

Agenda No. 10

Revd. Sigrist
 Priest-in-Charge
 Saltash, St Stephen by Saltash, Botus Fleming,
 Landrake & St Erney

14 August 2017

Sent by email to rev.cathysigrist@gmail.com

Dear Revd. Sigrist

St Stephen by Saltash Churchyard

I write in relation to your letter to Cllr Sue James dated 22 July 2017 regarding St Stephen by Saltash Closed Churchyard. I note the points you have raised and would respond as follows;

1. Site Management

Cornwall Council is responsible for the management of St Stephens closed churchyard in Saltash. The Council delivers a consistent level of service to all 90 of closed churchyards under its management and information on the maintenance standards which the Council currently operates to are set out as below;

<http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/parks-and-open-spaces/closed-churchyards/>

Our contractor Cormac Solutions cut the grass in closed churchyards three times per year. We ensure that all sites under our care remain safe and that all main footpaths and entrances are kept clear. This is a sympathetic wildlife focused approach and offers many ecological benefits while maintaining churchyards in a respectful way.

I note that you have recently engaged a group of local teenagers as part of the NCS scheme. I fully support this action and can advise that we do employ a Partnership Officer based within Cormac who may be able to help with future volunteering at the site, her name is Rebecca Dickson and can be contacted direct on the following email rdickson@cormacltd.co.uk if you wish for support delivering future community projects. Churches and other stakeholder groups can choose to fund extra maintenance for their closed churchyards, and we currently work with a number of parochial church councils to provide individual maintenance arrangements to meet local priorities.

2. Local Management of the Site

In relation to the request to Cornwall Council for Saltash Town Council to take on the ongoing management of the site, unfortunately I have not had sight of this letter and wonder if it was sent directly to Cormac. I am pleased however to note the town



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council may have an interest in taking on the grass maintenance at this site. This Council is prepared to pay for the local management at 3.72p/m² per cut, with funding for a three cut regime per year, i.e. a maximum of 11.16p/m²/yr. Cornwall Council will continue its statutory duties in relation to headstone testing, structural assessments of retaining walls and trees but would be pleased to set up a funded maintenance agreement to cover grass cutting with the town council. If the clerk of Saltash Town Council contacts me direct then I would be happy to organise this direct arrangement.

3. St Stephens Tomb

The Council takes its responsibility for the management of headstones extremely seriously and I will instruct a safety inspector to visit the site and ensure the fencing around this structure is secure. I am unable to fund a full reinstatement/restoration of the specific tomb but would support any project which the town council or Parochial Church Council develop to undertake the identified and approved works.

I hope this letter answers the specific queries you have raised.

Yours sincerely



Paul Masters
Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods

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