



## **Buckden Parish Council**

### **Village Maintenance Advisory Group**

#### **Type:**

Advisory Group

#### **Membership**

The Advisory Group will have a minimum of 2 Parish Councillors  
Parish Council members are appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council (The first meeting of the Parish Council year)

The Chairman is selected/elected at the Annual Parish Council meeting or failing this at the first meeting of the Advisory Group. In year vacancies may be filled by co-option by agreement with the Chair of the Parish Council.

Co-opted members of the public may be selected/elected throughout the year. Co-opted members shall be subject to approval by the full Parish Council.

One member of the AG will be nominated as the Climate Change Champion

#### **Quorum and Attendance**

Other members of the Parish Council may attend by invitation of the advisory group and the group may allow other persons to attend to advise as required.

The quorum shall be 3 members of the advisory group at least one of whom must be a Councillor

#### **Purpose**

The Advisory group will on behalf of the Parish Council oversee the upkeep and general maintenance of the village, including the cemetery. It will support the Clerk/Assistant Clerk to manage village maintenance by reviewing, advising on and prioritising new and ongoing programmes of work & projects as sustainable ways as possible.

The group will be responsible for working with the Clerk on managing any staffing issues linked to Village Maintenance

#### **It will advise the Parish Council on the following broad matters:**

- General Maintenance of the street lights that are the responsibility of the Parish Council.
- Renovation, maintenance or replacement of any objects or areas of importance in the village that are the responsibility of the Parish Council, including but not limited to children's playground within the fenced area, zip wire and bouldering wall, lychgate in the cemetery, St Mary's churchyard retaining wall, area opposite the Towers in the High Street, telephone kiosk in the High Street and the defibrillator machines.



In addition the group will:

- Support the Assistant Clerk/Clerk with arrangements on the installation, taking down and general maintenance of the Christmas lights by contractors
- Support the Clerk to manage maintenance or replacement of bus shelters, salt bins, refuse bins, and Council Noticeboards.
- Prioritise and support the implementation of projects requested by the Parish Council.
- Seek grants on behalf of the Council but if funding is not available from elsewhere recommend to the Council when the proposed project be wholly funded by the Council.
- Work in partnership with other Advisory Groups e.g. Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity, Highways & Sustainable Transport and Communications to optimise arrangements where the responsibilities and accountabilities of the advisory groups potentially overlap.
- Delivery of the relevant elements of the BPC Operational Plan (Appendix 1)

**In relation to the Cemetery and Churchyard the Advisory group will:**

- Maintain oversight on behalf of the Council and obtain assurance from the clerk/assistant clerk that cemetery records are completed appropriately.
- Maintain oversight on behalf of the Council and obtain assurance from the clerk/assistant clerk that burials and cremations are conducted in line with Regulations.
- With the Assistant Clerk & Clerk review cemetery regulations periodically (at least every 5 years), publicise cemetery regulations and support action by the Assistant Clerk/Clerk as necessary to take action when cemetery regulations are breached.
- Maintain oversight on behalf of the Council of maintenance and other works undertaken in the Cemetery and Churchyard by contractors and/or handymen acting on behalf of BPC.
- Keep the Parish Council aware of all work involving Buckden Cemetery and St Mary's Churchyard and oversee any other projects requested by the Parish Council in relation to the cemetery and churchyard.

**In relation to staffing the Advisory Group will:**

- Determine and recommend to the Parish Council the staffing levels for work necessary to efficiently discharge work required by the Council and to review employee workloads and lone working arrangements periodically; consider village maintenance work by employees in relation to services provided by external contractors
- Ensure the Health and Safety of staff employed by providing appropriate working spaces, tools and equipment and arranging training for staff as necessary to safeguard their Health and Safety at Work in all roles on behalf of the Council.
- Undertake reviews of working practices and procedures of the Council as a whole when requested and to make recommendations to Full Council.

## **Authority**

The Advisory Group oversees delivery of activities within its revenue budget and Earmarked Reserves to enable Village Maintenance to be carried out efficiently and effectively in a timely manner. It has no decision-making powers but will instead make recommendations to the full Parish Council, including through the annual budget-setting process.



## Meeting arrangements

There will be a minimum of 3 meetings a year. One week's notice of the date and agenda must be given. The Chairman will be responsible for calling meetings. Agenda, Notes and Action Plans shall be produced and circulated to the group members by the Assistant Clerk, supported where necessary by the Parish Clerk.

Meetings may be called at the request of the full Council to discuss and provide advice or recommendations on a particular subject within the remit of VMAG.

## Reporting

Reports on the work of the Advisory Group will be provided to the full Parish Council on a regular basis and recommendations for action made as required by full Council.

## Resources and budget

The Chairman of the Advisory Group will be a member of the Finance Advisory Group and will advise that Advisory Group on the budgetary requirements for the forthcoming year. The Advisory Group will be responsible for administering the budget set and may through the Clerk spend up to a certain amount each financial year for individual items not requiring full Council approval, as per Financial Regulations.

Any proposals for expenditure that exceeds the budget set for the group must be taken to full Council.

For all major expenditure it is the normal practice for three quotes to be obtained and considered. Where the expenditure falls outside budgets agreed annually by full Council recommendation shall be made to the whole Parish Council for such purchases.

In certain circumstances where it is not practical or possible to obtain three quotes the Council may decide to go for one or two quotes only.

## Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed each year at the first meeting of the Advisory Group following the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

## Version Control

| Date amended | Reason for version change                                             | Amended by                                                                                          |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| July 2023    | Terms of Reference created for new Village Maintenance Advisory Group | Prepared by Cllr C Underwood, Chairman Compliance AG and S Ashwell, Chairman Village Maintenance AG |



## APPENDIX 1

| CAP Priorities for Village Maintenance                                                                                               |            |                           |                         |                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>COMPLETED</b> Digital mapping of cemetery and first systematic stability testing of memorials in Buckden cemetery                 |            |                           |                         |                                                                                                             |
| Village Maintenance Advisory Group to maintain and improve the village infra structure and advise on staffing issues related to this |            |                           |                         |                                                                                                             |
| Action                                                                                                                               | Owner      | Status                    | Budget/Resources        | Timescales                                                                                                  |
| <b>VMAG 1</b><br>Implement Cemetery safety testing and management policy                                                             | VMAG & BPC | Ongoing                   | Cemetery revenue budget | Policy completed July2023<br>Management ongoing – majority of work planned for completion by Christmas 2023 |
| <b>VMAG 2</b><br>Expand Cemetery ashes area and effect improvements to St Marys Churchyard                                           | VMAG       | In discussion with church | TBA                     | TBA                                                                                                         |
| <b>VMAG 3</b><br>Increase play equipment for children with special needs                                                             | VMAG       |                           | TBA                     |                                                                                                             |
| <b>VMAG 4</b><br>Support the Assistant Clerk/Clerk to resolve Christmas lights issues                                                | VMAG       | Resolved                  |                         | July 2023                                                                                                   |
| <b>VMAG 5</b><br>Complete healthy aging project                                                                                      | VMAG       |                           |                         | Completion anticipated during 2023 with University of Cambridge                                             |
| <b>VMAG 6</b><br>Seek to install adult/teenage fitness equipment when suitable and available locations are identified.               | VMAG       | Ongoing                   | TBA                     |                                                                                                             |