



The Friends of Raikes Road Burial Ground

Minutes of the Meeting of the Friends of Raikes Road Burial Ground held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 29th July 2014 at the Skipton Town Council Offices, Barclay's Bank Chambers, Skipton.

Present: Jean Robinson, Hazel Bulcock, Stephanie Carter, Les Chandler, Audrey Crossley, Norrie Earl, Peter Gallagher, Paul Norman, Geoff Sharwood-Smith, Ann Wilkinson and Stuart Wilkinson.

1. Apologies for absence

Eleanor Gouldney, Valerie Mason and Glenn Roadley.

2. To approve the Minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 29th April 2014

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 29th April 2014 were approved.
Proposed by HB and seconded by NE.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

Although formal access to the burial ground had been denied to bystanders of the Tour de France on 5th July, people did get in leaving behind rubbish and causing damage to the wall which has since been repaired.

As there were not enough volunteers to help out and the path was still under construction it was decided to cancel the open day planned for 21st June.

4. Finance

There were no accounts to report at the meeting. JR confirmed that Lesley Gould wishes to continue as the Treasurer and will contact her for a financial report which can be circulated to members later. JR reported that the work of installing the new pathway had been paid for out of Council funds and will need to be reimbursed.

5. Ongoing and planned work

The Restoration Action Plan updated at the last quarterly meeting was reviewed.

A number of tasks were marked as completed including research visits to Lister Lane Cemetery, Halifax; Craven Museum and Gallery; local schools and institutes; and the Borthwick Institute at York University.

Other tasks addressed or to be acted upon in the next few months:

The bird survey is due to be completed in September and LC will follow up with Steven Howarth and report back at the next quarterly meeting.

The small mammal survey undertaken on the 12th/13th July revealed the unexpected presence of two Water Shrews and in light of this, LC suggested the action to repair the drain needs to be reconsidered. As it was too wet, the insect survey was not undertaken at the same time as the mammal survey, but it is expected to be completed sometime in August or September (possibly around the same time as the fungi survey). When completed, LC will upload images onto an appropriate website for help from experts with the identification of insect species.

An archaeological investigation of the mortuary has been arranged for 4th/5th August. It is hoped the excavation will clarify whether the roof is still intact or if the building has been filled in.

Glenn Roadley has stepped down as the FRRBG Conservation Officer and LC agreed to approach Eleanor Gouldney about taking on the responsibility for the Conservation Officer tasks. Daniel Webb has also confirmed that he will no longer be able to help out but is happy to source plants for the wildflower planting scheme. JR agreed to take on Daniel's tasks for the location and installation of the benches and will communicate with GSS by email in due course. SW said that the Friends of Lister Lane Cemetery have a spare bench which they may consider giving to FRRBG. SC and NE offered to help with preparing the drafts for the site trail guide and advertising flyer.

LC has applied for a small copse pack and will know in September if the application has been successful. If not successful, he proposed buying a small copse pack out of the Town Council small groups' fund. He also suggested contacting Skipton in Bloom for help with the planting and also for their help with the wildflower planting scheme.

LC will obtain a quote from Enoch Harrison (stonemason) for the restoration of the monuments and gravestones.

LC had prepared a first draft of the schools pack, copies of which were circulated at the meeting for those present to comment on. Feedback included making the pack printer ready and available to download from the FRRBG website.

PN reported on the burial ground survey (identified originally as a post-project activity) undertaken on 10th May. Data from the recording sheets still has to be transcribed onto a GIS database. Once complete other information can be tied in, including images and gravestone transcriptions, census records, family history and biographies of individuals buried in the burial ground.

Levelling off of the slip road to the restored path providing smooth access for wheelchairs and pushchairs was added as a post-project activity. One possibility is to use tarmac, and LC will look into the options. AC suggested something to improve the visual access from the burial ground onto the busy road, possibly the location of a mirror opposite the entrance on the other side of the road.

The Action Plan will be reviewed at the next quarterly meeting.

6. Contact with Waltonwrays Cemetery

JR has been in contact with Sue Allot at Waltonwrays Cemetery. Unfortunately, Sue was unable to attend this meeting but indicated that she was happy for an exchange of information between the two groups.

7. To consider central archive

SC said she has a lot of information stored as hard copies in her house and wanted to know if this would eventually be archived at Craven Museum when the project was completed. JR suggested one option may be to digitise copies of the information and proposed adding this item as a post-project activity for consideration later.

8. Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI)

NE and AW attended a free workshop at the University of York on 15th May when this digital imaging technique was introduced as a means of recording inscriptions on headstones. JR has since been in contact with the workshop organiser, Gareth Beale about coming out to the burial ground sometime in September to demonstrate the technique, and knows someone who may be interested in undertaking the photographic work.

9. Any other business

It was decided not to open the burial ground for Heritage Open Days (HOD's) in September 2014, but to wait until after the project work has been completed. Discussion on HOD's 2015 deferred until a later meeting.

Guy (?) who runs the Community Payback team has asked if he can graze his sheep at the burial ground. LC has been looking into this and circulated a copy of '*The Living Churchyard*' by David Manning which briefly touches on this issue. There was some concern expressed about what impact grazing sheep would have on the planting of new wildflowers and trees in the burial ground, and it was suggested JR could prepare a brief article for the National Federation of Cemetery Friends newsletter inviting feedback from their members. Further discussion was deferred to a later meeting.

JR said if anyone present would like to prepare something for inclusion on the FRRBG website; they would be welcome to do so.

10. Date of next meeting

To be held on Tuesday 14th October 2014 at 7.00 pm at the Skipton Town Council Offices, Barclay's Bank Chambers, Skipton.