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# SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL.

## Allotments & Cemeteries Sub- Committee.

Councillor Hazel Stephens - Chairman  
Councillor Peter Harman - Vice-Chairman  
Councillor Ann Duke  
Councillor Lesley Howes  
Councillor Claire Pearce  
Councillor Elizabeth Wickham

To all other Councillors: For information only

**A Meeting of the above Committee will be held on**

**Wednesday 25 October 2023 at 11.00am**

**at The Council Offices, The Grove, Swanscombe, DA10 0GA.**

Graham Blew  
Town Clerk

Dated: 20 October 2023

Should any member have any questions regarding the content of the agenda or attached papers, please put them to the clerk's office 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

The Council Offices, The Grove, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0GA.  
Tel: (01322) 385513 Fax: (01322) 385849



## A G E N D A.

**The Quorum for Sub-Committees is one half of its Membership. If a Councillor is unable to attend, that Councillor can arrange for a substitute to attend in their place.**

1. Apologies for absence. (*Local Government Act 1972, s.85*).
2. Substitutes.
3. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda. (*Localism Act 2011, s.31*).
- \* ***As per Standing Order 34 c), and at the Chairman's discretion, the meeting will be adjourned at this point to allow any members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business to be transacted at the meeting. Members of the public are allowed to (i) make representations, (ii) answer questions and (iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted.***
4. To receive items deemed urgent by the Chairman / matters arising from the previous minutes and their position on the Agenda (*for information, not for decisions*).
5. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 October 2022 (p) (Town Council 20 October 2022). (*Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, Para 41(1)*).

### 6. **SWANSCOMBE CEMETERY – LYCHGATE & WALL (p).**

Under its Terms of Reference, the functions of the Sub – Committee are as follows: -

#### ➤ **COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS:**

*The Sub-Committee shall:*

*Exercise the functions of the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee with reference to the appointment of lay volunteer allotment managers as per the provisions of Section 20 of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908.*

*Exercise the functions of the Recreation Leisure & Amenities Committee on any finances relating to the provision, management, maintenance, improvement, and administration of all allotments under the control of the Town Council, inclusive of the right to report suggestions for finances to be included within the annual estimates for specific schemes of improvement.*

*Exercise the function of the Council in relation to the dead Cemetery within St Peter & St Paul's Church, in particular the maintenance of the Churchyard Wall.*

The Lychgate and wall of Swanscombe Cemetery have been deteriorating for some time and it has not been possible to confirm who is responsible for the maintenance of these features. Dartford Borough Council (DBC) have, for as long as can be remembered, always maintained the landscaping of the cemetery and it was assumed that this included the lychgate and wall. They themselves applied to the Diocese of Rochester (DoR) for permission to carry out repairs to the lychgate in 2016 but the proposed method of the repairs was declined by DoR. In their letter to DBC regarding this request the DoR advised that they (DoR) did not own the lychgate and that ownership lies with the incumbent of the church for the time being and that it was up to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) to arrange insurance.

The Town Council have been corresponding with DBC over a long period to try and resolve this matter so that plans can be made regarding the condition of the lychgate and wall.

DBC have recently confirmed that their legal department are firmly of the view that they have no responsibility for the wall or gate and have provided a diagram indicating which area of the cemetery they feel is their responsibility.

Whilst the Town Council are responsible for the maintenance of the St Peter & St Pauls Churchyard and wall for, at least the last 25 years, the Town Council have never maintained any of the cemetery. Members are asked to consider how they wish to proceed with regards to the wall and lychgate of Swanscombe Cemetery.

Obviously, the remedial works required to the lychgate, and wall would incur considerable cost/s and these are not something the Town Council has previously budgeted for.

To assist members with their consideration of this issue the following documents/information are included.

- A.** Photographs of the lychgate and wall showing how DBC have secured them with wooden supports.
- B.** Correspondences with DBC from 2022 to 2023 including diagram from DBC highlighting what they feel are DBC area of responsibility.
- C.** Correspondences with DBC from 2018 to 2021
- D.** Correspondence from DBC in 2019 including letter from the Home Office.
- E.** Correspondence from the DoR in 2019 including a timeline for sections of the cemetery.
- F.** Correspondence from DoR in 2019.
- G.** Correspondence from DoR in 2016 to DBC re: proposed repairs to the Lychgate.

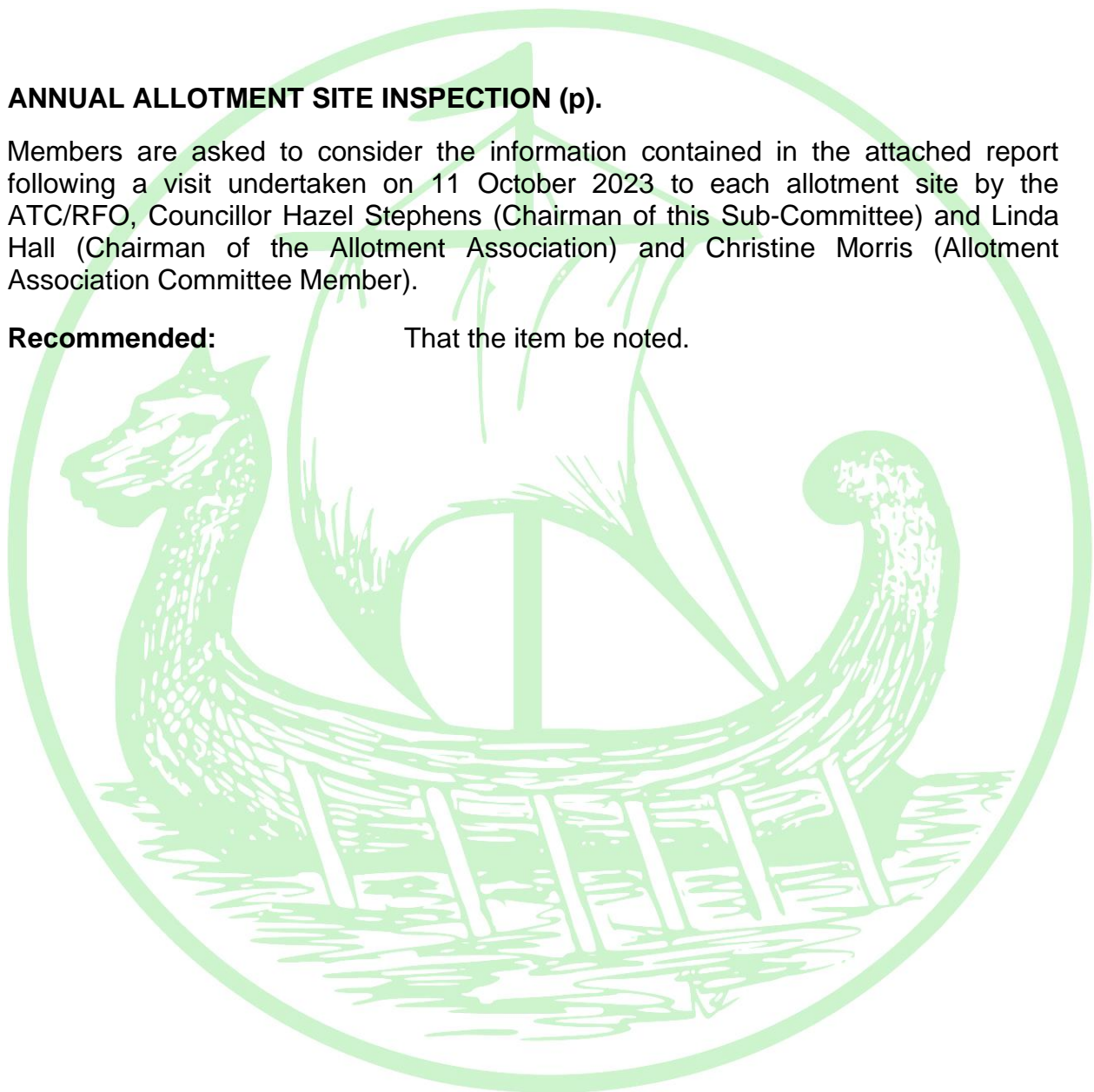
- H. Correspondence in 1981 between DBC, Dept of Environment, PCC and the Town Council.
- I. Title TT1919 – St Peter & St Paul Church and Churchyard.

**Recommended:** To discuss and advise accordingly.

## 7. ANNUAL ALLOTMENT SITE INSPECTION (p).

Members are asked to consider the information contained in the attached report following a visit undertaken on 11 October 2023 to each allotment site by the ATC/RFO, Councillor Hazel Stephens (Chairman of this Sub-Committee) and Linda Hall (Chairman of the Allotment Association) and Christine Morris (Allotment Association Committee Member).

**Recommended:** That the item be noted.



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<http://www.swanscombeandgreenhithe town council.gov.uk>

