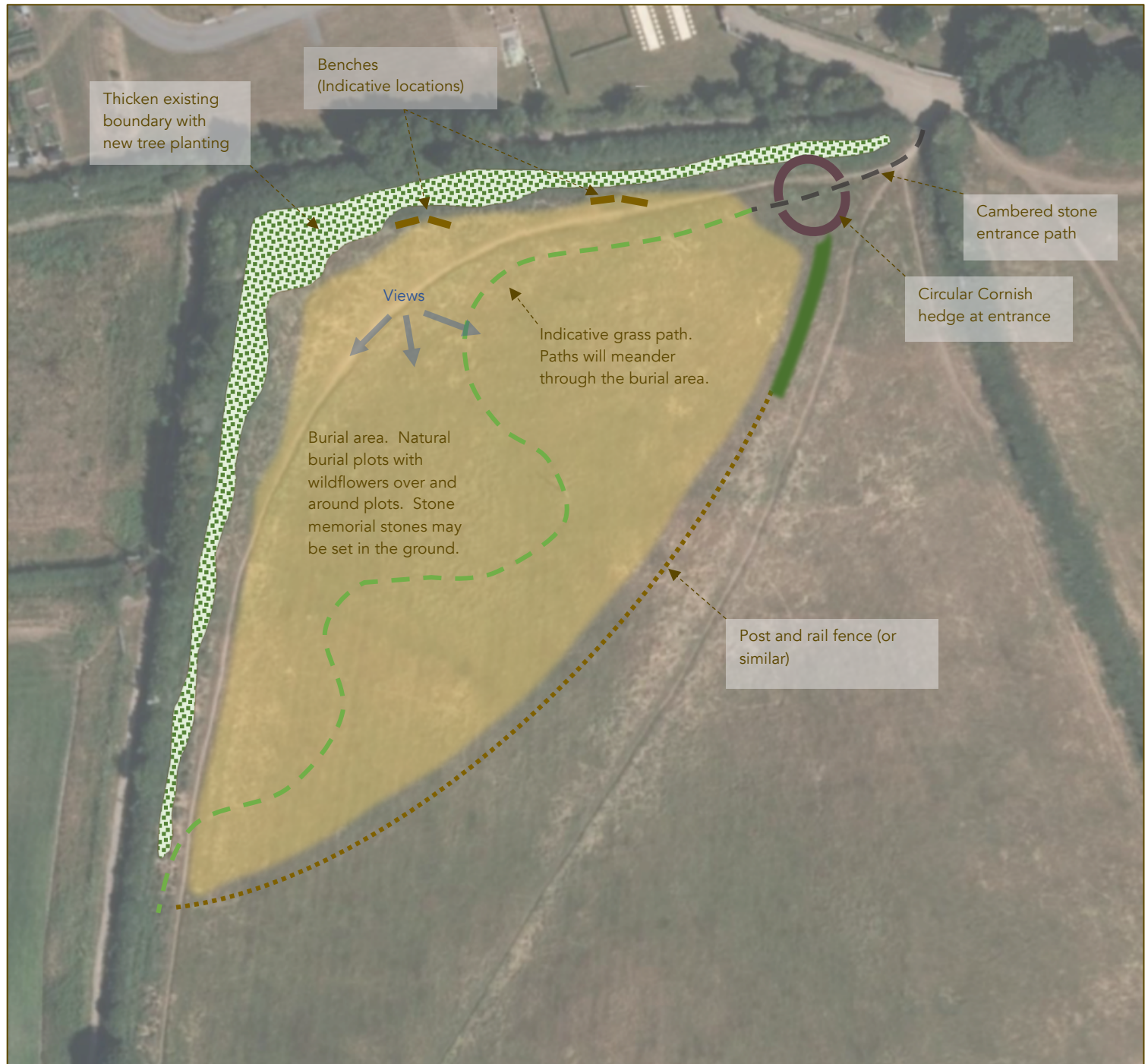
- b. We also seek a lease of a site for a small storage shed (approx. 500 sq ft) somewhere within the cemetery grounds where a funeral bier could be stored, together with small machinery and equipment. We understand that space is limited but we would like to explore this with you.

When we met with councillors and officers on site previously it was agreed that we would provide further details for a presentation once we had considered our plans further. We have now done so and remain willing to give a presentation and/or meet again. We would be grateful if you could give this your consideration and look forward to hearing from you.

William Trinick
Estate Manager

August 2023

Churchtown Farm Natural Burial Ground Indicative design



The area totals 1.8 acres, with the area available for natural burial plots being approximately 1.4 acres. It allows, very gradually, for about 1,000 natural burial plots of 3.0 x 1.7 metres. Burial plots will be planted with a wildflower mix to be supplied to ensure consistency, so that the whole site gradually becomes a wildflower area. It will continue to be maintained as such, and in the years that the site gradually fills the mowing regime will encourage existing wildflowers in the soil to grow here.

A small stone memorial may also be laid on each plot. This will be flush with the ground (1" below turf level to avoid mower damage) rather than being upright. The stones, which will be locally sourced, will be provided as part of the service and this will ensure consistency and quality.

A low, circular Cornish hedge with pedestrian gaps on each side will provide an entrance. Otherwise the boundary with the remainder of the field will consist of a short section of planted hedgerow (which will help provide a sense of enclosure when first entering the site) and a stockproof fence, probably post and rail, for the remainder of the length. This will help maintain the open aspect of the burial ground.

A small number of wooden benches will be provided near the top boundary.

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The existing hedge/tree boundary will be supplemented with additional planting but otherwise the intention is retain the open nature of the site, the views from which are its main attraction.