



TO ALL MEMBERS OF MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL **OPEN SPACES SUB-COMMITTEE**

Dear Councillor

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO ATTEND the meeting of Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting to be held on Tuesday 27th October 2026 at 1.30pm in the Parish Council Offices, Marden Memorial Hall, Goudhurst Road, Marden, Kent

Sue Smith

Sue Smith
Deputy Clerk to Marden Parish Council
Date: 20th October 2026
01622 832305 / deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

Members of the public and press are welcome to attend this meeting and may speak at the discretion of the Chairman and in accordance with standing order 1 e-g. Questions relating to any other items that are not on this agenda should be referred to the Chair of the Open Spaces Sub-Committee or Deputy Clerk as appropriate and outside this meeting.

The law allows the public proceedings of council meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted. By attending this meeting, you are consenting to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, please advise the Deputy Clerk if you intend to record any part of the proceedings.

Marden Parish Council operates under General Power of Competence since adopted on 7th May 2024. Minute Reference 012/24.

AGENDA

001/26 PRESENT

Cllrs to inform the Deputy Clerk by 10.00am on the day of the meeting if they will be taking part in the meeting.

002/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence.

Cllrs to inform the Deputy Clerk by 10.00am on the day of the meeting if they will not be taking part in the meeting.

Office Opening Times:
Mondays, Tuesdays & Fridays 10am - 12 noon
Email: deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk
Website: www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk



003/26 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
Granting of Dispensation

004/26 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

No Open Spaces Sub-Committees held previously

005/26 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

Members of the public to make themselves known to the meeting as to whether they wish to raise any issue under this item.

006/26 ELECTION OF OPEN SPACES SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

Cllrs to elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman

007/26 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Cllrs to review draft Terms of Reference supplied in meeting papers

008/26 SITE VISITS**Action Log**

Cllrs to review Action Log supplied in meeting papers

Playing FieldNew Play Equipment

Cllrs to consider quotes for replacement basket swing, baby swing seat and also replacement of full double bay swing set in Play Area.

Tree Audit

Cllrs to consider quotes for Autumn 2026 Tree Audits

Southons Field**Other Open Space Issues**New Machinery

Cllrs to consider options for new machinery requested by Groundsmen

009/26 CEMETERY**Cemetery Issues**New Cemetery Database

Cllrs to consider options for new software – report in meeting papers

Grave Surrounds Policy

Cllrs to review current Policy. Relevant extracts of the Cemetery Rules & Regulations are in the meeting papers.

Memorial Benches and Plaques Policy

Cllrs to review the Discussion Paper supplied with the meeting papers and discuss prior to a Memorial Benches Policy being drafted.

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Newly Planted Trees at Cemetery

Cllrs to review paper in meeting notes, re maintenance arrangements for trees planted in 2024.

010/26 CEMETERY AND OPEN SPACES FEES FOR 2027/2028

Cllrs to review fees for 2027/2028 for proposal to the Amenities Committee.

Meeting papers can be found separately to the agenda at: <https://mardenkent-pc.gov.uk/meetings/open-spaces-sub-committee-27-october-2026/>

If you have any questions etc that you wish to ask regarding this meeting please contact the Deputy Clerk on 01622 832305 or email deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

Copies of agendas will be posted on the council's website, Facebook page and noticeboards or can be requested in advance by telephoning 01622 832305 or emailing deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

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DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE **SUB-COMMITTEES**

Open Spaces Sub-Committee

Reports to Amenities Committee

From October 2026 – the Cemetery Sub-committee has been combined with the Open Spaces Sub-Committee.

The Open Spaces Sub-Committee of Marden Parish Council is a sub-committee of the Amenities Committee and consists of the Chairman of the Parish Council and a minimum of 2/maximum of 5 Cllrs. The appointment of members to this Sub-Committee is decided at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

The role of the HR Sub-Committee is to:

- 1) Review the terms and conditions of Open Space bookings (ie Southons Field and Playing Field) and the cemetery rules and regulations, at least annually and put before Amenities Committee for ratification.
- 2) Review and recommend the fees for Southons Field, Playing Field, and the cemetery, annually in October and report to Finance Committee for budgeting purposes.
- 3) Undertake and attend at least two site meetings annually (April and September) and report back to Amenities Committee.
- 4) Agree memorial/inscription applications at the cemetery if issues arise by the Clerk.
- 5) Agree burial/interment of ashes at the cemetery, if not resident of parish if concerns raised by Clerk.
- 6) Be responsible for directing the maintenance of the Parish Council owned open space and the cemetery within a schedule agreed by the Amenities Committee in order to maintain a good standard of appearance.
- 7) Be responsible for the operation of the cemetery with the use of the Parish Council's rules and regulations to ensure the safety, dignity and ongoing use of the cemetery.
- 8) Ensure the Clerk has effectively documented procedures in place to take day to day operational decision on the management of the cemetery. All

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Parish Council Terms of Reference March 2026



procedures will be referred to the Parish Council for approval if needed to include:

- a) Keeping records of all burials and interment of ashes and their locations;
- b) To liaise with funeral directors appertaining to all interments;
- c) To receive all documentation and fees from the funeral director at least three days before the funeral and sending relevant documents to the Register of Deaths.

- 9) Ensure that all buildings, trees and gravestones are in a safe condition.
- 10) Review the open spaces mowing contract on a three-year basis (or earlier if required) and take to Amenities Committee/Finance Committee for ratification.
- 11) Recommend how to spend money within the budget on projects relating to the open spaces and cemetery, reporting to the Amenities Committee/Finance Committee for ratification.
- 12) Provide a list of small items of work to be undertaken by caretaking staff to the Clerk and/or Deputy Clerk when need arises
- 13) Recommend how to spend money within the budget of the cemetery on projects relating to the cemetery and reporting to the Amenities Committee/Finance Committee for ratification

The Open Spaces Sub-Committee will make no decisions other than those outlined above. All other recommendations will be required to be ratified at the next Amenities Committee or Full Council meeting.

Delegated Powers to Open Spaces Sub-Committee:

- Managing Marden Cemetery
- To agree memorial/inscription applications if issues arise by the Clerk.
- To agree burial/interment of ashes if not resident of parish and concerns raised by the Clerk
- To be responsible for the direction of maintenance of the Parish Council owned open spaces and the cemetery within a schedule agreed by the Amenities Committee in order to maintain a good standard of appearance
- To be responsible for the direction of the operation of the cemetery with the use of the Parish Council's rules and regulations to ensure the safety, dignity and ongoing use of the cemetery.
- To ensure the Clerk has effectively documented procedures in place to take day to day operational decision on the management of the cemetery. All procedures will be referred to the Parish Council for approval if needed.
- To ensure all buildings, trees and gravestones are in a safe condition.

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Amenities Meeting Action Log

Ongoing	Action for Clerks
Action for Cllrs	Action for Cllrs and Clerks

Ongoing Items

Action	Allocated to	To Do
Allotments	Deputy Clerk	ONGOING: Take over once transfer has taken place
Changing Rooms	Clerk/Deputy Clerk and Cllrs Griffiths and Turner	ONGOING: Work with Clerk on refurbishment project
Public Conveniences - Solar panels	Deputy Clerk	ONGOING: Take over once legal work has been completed
Review Policies annually	Deputy Clerk	ANNUALLY for January meeting
Update Caretakers to do lists	Deputy Clerk	MONTHLY or following site meetings

Amenities Meetings Action Log

Action No.	Minute No.	Date	Location	Minute Action	Allocated to	To Do/Current situation
A18	043/25	23-Sep-25	Admin	Produce a communication strategy on how to reach young people	Cllr Rabot	In conjunction with Kent Cricket Community Trust
A79		22-Sep-26	Admin	Contact Business Stream to resolve ongoing incorrect billing issues	Cllr Turner	
	Env Sub Grp	15-Oct-26	Admin	Add Public Conveniences' solar panels to ISP	Clerks	Once solar panels fitted

A10	030/25	22-Jul-25	Bins	Liaise with MBC to move litter bins from opposite West End Stores to the corner of Albion Road and for a double bin to be installed outside the shops at Church Green	Deputy Clerk	To undertake a new litter bin audit and report back to Amenities regarding further actions
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A76	038/26	22-Sep-26	Car Park	Chase for reposnse from Alex Wells - MBC following meeting & e-mails to look at parking issues in Marden	Cllr Somersgill	12 Aug 26 chased - no response 24 Sep 26 chased - away until 5 Oct 26 20 Oct 26 - 3rd remnder sent
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A64	024/26	25-Aug-26	Cemetery	Review management of trees at cemetery to add to Tree Management Policy	All Cllrs and Clerk	Site meeting. Dep CI has checked KCC tree maintnenance contract. Paper to Open Spaces Sub-Comm 27 Oct 26
A72	037/26	22-Sep-26	Cemetery	Agree a policy for memorial bench requests and plaques at cemetery.	Open Spaces Sub-Committee	
A73	037/26	22-Sep-26	Cemetery	Assess hedge saplings at cemetery that need re-planting	Open Spaces Sub-Committee	Site meeting 8 Oct 26 Agreed to review again @ Spr '27 mtg to assess survival
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Cemetery	Review Grave Surround Policy	Open Spaces Sub-Committee	On agenda for 27 Oct 26
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Cemetery	Consider purchase of 2 new memorial benches at Cemetery. Quotes to be obtained	Deputy Clerk	

	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Cemetery	Assess survival of cemetery cherry tree by cremated remains	Open Spaces Sub-Committee	Assess again at Spr '27 Site meeting
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A78	039/26	22-Sep-26	Events	Meeting to discuss ideas/costings for 2027 events, for first budget meeting at end Oct.	Village Events Sub-Group	Meeting scheduled - 28 Oct 26
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A50	109/26	28-Apr-26	Open Spaces	Produce a spreadsheet of current MPC owned machinery with value, replacement costs and expected lifespan	Deputy Clerk	Liaise with grounds staff as to what is held and where
A60	023/26	25-Aug-26	Open Spaces	Erect signage with Resilience Planning / Emergency contact number for vehicle gate padlock	Clerk	Reviewing mobile phone and number for emergency use
A65	024/26	25-Aug-26	Open Spaces	Obtain quote for tree audit (now every 18 months - Autumn/Spring)	Clerk	22 Sep 26 - Previous company used no longer in business 3 further quotes rec'd. On agenda for 27 Oct 26.
A68	027/26	25-Aug-26	Open Spaces	Review Estate Management Plan	Environmental Sub-Group	Revised @ meeting 15/10/26. On Amen Comm agenda to sign off 27 Oct 26
A69	028/26	25-Aug-26	Open Spaces	Review possible work for Community Payback Team	All Cllrs and Clerk	Sites identified @ Site mtg 8 Oct 26. Dep Cl to contact CPB team
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Open Spaces	Obtain quote for new brush cutter for cemetery/leaf blower/sucker & strimmer	Clerk	22 Oct 26 - In progress
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Open Spaces	Update Maintenance Strategies with outcomes from 8/10/26 Site Meeting	Deputy Clerk	Talk through with caretakers

A47	109/25	28-Apr-26	Play Areas	Local contractor to be contacted to ask for quote for basket swing/have any in stock	Clerk	22 Oct 26 - In progress
A61	023/26	25-Aug-26	Play Areas	Consider new play equipment for grant funding (SIPA)	All Cllrs and Deputy Clerk	Site meeting suggested new dbl bay swing. Deputy Clerk obtaining 3 quotes. Site meetings booked with suppliers w/b 26 Oct & 9 Nov
A71	036/26	22-Sep-26	Play Areas	Obtain quote for replacement swing seats in Playing Field Play Area	Clerk	In process of obtaining quote using SIPA funding
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Play Areas	Replace missing reflector strips	Deputy Clerk	
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Play Areas	Play Area Toadstools to be cleaned	Deputy Clerk	Add to Caretaker's list
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Play Areas	Play Area protruding metal on fence to be secured	Deputy Clerk	Add to Caretaker's list
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Play Areas	Play Area & Rookery Path - brambles to be cleared	Deputy Clerk	Caretaker or Community Pay Back to action

A58	023/26	25-Aug-26	Playing Field	Submit Management Plan for changing rooms conditions (and other conditions)	Cllr Griffiths and Clerk (via Architect)	Passed to architect
A59	023/26	25-Aug-26	Playing Field	Review trees (?TPOs) at Playing Field/Rookery Path	All Cllrs and Clerk	Site meeting 8/10/26 Research if can replant TPO trees that have been felled.
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Playing Field	Broken fence rail & wobbly post at Rookery Court entrance	Deputy Clerk	Contact Rookery Court Mgmt Co

	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Playing Field	Badly leaning tree along Southern edge from neighbouring land	Clerk	To contact Parsonage Mgmt Co
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Playing Field	Changing Room - caretaker to clear items into skip at S/F	Deputy Clerk	Add to Caretaker's list
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Playing Field	Gen waste contractor no longer accepts dog waste - separate contract needed for bins & collection. Signage to be changed on existing bins	Clerk	Quotes obtained - on agenda for 27 Oct 26.
A57	023/26	25-Aug-26 22-Sep-26	Playing Field	Continue working with architect for phasing the changing rooms project Contact Architect to check progress	Cllr Griffiths and Clerk Cllr Turner	Obtain new quotes from preferred contractors (via previous tender) and review
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Playing Field & Rookery Path	Tree works required for overhanging and dead trees. Quote to be obtained	Deputy Clerk	Quotes to be sought after Aut '26 Tree Audit

A36	081/26	24-Feb-26	Southons	Chequer Tree to be planted in Southons Field to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II	Cllr Boswell	Cllr Boswell will plant early Nov '26
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Southons	Self-seeded ash trees to be removed by cemetery groundsman	Deputy Clerk	Action for cemetery groundsman
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Southons	Pavilion needs work to the gutters, roof edging and timber needs treating	Deputy Clerk	Add to Caretaker's list
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Southons	Picnic benches require some minor works	Deputy Clerk	Add to Caretaker's list
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Southons	Fencing by Tel Exch needs repairing & preventative action taken to deter access	Deputy Clerk	Talk through with caretakers

A14	041/25	23-Sep-25	Toilets	Wheelchair accessibility at public conv discussed at 8 Oct 26 site meeting	Cllr Turner, Open Spaces Comm and Deputy Clerk	16 Oct 26 Dep Clerk has taken all measurements, now confirming requirements with Cllr Turner
A34	069/26	27-Jan-26	Toilets	Purchase and instal 2 x baby change units, including Ecosan disposal unit & emptying contract	Deputy Clerk	Assess position in line with review of wheelchair access - see A14
A66	025/26	25-Aug-26	Toilets	Make contact with contractors re solar panel installation	Cllr Griffiths and Clerk	
A74	038/26	22-Sep-26	Toilets	Following solar panels work, contractor to deep clean toilets and Caretaker to re-paint	Clerk	Awaiting completion of works
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Toilets	2 x toilet roll dispensers to be replaced in Ladies toilet, with same style as gents	Clerk	Caretaker to fit once received
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Toilets	Lightbulb to be replaced in Ladies	Deputy Clerk	Add to Caretaker's list
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Toilets	Broken floor tile in Ladies	Deputy Clerk	Add to Caretaker's list
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Toilets	Spinning tap in Gents	Deputy Clerk	Add to Caretaker's list
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Toilets	New signage for the toilets , as required based on wheelchair access & baby change	Cllr Newton	
	Site Mtg	08-Oct-26	Toilets	Instalation of a water re-fill station on outside wall	Environmental Sub-Group	Cllr Rabot investigating grants

Completed since last review meeting

A77	039/26	22-Sep-26	Christmas	New Stallholder Policy to be implemented for Marden at Christmas and Booking Form to be updated to reflect changes	Deputy Clerk	Oct 26 - Actioned
A62	023/26	25-Aug-26	Southons	Purchase one goal for S/F	Admin Assistant	Oct 26 - Purchased & in store at S/F
A75	038/26	22-Sep-26	Toilets	Complete Public Toilet Survey	Deputy Clerk	19 Oct 26 - Actioned

Tree Audit Quotes

27th October 2026 - Amenities Committee meeting

As discussed, and agreed, at 22nd September Amenities meeting I have contacted companies to obtain quotes for tree audits for November 2026.

Areas covered:

Cemetery

Southons Field

Playing Field/Rookery Path/Chestnuts

Company	Cost	Notes
Tree Cycle Ltd	£ -	Previous company used - no longer in business
Silva Arboriculture Ltd	£ 795.00	Recommended by Hunton PC (no VAT)
Invicta Arboriculture	£ 1,650.00	Recommended by other Clerks (East Kent) (VAT not explicit)
Qualitree	£ 2,755.00	Undertaken tree surgery work for MPC (Cost excludes VAT @ 20%)

REPORT TO OPEN SPACES SUB-COMMITTEE

Meeting date: 27th October 2026

Authors: Alison Hooker, Parish Clerk

Subject: Cemetery database

Purpose: *To inform Cllrs of current situation and to aid making a proposal to Finance Committee*

Recommendations:

That the Open Spaces Sub-Committee review this report and quotes received for a new database to manage cemetery burials and interment of ashes etc.

Background

The office uses Pear Technology Cemetery database and mapping system for managing the burial and ashes of Marden cemetery. It also enables users to unload details of next of kin, exclusive right of burial owners, headstone photos and plots location on mapping system to provide details to funeral directors and grave diggers. Following an email from Pear Technology dated 29th September (see next page) three companies were contacted whereby the mapping system could be imported over to the new system - Scribe, Rialtas and EdgelT – all three recommended by Pear Technology.

These 3 companies have now made contact (see attached quote spreadsheet) and Cllrs on the Open Spaces Sub-Committee are asked to make a proposal to Amenities Committee.

Options for Council

- a) Note/Do nothing – continue to use current system but no updates or support would be provided.
- b) Recommend the preferred system to Amenities Committee for current year;
- c) Recommend the preferred system to Amenities Committee for the new financial year
- d) To

Reason for recommendation

See above. If continue to use current system there would be no support, training or updates going forward.

Expected benefits (categorise the benefits if possible, good for reaching councillors who have interests, also useful for any potential funding applications)

- a) The local community
- ~~b) The environment~~
- c) The wider community
- d) Other

Appendices

(Attach any additional information/paperwork/links which will allow Cllrs to find out more details)

Email received from Pear Technology

Pear are no longer selling the Pear Cemetery Database. The software relies on Microsoft Access Runtime 2010, which is now end-of-life and no longer supported by Microsoft. Because we recognise the security vulnerabilities associated with end-of-life software, we do not have plans to release a newer version.

Instead, we recommend that the Council transitions to a modern, cloud-based burial administration system that is fully compatible with the digital cemetery maps we have already created for you. Furthermore, because Maplink is also aging and will not be upgraded by Pear going forward, moving to a modern platform is the best route for long-term security and functionality.

Cemetery Database Quotes**For Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting on 27th October 2026**

Company	Initial Payment	Importing from Pear	Cemetery Mapping	Monthly Fee	Annual Fee	Licence	Training	Total one-off payment	Total annual costs	Total initial payment on set up	Notes
Scribe	£ 319.00	£ 599.00	Included in import	£ 39.00	£ -	Included	Included	£ 918.00	£ 468.00	£ 1,386.00	On-line demo given to Clerk - seemed a good system and easy to use
Rialtas	£ -	Included in training	Included in training	£ -	£ 642.00	£ 1,048.00	£ 1,099.00	£ 2,147.00	£ 642.00	£ 2,789.00	No demo available at current time
Edge IT											Waiting for quote
Parish Online	£ -		Included in set up		£ 300.00	Included	Included	£ -	£ 300.00		Within Parish Online mapping system - would no longer need Pear Technology (£260 pa plus additional costs for updates on OS etc - last update provided by PT - 2024)

REPORT TO OPEN SPACES SUB-COMMITTEE

Meeting date: 27th October 2026

Author: Sue Smith, Deputy Parish Clerk

Subject: Review Grave Surrounds Policy

Purpose: *To inform Cllrs of current Cemetery Rules and Regulations in relation to Memorials, Fencing, Tributes and Care of Graves and Ashes Plots*

Recommendation: That the Open Spaces Sub-Committee consider any required revisions to the current Rules.

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BURIALS IN SECTIONS 1, 2,3 and 4

8. Memorials

8.1 Cemetery Section 1 and 2 relates to the older part of the Cemetery and kerbstones are permitted.

8.2 Section 3 relates to the section to the right at the rear of the cemetery and is a designated lawned area with headstones only permitted with one vase, kerbstones are not permitted. The plot can be tended by family members to a maximum of 2'6" x 6' but no further memorials can be placed on the plot. Written confirmation of this will be required.

8.3 Section 4 relates to the new section to the left at the rear of the cemetery with headstones only permitted with one vase within the headstone base. The plot cannot be tended as Section 3. Kerbstones and fencing are not permitted The Parish Council will order removal of any kerbstone or fencing following 14 days written notice (no compensation will be payable).

8.4 Stone chippings are permitted in Section 3 but must be in a tended, fenced area on the plot measuring no more than 2'6" x 6'. Chippings must not be on the grass or allowed to fall onto the grassed area.

8.5 Only one headstone can be erected on a grave. No other memorial is permitted without prior approval of the Parish Council. It is the rightful owner of the ERB who maintains the headstone during the period of grave rights granted.

8.6 Maximum size for a headstone on an adult burial plot is 3ft high x 2ft 6in wide (92cm x 76cm). For a child's grave (up to 5 years of age) the maximum size is 18" high x 21" wide (46cm x 53cm). If any headstone exceeds these dimensions the Parish Council will order removal following fourteen days written notice (No compensation will be payable). The base of the headstone shall be placed and maintained below the level of the surface of the surrounding ground.

8.7 Applications including drawings showing dimensions of every headstone with a statement of the type of stone to be used, proposed position on the grave space, details of inscription and fittings MUST be submitted to the Parish Council for

consideration before installation. An additional fee is incurred for the headstone. All memorial work must be carried out in accordance with the relevant Code of Working Practice of The National Association of Memorial Masons / BRAMM Blue Book and BS8415.

8.8 No headstone shall be erected or placed on a grave or anywhere in the Cemetery without prior approval from the Parish Council.

9. Fencing & Tributes on Graves

Fencing

9.1 If desired, a plot within Section 3 of the Cemetery, may be tended but will be reverted to lawn at the discretion of the Parish Council if not regularly maintained. The plot must not exceed 6ft x 2ft 6in (180cm x 76cm) (including the base of the headstone).

9.2 A fence, not exceeding 12in (30cm) in height, may be placed round the grave in Section 3 but must be within the 6ft x 2ft 6in (180cm x 76cm) area. Applications for the erection of any fencing should include drawings showing dimensions of the fencing to be used and the positioning of the fencing must be submitted to the Parish Council for consideration. No fencing to be erected, or placed in the Cemetery, without prior written approval of the Parish Council. The design of fencing must be safe for other users of the cemetery (ie no spikes) and allow free maintenance of surrounding graves.

Other Tributes

9.3 The following are not permitted on graves in any section unless stated. If placed on graves the Parish Council will order their removal following fourteen days written notice to the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial and will be kept by the Parish Council for twenty-eight days following removal (No compensation will be payable).

- NO SHRUBS OR TREES are to be PLANTED ON THE GRAVES
- NO GLASS CONTAINERS OR COVERS on graves
- NO SOLAR LIGHTS ARE PERMITTED
- NO KERBSTONES except in Sections 1 and 2
- NO FOOTSTONE, OR OTHER MEMORIAL/OBSTRUCTION to be placed on the grave or within a fenced area

9.4 Tributes (such as those for birthdays, anniversaries, Mothering Sunday, Father's Day, Easter etc) may be placed on the graves but tributes including balloons are to be removed from the graves after 14 days. Marden Parish Council reserves the right to remove such tributes after this time.

9.5 Christmas wreaths are to be removed by 14th January each year; The Parish Council reserves the right to remove tributes after this time.

9.6 Floral Tributes must be contained within the area of the grave to which they relate and must not spread over surrounding graves and be removed within 14 days. Marden Parish Council reserves the right to remove such tributes after this time.

9.7 In all cases, dead flowers and other rubbish must be placed in the waste bins provided. Any floral items found 'past their best' within any areas of the cemetery may be removed without notice by the Parish Council's employees. No stones or soil must be placed in these bins.

10. Care of Graves

10.1 Sections 1 and 2 Graves (old part of the cemetery) to contain a mixture of memorials such as headstones and full kerbs. The owner of the ERB may plant annual bedding over the whole grave or it may be grassed over but must not include tree or large shrub planting. The ground maintenance is the responsibility of the owner of the ERB and the grave space is not therefore maintained by the Parish Council. The Parish Council maintains the paths between graves. On very old or neglected graves, the Parish Council will trim the grass on the grave.

10.2 Section 3 Graves to contain a headstone and tended plot.

10.3 Section 4 Graves to contain a headstone only.

10.4 Except where permitted above, no other decoration or adornment shall be placed in the cemetery. If this occurs the Parish Council will order their removal following fourteen days written notice to the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial (if known), and will be kept by the Parish Council for twenty-eight days following removal (No compensation will be payable).

10.5 No chemicals of any description shall be used on or around a grave/ashes plot.

10.6 Turf must be re-laid following a burial and no artificial grass is permitted.

10.7 If it is deemed necessary, the Parish Council may contact the person/s named on the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial and request that they perform maintenance on the plot to bring it up to a standard in line with other graves in the Section.

INTERMENT OF ASHES/CREMATED REMAINS

16. Memorials on Ashes Plots

16.1 Only one Memorial stone is permitted on an ashes plot. No other memorial stone is permitted. It is the rightful owner of the ERB who maintains the memorial stone during the period of grave rights granted.

16.2 Maximum size for memorial stone on ashes plot is 18in x 18in (46cm x 46cm)

16.7 A single vase may be placed on a memorial tablet within the ashes area, if it is placed on the surrounding area the Parish Council will order removal following fourteen days written notice (No compensation will be payable).

17. Fencing & Tributes on Ashes Plots

Fencing

17.1 No fencing is permitted on any of the plots within the cremated remains sections.

Other Tributes

17.2 The following is not permitted on ashes plots, otherwise the Parish Council will order their removal following fourteen days written notice to the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial, and will be kept by the Parish Council for twenty eight days following removal (No compensation will be payable).

- NO SHRUBS OR TREES are to be PLANTED IN BETWEEN THE ASHES PLOTS
- NO GLASS CONTAINERS OR COVERS
- NO SOLAR LIGHTS ARE PERMITTED
- NO OTHER MEMORIAL/OBSTRUCTION

17.3 Tributes (such as those for birthdays, anniversaries, Mothering Sunday, Fathers Day, Easter etc) may be placed on the memorial tablet but tributes including balloons are to be removed after 14 days. Marden Parish Council reserves the right to remove such tributes after this time.

17.4 Floral tributes may be placed on the memorial tablet – either natural or silk – but natural tributes are to be removed after 14 days. Marden Parish Council reserves the right to remove such tributes.

17.5 Floral tributes MUST be contained within the area of the plot to which they relate and must not spread over surrounding ashes plots.

17.6 Christmas wreaths are to be removed by 14th January each year; The Parish Council reserves the right to remove tributes after this time.

17.7 In all cases, dead flowers and other rubbish must be placed in the waste bins provided. No stones or soil must be placed in these bins.

18. Care of Ashes Plots

18.1 Except where permitted above, no other decoration or adornment shall be placed in the cemetery. If this occurs the Parish Council will order their removal following fourteen days written notice to the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial (if known), and will be kept by the Parish Council for twenty eight days following removal (No compensation will be payable).

18.2 If it is deemed necessary, the Parish Council may contact the person/s named on the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial and request that they perform maintenance on the plot to bring it up to a standard in line with other graves in the Section.

18.3 The ashes section will be planted by the Parish Council between each plot for ease of maintenance.

18.4 The ashes section will be maintained by the Parish Council and no further planting is to take place.

Cemetery Permissions - If Yes permission is still required from MPC

	Section 1 & 2	Section 3	Section 4 (adult and children's graves)	Cremated Remains Sections	Children's Section 1 & 2 and Cremated Remains area	Scattered Ashes Section
Kerbstones	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
Fencing	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Wooden/ Biodegradable coffins	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes	No
Caskets – see item 5.3	No	No	Yes	N/A	No	No
Wooden/ Biodegradable ashes containers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Plastic ashes containers	No	No	No	No	No	No
Headstones (3' x 2'6") (92cm x 76cm)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Children's Headstones (up to 5years of age) (18" x 21") (46cm x 53cm)	Yes	N/A	Yes	No	Yes	No
Headstones (other size)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Memorial Tablet (18" x 18") (46cm x 46cm)	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
Footstones	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Other Memorials	No	No	No	No	No	No
Plaque (12" x 8" max) (30cm x 20cm)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Vases	Yes	Yes	In with headstone	In with memorial tablet	Yes	No
Tending of plot (6'x2'6") (180cm x 76cm)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Tending of plot in Children's Section	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Shrubs/Trees on plots	No	No	No	No	No	No
Glass containers on plots	No	No	No	No	No	No
Solar Lighting on plots or elsewhere in the cemetery	No	No	No	No	No	No
Floral tributes (MUST BE removed after 14 days)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Balloons (MUST BE removed after 14 days)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Christmas, Birthday, Anniversary and other festive tributes (MUST BE removed after 14 days)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Plaques on benches	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Chemicals	No	No	No	No	No	No
Artificial Grass	No	No	No	No	No	No
Scattering of Ashes (permission required)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

REPORT TO OPEN SPACES SUB-COMMITTEE

Meeting date: 27th October 2026

Author: Sue Smith, Deputy Parish Clerk

Subject: Memorial Bench and Plaque Policy – Discussion Paper

Purpose: *Discussion paper to aid the formulation of a future Memorial Bench Policy*

Recommendations:

That the Open Spaces Sub-Committee review this paper and advise on the approach Marden Parish Council should take on requests for memorial benches and plaques in future.

Memorial Bench Policy – Discussion Paper

Things to Consider

1 Process to apply

- a) Application form to Parish Office
- b) Establish a legitimate link to Marden Parish
- c) Decisions made by Amenities Committee or Open Spaces Sub-Committee?

2 Bench vs Plaque Options

- a) Allow family to pay for a dedicated bench, to their own design?
- b) Family to pay for a dedicated bench to a MPC stipulated design? Who orders?
- c) MPC to purchase and site benches, for families to add plaques to? If so, max no of plaques per bench

3 Bench Design

- a) Restrict the style of bench to allow?
- b) Material - wooden/recycled plastic
- c) Size of bench

4 Placement of Benches/Plaques

- a) Can family propose a location?
- b) Will MPC restrict site positions?
- c) Siting of bench – fixed or movable? Set on a concrete plinth/paving slabs for ease of mowing?
- d) Should MPC pro-actively list allowable positions for benches?
- e) Final decision on location to be taken by ??
- f) Need to take account of accessibility, public safety, preservation of green spaces
- g) Will nearby residents be consulted, and objections taken into account if relevant?

5 Plaque Design – whether family or MPC owned

- a) Size and material for plaque (see current rules below on size, which needs amending)
- b) Amount of text
- c) MPC to approve text?
- d) Who produces plaque?
- e) Who determines placement position on bench

6 Ownership and Maintenance

- a) Who will 'own' the bench/plaque
- b) Will MPC carry out any maintenance? Pre-state what and how often?
- c) Who authorises major repair/replacement if not an MPC purchased bench and who can carry out repairs?

7 Additional Items on Bench?

- a) Will you allow vases, floral tributes, wreaths, statues, decorations, toys etc?
- b) If floral tributes, include a vase? Size and style of vase? Specify time limit after which removed?

8 Duration

- a) How long do family have bench/plaque in place for?
- b) What happens at the end of that time?
- c) Retain contact details for family
- d) Return any plaques safely to family at end of time, or if damaged

9 Fees or Donation - What does charge cover?

- a) Bench/plaque purchase/delivery
- b) Installation – by MPC or external contractor?
- c) Maintenance programme
- d) Minor repair
- e) Major repair

10 Insurance cover/Damage

- a) Within MPC insurance policy/risk assessment/asset register?
- b) Does MPC have right to remove if unsafe?

From Cemetery Rules & Regulations April 2026:

Benches & Plaques

2.20 Benches have been provided in the cemetery by the Parish Council. Families are able to request the purchase of a commemorative plaque to be placed on a bench and a written application should be made to the clerk. The plaques (12" x 8" max) (30cm x 20cm) **(Note: This should probably be 12cm x 8cm?)** to be installed by the Parish Council. Both the purchase of the plaque and installation will be at the applicant's expense.

MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL FEES FOR OPEN SPACE, PLAY SCHEME AND CEMETERY

Open Space Fee History

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27
Playing Field (Pitch & Changing Room)				£ 38.00	£ 42.50	£ 47.00	£ 47.50	£ 47.50	£ 48.00	£ 50.00	£ 52.50	£ 52.50	£ 52.50	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Playing Field (other) see S/F charges																			£ -
Southons Field - car parking	£ 25.00	£ 25.00	£ 25.00	£ 25.00	£ 25.00	£ 30.00	£ 30.00	£ 30.00	£ 30.00	£ 30.00	£ 30.00	£ 30.00	£ 30.00	£ 30.00	£ 35.00	£ 37.50	£ 37.50	£ 40.00	£ -
Southons Field - < 4 hours	£ 40.00	£ 40.00	£ 50.00	£ 50.00	£ 50.00	£ 55.00	£ 55.00	£ 55.00	£ 55.00	£ 55.00	£ 55.00	£ 55.00	£ 55.00	£ 55.00	£ 65.00	£ 70.00	£ 70.00	£ 75.00	£ -
Southons Field - >4 hours	£ 80.00	£ 80.00	£ 100.00	£ 100.00	£ 100.00	£ 110.00	£ 110.00	£ 110.00	£ 110.00	£ 110.00	£ 110.00	£ 110.00	£ 110.00	£ 110.00	£ 130.00	£ 140.00	£ 140.00	£ 150.00	£ -
Southons Field - hourly rate	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	£ 15.00	£ 15.00	£ 15.00	£ 15.00	£ 15.00	£ 15.00	£ 17.50	£ 18.50	£ 18.50	£ 20.00	£ -

MARDEN SUMMER PLAY SCHEME
YEARLY FEES

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
AM																			
one child	£ 2.50	£ 3.00	£ 3.75	£ 4.00	£ 4.50	£ 4.50	£ 4.50	£ 4.50	£ 4.50	£ 4.50	£ 5.00	Covid	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 6.50	£ 6.50	£ 7.00	0
Two children	£ 4.50	£ 5.50	£ 7.00	£ 7.50	£ 8.00	£ 8.00	£ 8.00	£ 8.00	£ 8.00	£ 8.00	£ 9.00	Covid	£ 9.00	£ 9.00	£ 9.00	£ 12.00	£ 12.00	£ 13.00	0
Three Children	£ 6.50	£ 7.50	£ 10.00	£ 11.00	£ 12.00	£ 12.00	£ 12.00	£ 12.00	£ 12.00	£ 12.00	£ 13.50	Covid	£ 13.50	£ 13.50	£ 13.50	£ 16.50	£ 16.50	£ 20.00	0
ALL DAY																			
one child	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	£ 9.00	£ 9.00	£ 9.00	£ 9.00	£ 9.00	£ 9.00	£ 10.00	Covid	£ 10.00	£ 10.00	£ 10.00	£ 13.00	£ 13.00	£ 14.00	0
Two children	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	£ 16.00	£ 16.00	£ 16.00	£ 16.00	£ 16.00	£ 16.00	£ 18.00	Covid	£ 18.00	£ 18.00	£ 18.00	£ 24.00	£ 24.00	£ 26.00	0
Three Children	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	£ 24.00	£ 24.00	£ 24.00	£ 24.00	£ 24.00	£ 24.00	£ 27.00	Covid	£ 27.00	£ 27.00	£ 27.00	£ 33.00	£ 33.00	£ 40.00	0
ON DAY																			
Any child	£ 3.50	£ 3.50	£ 4.25	£ 4.50	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.50	Covid	same as above	same as above	same as above	same as above	same as above	same as above	
All day	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	£ 10.00	£ 10.00	£ 10.00	£ 10.00	£ 10.00	£ 10.00	£ 11.00	Covid	same as above	same as above	same as above	same as above	same as above	same as above	

PARISH COUNCIL CEMETERY COMPARISON PRICES for 2027 budgeting - SEE SEPARATE SHEET FOR OTHER PARISH CHARGES

	GRAVE 0-5 years	GRAVE 5 - 16 years	Interment (incl ERB)	2nd interment (re-open of grave)	ERB	Extra Depth	Ashes in existing grave	Approval of headstone	Approval of vase	Additional Inscription	Interment of Ashes (incl ERB)	2nd interment (ashes plot)	ERB	Re/Opening Fee	Transfer of Ownership	Approval of memorial tablet	Preparing plot for ashes	Scattering of Ashes	Double fees if not resident
Marden 2012 fees	no charge	£ 68.00	£210.00	£ -	£173.00	£ 58.00	£ 79.00	£105.00	£ 32.00	£ 42.00	£100.00	£100.00	£105.00		£ 42.00	£ 42.00	£ 32.00		yes
Marden 2013 fees	no charge	£ 75.00	£220.00	£ -	£200.00	£ 60.00	£ 85.00	£105.00	£ 35.00	£ 45.00	£105.00	£100.00	£110.00		£ 50.00	£ 45.00	£ 35.00		yes
Marden 2014 fees	no charge	£ 75.00	£225.00	£ -	£205.00	£ 60.00	£ 85.00	£110.00	£ 35.00	£ 45.00	£110.00	£105.00	£115.00		£ 50.00	£ 45.00	£ 35.00		yes
Marden 2014 fees	no charge	£ 75.00	£250.00	£ -	£250.00	£ 60.00	£110.00	£110.00	£ 35.00	£ 50.00	£125.00	£110.00	£125.00		£ 50.00	£ 60.00	£ 50.00		yes
Marden 2015 fees	no charge	£ 75.00	£250.00	£ -	£250.00	£ 60.00	£110.00	£110.00	£ 35.00	£ 50.00	£125.00	£110.00	£125.00		£ 50.00	£ 60.00	£ 50.00		yes
Marden 2016 fees	no charge	£ 75.00	£250.00	£ -	£250.00	£ 60.00	£110.00	£110.00	£ 35.00	£ 50.00	£125.00	£110.00	£125.00		£ 50.00	£ 60.00	£ 50.00		yes
Marden 2017 fees	no charge	£ 80.00	£525.00	£260.00	£ -	£ 65.00	£115.00	£115.00	£ 40.00	£ 55.00	£260.00	£130.00	£ -		£ 55.00	£ 65.00	£ 55.00		yes
Marden 2018 fees	no charge	no charge	£525.00	£260.00	£ -	£ 65.00	£115.00	£115.00	£ 40.00	£ 55.00	£260.00	£130.00	£ -		£ 55.00	£ 65.00	£ 55.00		yes
Marden 2019 fees	no charge	no charge	£535.00	£265.00	£ -	£ 70.00	£120.00	£120.00	£ 45.00	£ 60.00	£265.00	£135.00	£ -		£ 60.00	£ 70.00	£ 60.00		yes
Marden 2020 fees	no charge	no charge	£550.00	£275.00	£ -	£ 70.00	£120.00	£120.00	£ 45.00	£ 60.00	£275.00	£135.00	£ -		£ 60.00	£ 70.00	£45.00*		yes
Marden 2021 fees	no charge	no charge	£550.00	£275.00	£ -	£ 70.00	£120.00	£120.00	£ 45.00	£ 60.00	£275.00	£135.00	£ -		£ 60.00	£ 70.00	£45.00*		yes
Marden 2022 fees	no charge	no charge	£560.00	£285.00	£ -	£ 75.00	£125.00	£125.00	£ 50.00	£ 65.00	£285.00	£140.00	£ -		£ 65.00	£ 75.00	£45.00*	£ 40.00	Yes
Marden 2023 fees	no charge	no charge	£600.00	£300.00	£ -	£ 85.00	£140.00	£140.00	£ 55.00	£ 70.00	£300.00	£150.00	£ -		£ 70.00	£ 85.00	£45.00*	£ 45.00	Yes
Marden 2024 fees	no charge	no charge	£650.00	£330.00	£ -	£ 90.00	£150.00	£150.00	£ 60.00	£ 75.00	£330.00	£160.00	£ -		£ 75.00	£ 90.00	£50.00*	£ 45.00	Yes
Marden 2025 fees	no charge	no charge	£660.00	£340.00	£ -	£ 95.00	£160.00	£160.00	£ 65.00	£ 80.00	£340.00	£170.00	£ -		£ 80.00	£ 95.00	£50.00*	£ 50.00	Yes
Marden 2026 fees	no charge	no charge	£680.00	£350.00	£ -	£100.00	£165.00	£165.00	£ 70.00	£ 85.00	£350.00	£180.00	£ -		£ 85.00	£ 100.00	£50.00*	£ 50.00	Yes
Marden 2026 fees	no charge	no charge	£680.00	£350.00	£ -	£100.00	£165.00	£165.00	£ 70.00	£ 85.00	£350.00	£180.00	£ -		£ 85.00	£ 100.00	£50.00*	£ 50.00	Yes

* £50.00 - preparation of plot costs dependant on grave digger