

Pelton Parish Council

Serving the Communities of Grange Villa, High Handenhold, Newfield, Pelton,
Pelton Lane Ends, Perkinsville and West Pelton

Outdoor Spaces and Recreation Areas Committee Meeting held on 17th April 2023, 7.00pm in Pelton Community Centre present were

Parish Councillors- Irene Brown (IB), Miriam Lonsdale-Cope (MC) and Clare Todd (CT)

Clerk, Mrs Joanne Dickinson (JD)

Representatives from Durham County Council Bereavement Services -Graham Harrison (GH), Ian Ramsay (IR) & David Wales (DW).

Reverend Lintern and Reverend Spencer.

Member of the Public- Amanda Hedley (AH)

1. Meeting commenced at 7.01pm
2. Cllrs Brown and Lonsdale-Cope nominated Cllr Todd as Chair of the Meeting.
3. Cllr Steele and Cllr Wood had provided their apologies for absence.
4. There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda.
5. **Chair's Remarks-** Chair asked those present to introduce themselves to the group. Chair provided background as to why the meeting had been arranged-recent vandalism and the opportunity for the cemetery to be part of the community and not just a place of rest. This is an opportunity to care for the grounds.
6. **Public Participation-** AH advised that her son's headstone had been vandalised and that items have been stolen from the grave over the years. Disrespectfully, scramble motorbikes are accessing the cemetery and AH asked if there are ways to stop this. Cars are parking up and parents are letting their kids play in the area. The gates are all off which makes access easier for antisocial behaviour. AH has to cable tie down items she leaves at the grave.
7. **Discuss the next steps in setting up a 'Friends of Pelton Cemetery Group' after the recent vandalism.**
The following salient points were discussed and actions are highlighted in green.
 - a. Reverend Lintern advised the vandalism wasn't a new problem.
 - b. Reverend Lintern advised there were 2 areas within the grounds-the cemetery and the churchyard. Historically they were physically separated. The cemetery is the responsibility of Durham County Council.
 - c. The areas of antisocial behaviour in the cemetery are behind the house at the top where there are signs of drug and drink paraphernalia. The house is being sold and this may stop this area being used.
 - d. How can we stop cars going into the cemetery out of usual hours? GH agreed to look at reinstalling the small gates which had been removed in recent years and for the Neighbourhood Wardens to be asked to patrol the area late at night.
 - e. Gates leading to Memorial- Can the gates be closed out of hours? A local resident was given a key to carry this out but it's not being currently carried out. DW lives local and will liaise with the team to have the gates closed at the end of their working day. DW will also look into putting on a padlock.
 - f. How can the access by motorbikes be stopped from the railway line? GH to speak to the Public Rights of Way Officer to see what legal options they have to restrict access to the cemetery by vehicles.
 - g. Is there a sign stating who is responsible for the cemetery? GH advised there were signs but he would take a look to see if more are required.
 - h. Dog walkers are generally respectful and tidy up after their dogs.

- i. The group want the cemetery to look loved and be part of the village. Examples of a local group was discussed who carry out regular tidy up days at West Pelton Church. They started off advertising tidy up days and now meet regularly on a Saturday. Reverend Lintern advised if a group was set up for Pelton Cemetery the Church would provide refreshments. The group would like to engage local schools and youth groups to be part of the 'Friends of Group'. To discuss further at next meeting.
 - j. Reverend Lintern has been previously approached by a Restorative Justice Group to offer the services of offenders to help out. This could be considered at a future meeting for progression with the local Police Inspector Morris.
 - k. The planting should incorporate all year round plants as when the daffodils are blooming the frontage is beautiful.
 - l. Next steps agreed- advertise locally the next meeting which will be to appoint the group committee and agree the aims and objectives by putting out posters in the cemetery (permission from GH given to carry this out, Parish Council Noticeboards to include the allotment noticeboards; Promote the group in the next newsletter; The Parish Council will lead the setting up of meetings for now until the group is established. Funding can be applied for when the group is set up formally.
 - m. GH to provide any restrictions that are required in the cemetery as a guideline for the group.
 - n. Next meeting agreed for 23rd May 2023- 6pm in Pelton Community Centre.
- Meeting closed at 7.56pm

Signed

Cllr Danny Wood
Chair
23rd May 2023