

## Report from Cllr. Mike hope on behalf of the New Cemetery Working Group

Working Group members:-

Cllr. Mike Hope, Cllr. Joan Inger, Cllr. Marie Knowles, Cllr. Pat Bosworth, Cllr. Pat Marks, Cllr. Sandra Harris and Tony Barton (member of the public involved in previous developments), Cllr. Mackenzie (involved for a short time before resignation from the Council)

### The Background

Early in 2019 I agreed to form a working group and progress plans for a new cemetery on the Hollinwood Lane site. The site had been designated for use as a cemetery for a number of years going back to before 2011 and some work had been done in the form of gates and an avenue of trees but no plans had been agreed. The parish Clerk informed me that, in 2011, on current usage, our existing cemetery on Mansfield Lane was good for about 7 to 10 years so there was some urgency to the project. To bring this up to date we currently have approximately 3 cremation plots and 7 full length burial plots with potential for the same again where we had the cemetery hedge cut back to make more space. This and the situation in which we find ourselves now surely emphasises that urgency.

### The Concept

We were aware that this is a very large plot of land and whereas the current Mansfield Lane cemetery, because it is small, has charges which are low for Calverton residents but very high for others, that would not need to apply on this site. Add to that the fact that other cemeteries in and around Nottinghamshire, including Redhill, are themselves running out of space, then, given a sensible pricing policy, this land could provide Calverton with a regular and increasing income stream for very many years to come. Furthermore if we can make it an attractive, noticeable and versatile place then this will also enhance its potential benefit to the community.

### The Process

A series of meetings were held during January, February and March 2019. These involved the working group and a variety of outside agencies including Amanda Rose (GBC), Terry Ball (GBC), Mick Wright (stonemason) and local clergy. Out of these meetings we established a list of those things we would like to see in the cemetery which included (this list is not exhaustive):-

- Childrens section (Some arguments against this)
- Traditional burial area
- Woodland burial
- Family plots available
- Natural burial
- Ashes scattering walk probably footpath to Oxton Road
- Memorial garden
- Cremation plots
- Design should be as low maintenance as possible
- Water supply throughout site
- Easy waste disposal and access for collection
- Toilets?
- Disabled access

- The best arrangement for access is “one way in and one way out”
- The development will have to be phased
- Not a good idea to allow pre-purchase
- Parking should be controlled and kept to the front of the site and not allowed inside
- It is essential that we incorporate a path for dog walkers etc. from Hollinwood Lane down to the Oxton Road junction with Main Street to provide a safe route for walkers to Gravelly Hollow although this would have to be fenced off from formal cemetery areas.
- It is a good idea to have plaques in the memorial garden
- There is a large Italian community who like to use a Mausoleum and currently have to go to Loughborough. We have the space and it would be an extra income stream
- Do not allow people to put benches into the cemetery, rather put them where we want them and allow them to carry plaques
- There should be somewhere for the men who are going to fill in the grave and their equipment to be during the internment so that they do not appear to be waiting around to get on with the job.
- It would be helpful if there was a moveable cover to protect mourners in inclement weather.

At this point we decided that it would be helpful if we could involve some professional support. However this would come at a fairly high cost to the council. As an alternative we thought we might save money and get “state of the art” thinking if we could get a university department interested as a student project/dissertation. I contacted some universities including Nottingham. Leeds Beckett University department of Landscape design and Architecture expressed an interest in the project and offered to make it part of their third year student course. There would be an initial viewing of the site and discussion between the working group and students resulting in initial proposals. Following our comments on these the students would put together a final detailed proposal taking account of our views. All of this took place resulting in the final proposal for which I have already circulated a brief outline to all councillors.

We have therefore managed to produce a complete and fairly ambitious plan in only one year. I would like to thank the members of the working group and the students and lecturers from Leeds Beckett University for their work in making this happen.

#### The thinking behind the proposal

For their initial proposals the students were split into three groups. They researched the history of Calverton and produced three designs one based on Jellicoe’s design of Calverton Colliery, one based on Calverton’s weaving heritage and the third representing “the axis of life weaving through Calverton’s DNA”. We went to Leeds for their presentations. Since they were working from the list above there were clearly similarities between the schemes but also differences. In the discussion following the presentations we identified what parts we liked, for example naming it “Jellicoes Wood” rather than referencing it as a cemetery, and of course those things that we felt would not work but stressed the need for the scheme to be capable of phasing in over a period of time and on-going development even when in use. Clearly Calverton PC is not in a position to find the sums of money required for

such a scheme from the off. Based on these discussions they then went away to work together on the final proposal which they presented to us in Leeds just before Christmas 2019 and is the one that I have already circulated to councillors.

### The way forward

The working group held a meeting in February 2020 and the final plan was considered and welcomed. Everyone thought it was innovative and that a lot of work had been put into it. Despite the fact that in the longer term it should bring a regular income into Calverton there would be a need for initial expenditure to get the project started.

It was agreed that as a development there would have to be clear stages.

- Construction of spinal road (for hearses) and car park
- Tree planting (this needs to be early as many of these will be whips so will take some years to develop into trees)
- Sowing wild flower areas and developing a management plan for these
- Paths to access plots (initially these can be more basic or even grass paths)
- Public footpath from Hollinwood Lane to Oxton Road (this may be a bridleway) again this could be a grass path at first and given a better surface later
- Fencing along footpath
- Storage for equipment etc.
- Memorial Board, Columbarium, memorial garden and artwork outside cemetery will have to be funded on an as and when basis.

It was agreed that maintenance will be required from very early on even if it is only grass cutting and therefore some machinery will be needed.

We need to find out about the maintenance regime operated by the farmer currently taking hay from land.

We will need to provide an area for the scattering of ashes early on before the tree circles/glades are established.

### The Funding

Establishing the funding for this scheme depends to a large extent on what support we can get along the way. This is a proposal showing a possible final position and would be delivered as a phased project. Costs, possible grants and commercial support etc. can only really be presented once the requirements, phasing and plans are agreed and we have been able to find out what is available to us.

We have however done one or two things and had some thoughts on this:

- Tony has contacted the Woodland trust and it seems that they would be able to supply us with trees although this would be over a period of time. The suggested rate is 420/year although I think that this would be a matter for negotiation. We thought we could look for community support/input when it comes to planting.

- I have contacted Persimmon Homes as they may well be able to help when it comes to the construction of the spinal road and car park. Probably when they have the appropriate plant available on their development on Park Road. To date I have had no reply.
- This is a business opportunity for the PC and it will be worth discussing the way forward with other councils such as GBC as they too will have to look for other sites soon.
- In the design all the paths have a hard (expensive!) surface. However provided we have the spinal road and car park in place other paths would need to be clearly marked and maintained but could initially be very simple with an aim of making them more permanent over time and as funding eg. CIL, grants, outside input becomes available.
- We would not have to open up the whole site at first but would need to get most of the soft landscaping in place so that it has time to develop and also provide an attractive area for the community.

### Conclusion

This proposal is firmly based in Calverton's history. If implemented it will provide an attractive resting place and an amenity for the village. It should be seen as providing an income to the village over many years to come and there is much work still to be done in establishing rules, pricing policy, the way/order in which it is opened up, management and marketing. However nothing further can really be done until the PC has agreed a plan.