

West Norwood Cemetery Strategic Partnership Board

Meeting date: 8 October 2025

Time: 6-8pm

Location: Room 1-01, Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton Hill, SW2 1RW and via MS Teams

Attendees:

Archdeacon's representatives: Nicholas Long (NL)

Lambeth councillors: Cllr Emma Nye (EN) and Cllr Olga Fitzroy (OF) (Co-Chairs)

Friends of West Norwood Cemetery: Jane Jordan (JJ) and Andrea Woodside (AW)

Historical Specialists: Dr Ian Dungavell (ID) and Robert Flanagan (RF)

Lambeth officers: Kevin Crook (Assistant Director Neighbourhoods) (KC)

Norwood Forum: Tim Stephens (TS) and Susan Osborn (SO)

Co-optees: Christopher Long (CL), Anne Fairweather (AF) and Elyssa Livigant (EL).

Non-Board members present: Kim Hart (KH).

Live sub-groups and membership

1. Friends MoU (OF/EN/CB/JL/KC)
2. Hellenic Enclosure (CL/RF/NL/KC/EL (planting related)/other reps. to come from CL and KH)
3. Interpretation (OF/EN/NL/KC, others as required)
4. Volunteering (EN/OF/KC/JL/JJ/AW); other officers, e.g. KH, invited as required.

Actions are in a table at the end of the document

The meeting was quorate.

1. Introductions, Apologies and Declarations of Interest (Chair)

Apologies: Julian Briant (JB) and Jacqueline Landy (JL).

NL declared grave ownership; TS declared that as partner of KH he would not take part in any debate regarding her areas of work where decisions were to be made but would otherwise contribute to the discussion where appropriate.

Massive congratulations were expressed to everyone involved with the Family of Families event.

Huge thanks to KH to be minuted for everything she has done for the cemetery.

2. Minutes of previous meeting (Chair)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2025 were formally approved.

SO raised it had been agreed **ID** would share Values document from Highgate. **OF** noted these had just been received and will be considered at the next meeting.

3. Actions log / Actions arising (Chair)

These were gone through and outstanding items discussed. See updated Actions Log at end of document.

Specifically noted:

- Balli has been done.
- **Action:** Acceptable uses document to be discussed at next meeting, taking into account the Highgate document.
- **Action:** **KH** has template for EDI survey to be circulated.
- **SO:** raised need to see updated safety report for Robson Road entrance which Preeti mentioned at last meeting.
- **Action JL:** visit to crematorium and catacombs still outstanding.
- Board documents on website: **KC** explained webteam had said pdfs did not meet legal standards for accessibility and would need extensive work. **KH** would upload to project website instead. **OF** to submit Members Enquiry on the issue; **AF** noted need for documents to be publicised to achieve transparency for residents.
- Hubbard Road signage – **KH** said it had been agreed not to have signs there. **Action KH:** to arrange signs which just ask cyclists to dismount at gates.
- **Action:** Agreed to review Terms of Reference at next meeting.
- **AF:** some actions from Minutes not added to Action Log.
- **NL:** in addition. two items on p2, e.g. PCK agreed to provide clearer budget information, but that hasn't happened. Same issue p3 with Hubbard Road issue, there is a disconnect with Highways re. finalising works; then on p3 financial reporting; p4 the three memorials in Hellenic enclosure that are still not fully re-erected. **OF:** we have followed up separately, add to Action Log.
- **SO:** we also discussed a quarterly report on compliments, complaints and violent incidents.
- **Action:** **KC/JL** to add these into cemetery operations report.

4. Capital works (NLHF programme / Robson Road / Dodd) (Chair)

Action: still not received more recent safety assessment for Robson Road.

Action OF/EN: will invite Cabinet Member to next meeting.

NL/AF: need a representative from the capital team present at Board meetings to answer questions.

Action all: send questions to **OF** and she will feed back to capital team and Cabinet Member.

EL: Board needs to see financial information.

NL: Dodd (email sent) there is a reference in grave register, five interments were sealed vertically in lower part of vault – not reflected in architect's report or Preeti's report. Important in case anyone tries to interfere with concrete. **OF** raised budget issues.

TS: has the Board signed off the Dodd scheme? **NL/OF:** no. **NL:** we wish to see HARR works completed. Money allocated under project was arbitrarily removed by Preeti and we want to get back to status quo of work being completed. Budget is being spent elsewhere. Upper level has been done. **NL:** Dodd is finest mausoleum we have; Mick Wynne should be present at these meetings as it is that level of accountability we need.

5. Family of Families event (CL)

CL: I have been bombarded with attendees contacting to thank for an amazing day. Engendered a huge amount of goodwill. Agreed in April to set up some sort of support group for the families. **NL** has sent some suggestions. There is a core action committee – George Vassiadis (happy to work with **KC**), David Ralli, John Argenti (in US). Could **KC** please liaise with George to try and start leveraging in support and funding to keep enclosure in best possible condition into future. **CL** will send to **KC** to copy to all members a synthesis of all messages received. **OF** invited others to feed in. **AF:** could it develop into some sort of charitable foundation? **CL:** must be careful not to scare families off with demands. **CL:** with agreement of **JL**, agreed with George to do complete photographic assessment and can send notes to families about what needs to be done. **KC** has up to date list of all present, so potential is there to contact them but please use David, George and **CL** as conduit to contact them. **OF, NL** has anything been done in past? **NL:** yes Pan Pandelis has taken a survey of all memorials, but simply reference photos, **CL** idea is a very good step forward. **OF, NL** can you please share the survey with **CL**? **EL:** need to consider conflict of interest with private funders. Thought about Greenwood Cemetery in NY, but programmes and initiatives another way to bring in people who have funding. **CL:** we know the stories behind the families and is available to you, right now we need to maintain the enthusiasm and concentrate on pulling them into a support group, Friends involvement would be wonderful. Only a few weeks to take advantage of this. Lambeth to decide what form it takes. **KC** key as he has met a lot of them. **OF:** we can't set up a foundation. **CL:** ask George and David and they will progress, just need to know it has the Council's backing and supported by the Friends. **AF:** if families set up a foundation could be ongoing dialogue with Lambeth. Concern with Lambeth delivering capital works. **CL:** agree, once you have an acceptable group/trust, then you can ask families to leave funds in wills. Encourage families with space on memorials to make use of them as more likely to spend money on them. **NL:** in all this we return at Item 10. Responsibility rests with grave owners. **OF:** next steps? **CL:** if **KC** could have 30 mins with David, George and me optional this would be good first step. All agreed. **NL:** **CL** would like Board to underpin by show of support this proposal and agree formally here exploring creating a Hellenic support group. **OF:** would it be helpful if we write a letter to that effect? **CL:** yes but would help if has David's / George's / **CL** name/signature on letter. But yes, needs to be our board that supports this. **Action OF** will draft text for a letter. **CL:** you have the mailing list and can use it, you own it. **RF:** support idea of exploration, but before a Charitable Trust is created, we need to consider legal implications, e.g. on restoring memorials. Legal advice at appropriate stage would be useful. **OF:** yes Friends might be important in this respect. **RF:** through Friends we did try to get interested families involved in refurbishing memorials. Need to try and expand that work. **CL:** agree and need to be clear that several of those who have written have already been in contact with Friends so want to make sure there is full support from the Friends. **KH:** we also have a long list of

positive feedback; and conundrum between legislative requirement to restore their memorials and distinction from generic infrastructure.

Action: KC to progress as suggested.

6. Activities and Community Officer update (KC)

No comments on report. **KH** and **AW** left room. **KC** updated on situation, **KH** extended to end October. 36 applications, shortlisted and interviews scheduled. Role moving to new Libraries and Venues team under Neil Fenton.

EN: are event spaces ready? **KH:** wi-fi still being sorted but available to hire. Just finishing benchmarking on community room.

Action KC: circulate booking link for St Stephens Chapel and Business Plan.

RF: could someone from the Board be on the panel? **KC:** will need to ask Neil Fenton. **OF:** any volunteers? After discussion it was agreed best not to have board member on panel.

EN: can successful candidate meet board at some point. **OF Action KC:** provide the information pack given to Board members to the new postholder. **AF:** maybe they should just meet one of the Chairs initially. That was agreed, **Action KC** to arrange.

7. Working group updates – Volunteering (OF)

OF has not been able to pick up on this issue. **KH:** lots of work undertaken, visitor centre open on Tuesdays. John Clark, **AW** and Peter Hutchinson have been opening up, going very well. **Action OF** is arranging meeting next week to talk through how it all works in practice. Will pick up with **KH** offline as she is away.

8. Bereavement services report (KC)

Action: KC/JL to add complaints, compliments and violent incidents into the service report.

NL: gave context for Scheme of Management Committee decision regarding phased removal of memorial benches out of tenure. Put in without Faculty, mostly on top of graves. Lots have been added, including in last few years with no approval at all. Aim was to achieve a clean sheet in order to start again, would ask we hold to that. Some are excluded from removal programme, e.g. by entrance. Short term inconvenience needed to get on top of problem. **KH:** can we have a map? **NL:** – no several are added by grave owners without permission. **EL:** why are benches at front of cemetery different? **NL:** we know when they were authorised, are in good condition and not on a grave. Issue went to Consistory Court in 2002, decreed they have to go. **KH:** benches are fundamental to accessibility, number one thing people raise is can we have a bench. Surely we can decide which ones to keep now? **TS:** Forum had complaint about a favourite bench being removed. **OF:** that wasn't her individual bench though. **TS:** she also raised other ones, e.g. top of Reddins steps where she used to rest, it was on the road not a grave. Some are ideally placed for single women because they are visible. Crying need for benches in the cemetery and we are providing less and less. **JJ:** echo that as we were copied in as well. How much demand is there from relatives to purchase? **AF:** benches are easy to fund. Just about getting the location right. **NL:** they can't be on a

grave. **AF:** yes, goes without saying. **OF:** do all benches need faculty? **NL:** think that can be avoided. **KH:** think they are excluded from needing faculty. **OF Action:** **KC/JL** to produce a report on creating a new memorial bench scheme and to include bench design. **EN:** please include a map of current benches and potential permanent locations.

Action: need to remove those benches that people have brought in themselves and placed without permission. **KC/JL.**

Action: **KC** to circulate original removal programme.

KH Action: offered to put information on website about benches that are being removed.

TS: requested review of memorial tree policy to avoid removal of flowering fruit trees. Flagged two with mistletoe, **JL** agreed it could remain but removal sign still there. **NL:** gave background, uncontrolled scheme run by previous cemetery manager. SoMC wanted to draw a line under it. Also, needed a recognition of original landscape and understanding of species within original planting scheme and what would supplement that. Basic work for planting schedule not done yet. No problem with a new formal scheme.

JJ: please share bin quote, Friends might be able to help. **Action JL.**

KH: new tree-planting plan has been referred to, is there one? **TS:** Jack's report to last meeting mentioned issue. Will a report come to future meeting? Expecting a more detailed report as per Jack's report. **KH:** we need to replace trees coming to end of their life. **NL:** there was a report produced on original planting plan, will try to locate. It included what had failed. **Action NL.**

OF Action for KC: for next meeting can we have a tree planting policy. **EL:** this needs to consider climate change.

TS: last winter 40 plus conifers were removed. Conifers excellent for tackling climate change. What policy was being followed? What about adopt a tree scheme?

SO: a memorial approach can be discriminatory. **AF:** would need a waiting list. Adopt a tree scheme is better and gives everyone the opportunity to participate. **OF:** valid issues but don't think that is a reason not to create a memorial scheme. Can anyone suggest adopt a tree schemes from anywhere else? **Action:** all to investigate.

Action: **KC** to bring memorial tree and bench schemes to next meeting.

KH: lots of other options for plaques etc. in the cemetery, so memorialisation is well established.

9. Access review (KC)

KC: comments received from NL via email will be incorporated.

NL: need to include consideration of original paths that have ceased to exist, need to restore them where possible, e.g. Bailey currently goes nowhere. They are on a map.

KH: AccessAble are coming to do a site visit to update their online entry for the cemetery.

Action: **KC** to finalise and circulate and identify funding for actions.

10. Non-grave owners undertaking work to memorials (NL)

NL: suggest we agree an exploratory approach. At present memorial law is clear, responsibility sits only with owner. There are 2 exceptions – public funds can be applied if Listed and in poor repair; and if in a dangerous condition, can be made safe. What we are seeking is a scheme whereby if somebody comes forward and wishes to fund repairs, Lambeth can issue an indemnity to that person to undertake the works, need to be subject to a specification and a licence would be issued to undertake works. No transfer of rights. In past Lambeth have allowed organisations to take over grave and take on their maintenance. That was unlawful and precedence is now being cited. **JL** has spoken to other cemeteries and found other schemes do exist, is compiling a list and aim would be to bring a proposal to a future meeting. General support was expressed.

OF: is there capacity to deliver a new scheme? **KC/NL:** will be fine, numbers are low and Legal can help.

RF: in perpetuity agreements to be considered. **NL:** **JL** and team have done a lot of work on checking registers. Came to 5-600 with in perpetuity commitments, but the number remaining intact is a lot less, around 150-200. But a lot of work to do to go through the consequences.

Action: scheme to be taken forward – **JL** with support from **NL** and **KC**.

11. Review of the 2016 Filming Policy (KC)

NL: it is very outdated, no mention of TikTok etc. Needs someone with more technological knowledge to work on it.

EL: difficult to police, need to take that into account.

KH: there is a standard Lambeth filming policy, and it is mentioned in the Regulations, is that enough?

KC: gave context for its development, including being requested by the Council's Film Office contractor at the time (FilmFixer) due to the specific sensitivities and some issues that had occurred.

NL: people have been filming coffins with bones exposed and posting videos online. Strictly Come Dancing routine on Ship Path in 2017 was controversial, lots of negative press online.

SO: I looked at other policies online, e.g. Highgate. Be interesting to get Ian's view on what has led to their policy, very anti-supernatural.

Action: **KC** to circulate a revised version and give a tight deadline for responses.

12. Events for diaries (All)

KH: Friends and standard weekly walks main events at present.

Black History Month talk on Sunday.

13. AOB

EL: discussed creating a 'green space' or 'biodiversity' working group. There was general support, and **JJ** noted that Steve in the gardening group is keen on biodiversity. Agreed, **Action:** **EL** to set up.

KH: River Effra fleet to go on gravel beside Lodge. **AF:** but then becomes another thing to look after, the Board should decide if they stay or not. Who owns them? **KH:** Lambeth does, as paid for out of lottery project. Can always ask creators to take them home if we don't want to keep them. **JJ:** why was that art piece chosen to stay? **KH:** internal art – artists took back, Effra fleet was a community project. **AF:** we should bear in mind the site is a cemetery, not an art gallery. **Action:** Board to consider at next meeting after seeing the items in situ.

TS: any update on Mrs Fawcett fountain? **EN:** confirmed restoration all approved, has been returned to site but not assembled yet.

OF: may be penultimate meeting, as decided to stand down from Lambeth.

AW: I am a curator at a funeral museum in East London and happy to arrange a visit for Board members, provisionally 12 November, 11-1. Hosted 22 Bereavement Services staff a few weeks ago. **Action:** **AW** to formally invite Board members.

14. Date of next meeting (meeting are quarterly)

14 January 2026 in the cemetery – to be held in the Community Room within the Lodge.

ACTIONS LOG

No	Action	Raised	Who	Timescale	RAG
1	Provide budget statement for Bereavement Services	23/9/19	Kevin Crook	For each meeting	Standing item
2	Book venues for next meetings	30/9/24	Kevin Crook	Ongoing	Ongoing requirement
3	Minutes need to be circulated to Director of Highways, Environment and FM	27/11/24	Kevin Crook	Ongoing	Ongoing action
4	Standing items for all meetings to be added to agenda: - Volunteering update (JL and FoWNC) - Gardening update (JL) - Events happening between now and the next meeting for people's diaries (KH) - Finance Report (MW/PCK)	5/12/24	Cllr Emma Nye	Ongoing	Ongoing actions
5	Clarify removal of Heras and debris around Balli	30/9/24	Preeti C-K	By end October	Complete
6	Draft paper as discussion piece regarding acceptable uses of the cemetery	30/9/24	Kevin Crook	By end May 2025	Drafted, to be discussed again Jan 26
7	Arrange another MoU sub-group meeting	27/11/24	Kevin C	ASAP	Outstanding
8	EDI survey of Board members	27/11/24	Kim Hart	By mid-Jan	Survey ready to be circulated
9	Establish new Working Group for Volunteering and set up inaugural meeting	27/11/24	Kevin C	ASAP	Outstanding
10	Provide recent Robson Road highway safety assessment	27/11/24	Preeti C-K	ASAP	Outstanding
11	Arrange visit to crematorium/mortuary for Board members	27/11/24	Jacqueline Landy	ASAP	Open
12	Circulate revised paper on accessibility and equalities (access review)	27/11/24	Kevin Crook	Nov 25	Open
13	Meeting documents to be added to Lambeth's website	27/11/24	Kevin Crook	ASAP	Not possible, OF to query
14	Signage at Hubbard Road entrance needed	27/11/24	KH / JL	Feb/Mar	Open
15	Keep ToR on agenda for review	28/1/25	Kevin C	End June 2025	Put on Agenda for Jan 26
16	Provide additional members for Hellenic Enclosure Working Group	28/1/25	C Long / KC	ASAP	In progress
17	Update on Fawcett fountain to EN	28/1/25	Dan T	ASAP	In progress

MINUTES

No	Action	Raised	Who	Timescale	RAG
18	Financial status of NLHF programme	28/1/25	PCK	ASAP	Outstanding
19	Circulate list of capital projects for next meeting	28/1/25	Kevin C	Next meeting	Pending NLHF outturn
20	Circulate project plan for Robson Road	28/1/25	PCK	ASAP	Ongoing
21	Briefing on Dodd / Board needs to sign-off on any works package	28/1/25	PCK	ASAP as appropriate	Ongoing
22	Arrange next Catacombs meeting	28/1/25	KC	ASAP	Paused
23	Upload Board documents to Project website due to delays with Lambeth webteam	9/4/25	Kim Hart	By end April	Open
24	Issue of non-grave owners taking on works to memorials.	9/4/25	NL / KC / JL	For next meeting	In progress
25	Discuss wording for MoU	9/4/25	EN / NL / KC	By end May	Ongoing
26	Raise concerns and requests with Mick Wynne	9/4/25	Emma Nye	Before next meeting	Ongoing
27	Ensure concerns are raised at regular review meetings with PCK	9/4/25	Kevin Crook	Ongoing	Ongoing
28	Seek quotes for glass viewing door to vault room	9/4/25	Lucy Zaman	By end May	Paused
29	Add notes on complaints, compliments and violent incidents into operations report	8/10/25	Jacqueline / Kevin	Ongoing	Open
30	Invite Cabinet Members to next meeting	8/10/25	Chairs	Jan 26	Open
31	Send queries on capital schemes to Cllr Fitzroy	8/10/25	All	Nov 25	Open
32	Draft a letter confirming Lambeth's support for improvements to Hellenic Enclosure	8/10/25	Cllr Fitzroy	Nov 25	Open
33	Circulate booking link for St Stephens Chapel and Business Plan	8/10/25	Kevin C	Nov 25	Open
34	Provide new Activities and Community Officer with info pack	8/10/25	Kevin C	Nov 25	Open
35	Arrange preferred candidate to meet Chairs	8/10/25	KC / Chairs	Nov 25	Open
36	Produce a report on creating a new memorial bench and tree scheme, including possible bench designs, a map of current benches and potential permanent locations	8/10/25	KC / JL	By Jan 26	Open
37	Arrange removal of benches brought in by graveowners	8/10/25	KC / JL	By Jan 26	Open
38	Circulate 2017 bench removal schedule	8/10/25	KC	Nov 25	Open
39	Add bench removal information to project website	8/10/25	KC / KH	Dec 25	Open

MINUTES

No	Action	Raised	Who	Timescale	RAG
40	Send bin quote to Jane	8/10/25	JL	Nov 25	Open
41	Try to locate work done on original landscaping scheme	8/10/25	Nicholas	Nov 25	Open
42	Paper on tree-planting in the cemetery for next meeting	8/10/25	KC	Jan 26	Open
43	Research tree adoption schemes (as a form of memorialisation) for next meeting	8/10/25	All	Jan 26	Open
44	Develop a process for non-grave owners taking on responsibility for care/restoration of memorials	8/10/25	NL / JL / KC	Jan 26	Open
45	Circulate draft revision to Filming Policy	8/10/25	KC	Dec 25	Open
46	Create a biodiversity sub-group	8/10/25	EL (&KC)	Jan 26	Open
47	Make a decision on the Effra Fleet at next meeting	8/10/25	All	Jan 26	Open
48	Invite Board Members for a tour of the National Funeral Museum	8/10/25	AW	Nov 25	Open
49	Clarify approval process for guided walks not run by FoWNC	9/7/25	KC / JL	Dec 25	Open
50	Create statement of values to add to acceptable uses document	9/7/25	All	Jan 26	Open
51	Share information on brick vaults offered at Highgate	9/7/25	ID	Nov 25	Open
52	Check if Board meetings should/could be added to meetings calendar on Lambeth website	9/7/25	KC	Nov 25	Open
53	Confirm if Robson Road contract award report has been published	9/7/25	PCK or KC	Nov 25	Open
54	Confirm road safety arrangements for Robson Road entrance	9/7/25	PCK	Oct 25	Complete
55	Meet with Highways and capital teams	9/7/25	PCK	Nov 25	Open
56	MoU added to Robson Road decision report	9/7/25	PCK	Oct 25	Open
57	Separate meeting regarding Dodd restoration to be convened	9/7/25	PCK (KC)	Nov 25	Open

NB – once individual actions have been acknowledged as Complete by the Chairs at a Board meeting they will be removed from subsequent Minutes.