



Banwell Parish Council

Banwell Youth & Community Centre

West Street, Banwell. BS29 6DB

Telephone: (01934) 820442

Email: clerk@banwellparishcouncil.org.uk

MEETING: Cemetery and Memorials Working Group.

DATE & TIME: Monday, 7th October 2024 at 5:30pm.

LOCATION: Banwell Cemetery, St Andrews Church, Church Street, Banwell.

PRESENT: Parish Councillors, Paul Blatchford (Chairman), Paul Harding and Maggie McCarthy: plus co-opted member John Keate (Cemetery Orderly).

Also present: Liz Shayler (Clerk).

NOTES

01/23 To elect a Chairman (agenda item 1)

Resolved: To elect Cllr Blatchford as Chairman of the Working Group.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

02/23 To elect a Vice-Chairman (agenda item 2)

Resolved: To elect Cllr McCarthy as Vice-Chairman of the Working Group.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

03/24 To receive apologies for absence (agenda item 1)

Apologies were received from Cllr Steve Davies.

04/24 To receive members' declarations of interest on any agenda item (agenda item 2)

John Keate as Cemetery Orderly declared an interest in all matters of expenditure.

05/24 To agree the notes of the meeting held on the 18th of October 2023 (agenda item 3)

Resolved: To agree the notes of the meeting held on the 18th of October 2023.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

06/24 Matters for Information / Clerks Report (agenda item 4)

i) Interment of archaeological remains.

Border Archaeology have finally responded to the Clerks email and are organising for the collection of the remains by the Chairman of the Archaeological Society who has offered to store them until a date can be organised for interment.

ii) Remembrance Garden

Thanks was given to the grass cutting contractors for trying to keep the remembrance garden clear of grass. The Clerk was asked to contact landscaping contractors with a view to redesigning the garden and providing a quote for maintenance.

07/24 To consider brick graves within Banwell Cemetery (agenda item 5).

Resolved: To not allow brick graves in Banwell Cemetery for the following reasons.

- It is a lawn cemetery.
- They require a larger space and installation space around the grave which would not be possible in this setting.
- Banwell is part of the benefice of Banwell, Congresbury, Hewish and Puxton and Congresbury already offer this facility.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

08/24 To review and recommend approval of the following documents (agenda item 8)

i) Cemetery Regulations

Resolved: To recommend approval of the reviewed Cemetery Regulations with an additional point explain the policy in relation to Brick Graves and with the following additional paragraph.

Banwell Cemetery – Lawn Cemetery

Banwell Cemetery is a designated lawn cemetery. This means that, to maintain a serene, uniform appearance, the cemetery is characterised by open, grassed areas with minimal memorialisation allowed. Only headstones are permitted, with no kerbstones, fences, chippings, or plantings on the graves themselves. This design ensures ease of maintenance and preserves the park-like, tranquil environment for all visitors.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

ii) Memorial Inspection Risk Assessment

Resolved: To recommend approval of the Memorial Inspection Risk Assessment.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

09/24 To suggest any work needed on the paths, trees, garden and the bin in the Cemetery (agenda item 9)

i) Moss

The Cemetery Orderly to undertake a moss treatment. The Clerk to investigate whether salt affects the integrity of the tarmac.

ii) Cemetery Trees

The Clerk has spoken to the arboriculturist and there were no works needed to the Cemetery trees.

10/24 To note the Cemetery and Memorials Budget and income and to agree a suggested budget for 2024/25 (agenda item 10)

The Cemetery and Memorials Budget and income were noted and to agree a suggested budget for 2024/25 of £9450.

11/24 To note the annual memorial inspection undertaken in June 2024 (agenda item 11).

The Annual memorials safety inspection was June. It was observed that there had been further disintegration to Warner (70) which would now require a ground anchor. Also, that ground anchor work would be required for Willan (364), Yeeles (237), Grover (244), 339 (Hunt), 346 (Jakeway), 364 (Willian) & 365 (Dibble). All grave owners, except 1, had passed away.

12/24 Date of next meeting (agenda item 10)

TBD Wb 2nd June 2025 Banwell Cemetery

The Chairman closed the meeting at 17:50

.....Chairman

.....Date



Banwell Parish Council

Cemetery Risk Assessment

Risk Rating Matrix

	A possibility of death, major injury, major damage or loss of property or equipment.	B	C minor injury or minor damage to property or equipment
1 Extremely Likely			
2 Likely			
3 May but unlikely			

Identified Hazards	Who's Exposed	Risk Rating	Mitigation Measures	Final Risk Rating	Additional Mitigation
Loss of burial records through theft or natural disaster.	Clerk, Councillors, Public, Contractors	2B	All information currently held online via Scribe with appropriate encrypted backups. Hard copy in files in locked office. New information should be added to current databases as soon as possible.	3C	
Incorrect interments or record errors	Clerk, Funeral Directors, Families, Public	2A	All cemetery data recorded in Scribe Cemetery system. Double-check interment details with grave owner or family. Clerk confirms plot location before authorising interment. Gravedigger is only permitted to inter with written / verbal permission from the clerk.	3B	Photograph and GPS-mark new interments where possible
Unauthorised Burial	Clerk, Funeral Directors, Families, Public	2A	Only one authorised gravedigger is permitted and must not dig until receiving confirmation (verbal or written) from the Clerk. The local church acts as a secondary check by copying the Clerk into all organised funeral communications involving a burial. Funeral directors are required to follow this notification process.	3B	Possible annual letter to Funeral Directors reinforcing protocol. Investigate any breach and issue formal warnings.
Failure to review charges.	Clerk, Councillors, Public, Contractors	2B	Cemetery fees are reviewed annually (November) as an integral part of the budgetary process. Calendar reminders include charge review as a standing agenda item each October.	3C	
Failure to collect charges.	Clerk, Councillors, Public, Contractors	2B	The Clerk as RFO is responsible for collection of cemetery income. Calendar reminders for debt checks and cemetery paperwork upload. Prepare debtor accounts promptly. Cemetery income checked in internal controls testing. Ensure council approval required for write-off of any bad debts.	3C	

Failure to bank income.	Clerk, Councillors, Public, Contractors	2B	Cash discouraged, use of BACs / Card payment encouraged. Prompt collection of banking of income received as specified in the Councils Financial Regulations. Regular statement of income are provided to Council/ Cemetery Committee. Checked as part of internal controls.	3C	
Lone working. Councillors or contractors may inspect or work at the cemetery alone,	Clerk, Councillors, Contractors	2B	Implement check-in/out procedures; workers to carry a mobile phone; assess risk before working alone.	3C	Include in lone working risk assessment.
Slips, trips & falls		2B	Inspect and maintain paths every 6 months. Wear appropriate footwear. Added to agenda so inspection is minuted.	3C	Consider signage during icy weather.
Personal injury.	Clerk, Councillors, Public, Contractors	2B	Ensure that all relevant contractors and Councillors have read and are adhering to the Councils health and safety policy. Where relevant ensure that the correct, properly maintained tools are available as appropriate. Ensure that all appropriate disclaimer notices, warning signs etc. are in place. Gravedigging and Cemetery Maintenance is contracted out and a copy of their Public Liability Insurance is kept on file.	3C	Possible refresher H&S briefings annually.
Headstones/ kerbstones safety survey.	Clerk, Councillors, Public, Contractors	2B	An Annual memorial safety survey is undertaken by the cemetery committee. Arrange for completion of any necessary work in an appropriate time frame. Ensure that facility users are aware of danger. Maintain appropriate records of work undertaken. Adequate insurance cover is in place.	3C	Ensure Clerk maintain ICCM training every 3 years; Updated sign to include reminders to public not to touch or lean on memorials.
Maintenance of Cemetery including grass cutting.	Clerk, Councillors, Public, Contractors	2B	The Cemetery Committee is responsible for standards for cemetery maintenance and ensures that a planned programme is in place. Public liability is in place for the Parish Council and any contractor working within the cemetery.	3C	Introduce quarterly spot checks by the Clerk or councilor; maintain log.
Grave subsidence		2B	Inspect new graves regularly. Top up soil as needed.	3C	
Vandalism.	Clerk, Councillors, Public, Contractors	2B	Maintain liaison with local enforcement agencies. Take action as appropriate against offenders.	2C	Add to new sign RE vandalism / encourage residents to report suspicious activity.
Unauthorised access or antisocial behaviour	Public, Clerk	2B	Maintain liaison with police. Use signage to outline respectful behaviour. Report incidents promptly.	3C	Possible add to sign – respectful behaviour. Maintain log of incidents and review.

Tree hazards (falling branches)		2B	Tree inspections every 15 months; emergency checks after storms; fencing off unsafe areas.	3C	
Maintenance of buildings.	Clerk, Councillors, Public, Contractors	2B	Property maintenance is the responsibility of the Cemetery Committee. In conjunction with the Cemetery orderly regular inspections are carried out. Minutes of the Cemetery Committee record work undertaken.	3C	Possible quarterly visual checks by the Clerk / Working Group.
Security of cemeteries and buildings.	Clerk, Councillors, Public, Contractors	2B	Key to be held by Cemetery Orderly and Parish Office.	3C	
Contractor misconduct or poor performance.		2B	We use JK Gardening, who has looked after the cemetery for over 20 years and is trusted implicitly. While health and safety policies, contractor risk assessments, public liability and basic oversight processes remain in place, this is a long-standing, valued working relationship.	3C	No concerns identified to date due to trusted and consistent service.

Additional Notes

Emergency Procedures:

Any incidents or safety issues must be reported immediately to the Clerk.

Regular reviews are conducted to ensure compliance with data handling and health and safety policies.



Banwell Parish Council

Memorial Inspection Risk Assessment

	A possibility of death, major injury, major damage or loss of property or equipment.	B	C minor injury or minor damage to property or equipment
1 Extremely Likely			
2 Likely			
3 May but unlikely			

Identified Hazards	Who's Exposed	Risk Rating	Mitigation Measures	Final Risk Rating	Additional Mitigation
Crushing from the memorial falling	Clerk, Councillors, Public, Contractors	2B	Annual memorial safety inspection programme in place. Regular checks of memorials prior to interments. Loose memorials staked and banded where possible. Use of high visibility tape to identify loose or laid-flat memorials. Clerk trained via ICCM Memorial Inspection Course. PPE used (e.g., steel toe cap boots).	3C	Three year ICCM refresher recommended. New sign to include discouragement of touching memorials.
Muscle/Back strain from manual handling	Clerk, Councillors	2B	Only trained personnel to move memorials. Visual checks performed before handling. Always stand to the side. Never try to stop a falling memorial. Councillor training provided.	3C	On-site refresher training annually; reinforce safe handling procedures before inspections.
Slips, trips and falls in adverse weather	Clerk, Councillors	2B	Check weather forecasts before inspections and postpone if severe weather is expected. Wear appropriate footwear with good grip.	3C	Create a seasonal inspection checklist and reschedule during storms or ice.
Allergic reactions from noxious plant	Clerk, Councillors	3B	Site checked prior to work. Risk areas treated in advance. PPE used as needed.	3C	Review plant species annually and consider removal of high-risk species.
Incorrect memorial placement or record errors	Clerk, Families	2B	Clerk confirms location against approved cemetery map and authorisation forms before installation. All placements logged in Scribe.	3C	Cross-check map and Scribe records; consider photographic log of installed memorials.
Public tampering or climbing	Public	2B	Signage discourages interference. Council monitors site during 6 month inspections. Risks noted during maintenance visits.	3C	New sign to possible include reminders
Subsidence around memorials	Public, Contractors	2B	Ground around memorials inspected as part of six month check. Subsided ground flagged and corrected where needed.	3C	Add photos of repeat-risk areas to inspection records; note for possible groundworks.

Assessment Date: June 2025

Review Date: By September 2026



Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Banwell Parish Council: Cemetery Service

1. Service/Policy/Function Being Assessed: Banwell Parish Cemetery – encompassing cemetery fees, regulations, operations, and associated risk management.

2. Purpose: To ensure that the cemetery service is accessible, fair, and respectful to all individuals regardless of protected characteristics, and that it meets equality legislation standards.

3. Aims and Objectives:

- Provide safe and dignified burial and memorial services.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legal, health and safety, and environmental standards.
- Offer services that are equitable and culturally sensitive.
- Uphold the rights of grave owners and the bereaved.

4. Evidence Considered:

- Cemetery Regulations Policy (May 2025)
- Cemetery Risk Assessment
- Memorial Inspection Risk Assessment
- Cemetery Fees (from January 2024)
- Equality Act 2010
- Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977

5. Who Is Affected?

- Residents and non-residents of Banwell Parish
- Bereaved families and next of kin
- Funeral directors and memorial masons
- Council staff and contractors
- Visitors to the cemetery

6. Assessment of Impact on Protected Characteristics:

Protected Characteristic	Likely Impact	Comments and Mitigation
Age	Positive	Free interments and grave purchase for children under 18. No upper age restrictions.
Disability	Low risk	Path inspections in place. Add seasonal signage for trip hazards and review wheelchair access.
Gender Reassignment	Neutral	No policies that discriminate or exclude.
Marriage/Civil Partnership	Neutral	Burial rights are based on legal relationships or documented next of kin, not marital status.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive	Dedicated sections for infant and stillborn remains; free provision for infants.
Race	Low risk	Cultural customs supported, but clearer public guidance needed for burial timing and practices.
Religion or Belief	Moderate impact	Out-of-hours burials allowed at Clerk's discretion. Staff training to reinforce inclusive practice recommended.
Sex	Neutral	No discriminatory provisions.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	Equal access regardless of orientation.

Other (e.g., low income)	Moderate	Non-residents pay double fees and are only eligible for burial if a demonstrable Banwell connection exists. This may disproportionately affect individuals who have moved out of the area due to housing or affordability issues. Clearer communication of what qualifies as a Banwell connection may support transparency and fairness
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Additional Consideration: Cultural Needs (e.g., Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Communities)

Banwell Parish Cemetery is a designated lawn cemetery, meaning only simple headstones are permitted and the use of kerbstones, fencing, planting, or other memorialisation is not allowed. This uniform style supports maintenance and ensures accessibility. We recognise that some cultural or religious groups, including members of the Traveller community, may have burial preferences that differ from the lawn cemetery model. Where such needs cannot be accommodated within Banwell Cemetery, neighbouring facilities such as Congresbury Cemetery may offer more flexible options.

7. Key Actions and Recommendations:

Issue	Action	Deadline	Responsible Officer
Physical Accessibility	Continue formal visual inspections each October and June and informal checks during burials and grass cutting.	Ongoing	Clerk / Cemetery Committee
Cultural Burials	Provide public-facing information on out-of-hours/cultural need process.	June 2025	Clerk
Communication	Offer forms and policies in accessible formats.	Ongoing	Clerk
Fee Fairness	Publish clear criteria for Banwell connection.	Oct 2025	Cemetery Committee
Public Information	Create a short guidance leaflet or web page summarising cemetery rules, Banwell connection criteria, and contact details.	June 2025	Clerk

8. Monitoring and Review:

- The EQIA will be formally reviewed every three years, with the next full review due in June 2028.
- Monitoring will take place annually alongside fee and risk assessments to ensure ongoing compliance and to identify any emerging issues.
- Complaints logs and user feedback will be reviewed to highlight any equality-related concerns.
- Due to the small scale of the cemetery (approximately 500 plots with around 5 burials annually), informal monitoring through feedback from bereaved families and funeral directors may be used.

9. Conclusion: Banwell Parish Council's cemetery service is proportionate and inclusive for the scale of its operations and broadly meets equality requirements. The Council has already implemented fair practices in relation to age, maternity, and religious observance. Given the small size of the cemetery and low number of annual burials, a light-touch, proportionate approach—focused on clear communication, informal feedback, and annual monitoring will be used.

Further improvements in signage, access information, and transparency around residency and cultural considerations will help ensure the service remains fair and respectful for all users.

Date of EQIA: June 2025

Review Due: June 2028

Assessed By: Liz Shayler



Banwell Cemetery: Public Guidance Note

Welcome to Banwell Cemetery This guidance note is designed to help families, visitors, and funeral professionals understand the key rules and options available at Banwell Cemetery. If you have any questions, please contact the Clerk to the Parish Council.

Contact Details:

Clerk to Banwell Parish Council

Tel: 01934 820442

Email: clerk@banwellparishcouncil.org.uk

Website: www.banwellparishcouncil.org.uk

Cemetery Type

Banwell Cemetery is a **lawn cemetery**, meaning graves are grassed over and only upright headstones are permitted. Kerbstones, fencing, chippings, plantings, or free-standing ornaments are not allowed.

Who Can Be Buried Here?

- Residents of Banwell Parish may apply for a burial or cremated remains interment.
- Non-residents may be eligible only if they can demonstrate a connection to Banwell (e.g. previous long-term resident, immediate family already buried in the cemetery).
- All applications are subject to approval by the Clerk.

Fees

- Fees are reviewed annually and are available on our website or from the Parish Office.
- Non-residents typically pay double the standard fee.

Burial Types Available

- Full burials (earthen grave)
- Cremated remains burials (in dedicated plots or full graves)
- Children and infant sections are available and free of charge

Out-of-Hours or Cultural Burial Requests We recognise that some religious or cultural groups may have urgent or time-sensitive burial requirements. Please contact the Clerk as early as possible to discuss your needs. We will always try to accommodate where practically possible, depending on legal and staffing requirements.

Memorials

- Only permitted on graves where the Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased.
- All memorials must be approved via application and conform to the cemetery's size and material regulations.
- Memorial vases must be incorporated into the headstone (no loose vases or items are permitted).

Cemetery Behaviour & Access

- Open daily from 9am to 6pm or sunset, whichever is earlier.
- Please stay on paths unless visiting a grave.
- Dogs are not permitted (except assistance dogs).
- No filming or music without prior permission.
- Please place dead flowers and waste in the bins provided.

This guidance was last updated: June 2025.

Safety and Inspections

- Regular safety inspections of memorials and paths are carried out.
- Please do not lean on or attempt to straighten headstones.

Further Information A full copy of the Cemetery Regulations, fees, and memorial application forms are available on our website or by contacting the Clerk.

Thank you for helping us keep Banwell Cemetery a safe and respectful place for all.

Banwell Parish Council
Summary of Receipts and Payments
Cost Centre Group - Cemetery Committee

4 June 2025 (2025-2026)

Cemetery & Memorials

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
101	Cem Grass Cutting				1,950.00	325.00	1,625.00	1,625.00 (83%)
102	Cem paths / trees / garden				300.00		300.00	300.00 (100%)
103	Cem making up graves				200.00		200.00	200.00 (100%)
104	Cemetery / Memorial Maintenance				5,000.00	18.49	4,981.51	4,981.51 (99%)
105	Env Fee				2,045.00	80.00	1,965.00	1,965.00 (96%)
106	Cemetery software				450.00	105.00	345.00	345.00 (76%)
SUB TOTAL					9,945.00	528.49	9,416.51	9,416.51 (94%)

Cemetery Income

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
110	Cemetery Income		837.31	837.31				837.31 (N/A)
111	Cemetery Bank interest							(N/A)
SUB TOTAL			837.31	837.31				837.31 (N/A)

Summary

NET TOTAL	837.31	837.31	9,945.00	528.49	9,416.51	10,253.82 (103%)
V.A.T.						
GROSS TOTAL	837.31			528.49		