

## Committee: Merton and Sutton Joint Cemetery Board

Date: February 2024

Wards: Borough Wide Merton and Sutton

Subject: Client Report

### Subject:

Lead officer: Dan Jones Executive Director Environment Civic Pride and Climate

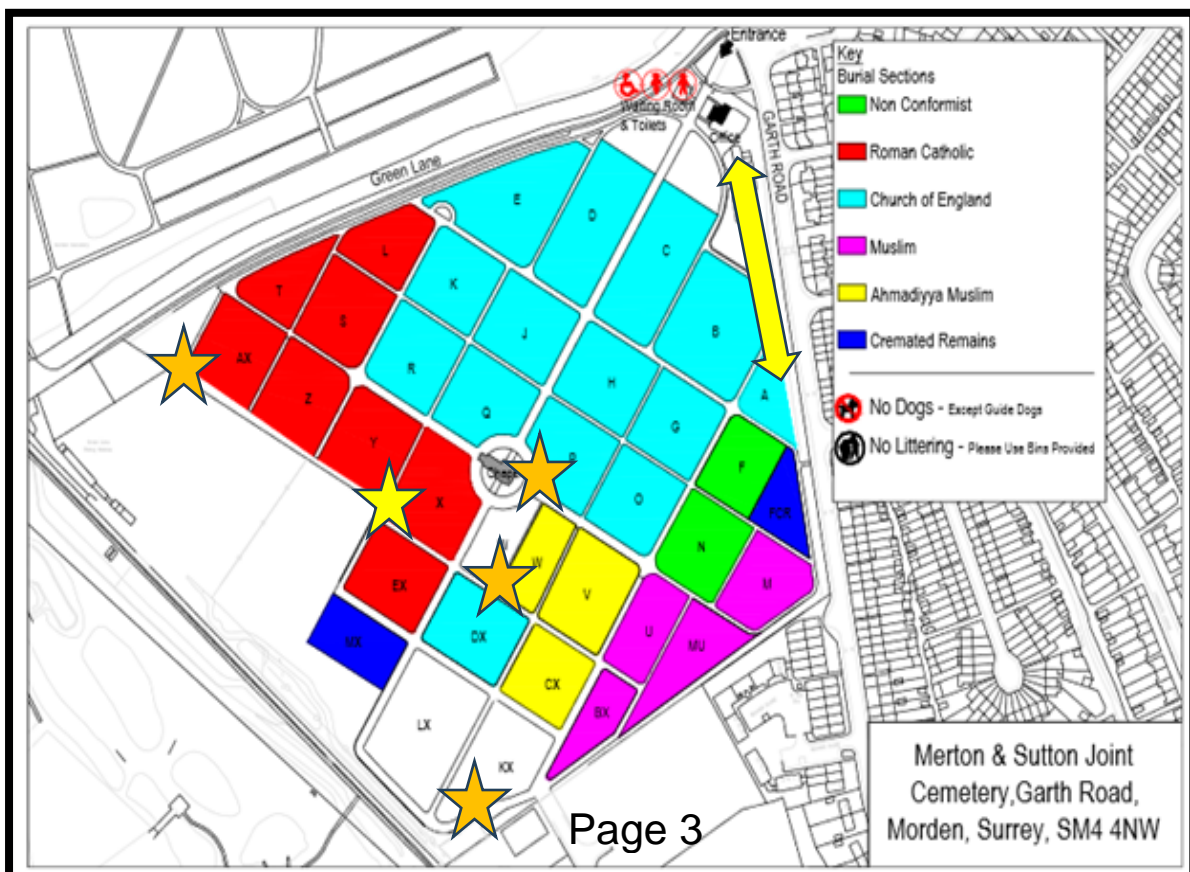
Contact officer: Andrew Kauffman Head of Parks Services




### Recommendations:

A. That the Members review the information and note the content of the report

## 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The report provides an update on business as usual cemeteries activities between June 2023 and January 2024 including operational activities and delivery of special projects conducted via LBM Facilities Management Team or council service contractors Idverde UK.
- 1.2. LBM Facilities Management and LBM Client side team continue to procure and programme the MSJC Special Projects including Cemetery Path Infrastructure and Memorial Bearer Beams throughout the cemetery to ensure we provide a sustainable number of beams on each of the main sections within the MSJC based on burial data trends that are reviewed by IdverdeUK and reported to the council at our Monthly Operational and Management Meetings. .



LOCATION	PROJECT
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>New Bearer Beams</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Section AX / F / W / KX</u></b></p> <p>Code: 00001516 - New Bearer Beams  Value: £121,440.00  Successful Contractor: Moys / Mckeown's  All works now complete</p>
	<p><b><u>Replacement Bearer Beams</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Section X</u></b></p> <p>Code: 00001516 - New Bearer Beams  Value: £132,000.00  Successful Contractor: Moy's  ALL WORKS NOW COMPLETE</p>
	<p><b><u>Section C to Section A</u></b></p> <p>Code: 00001593 - Roads and Footpaths  Value: £36,000.00  Successful Contractor: Moy's  All works now complete.</p>

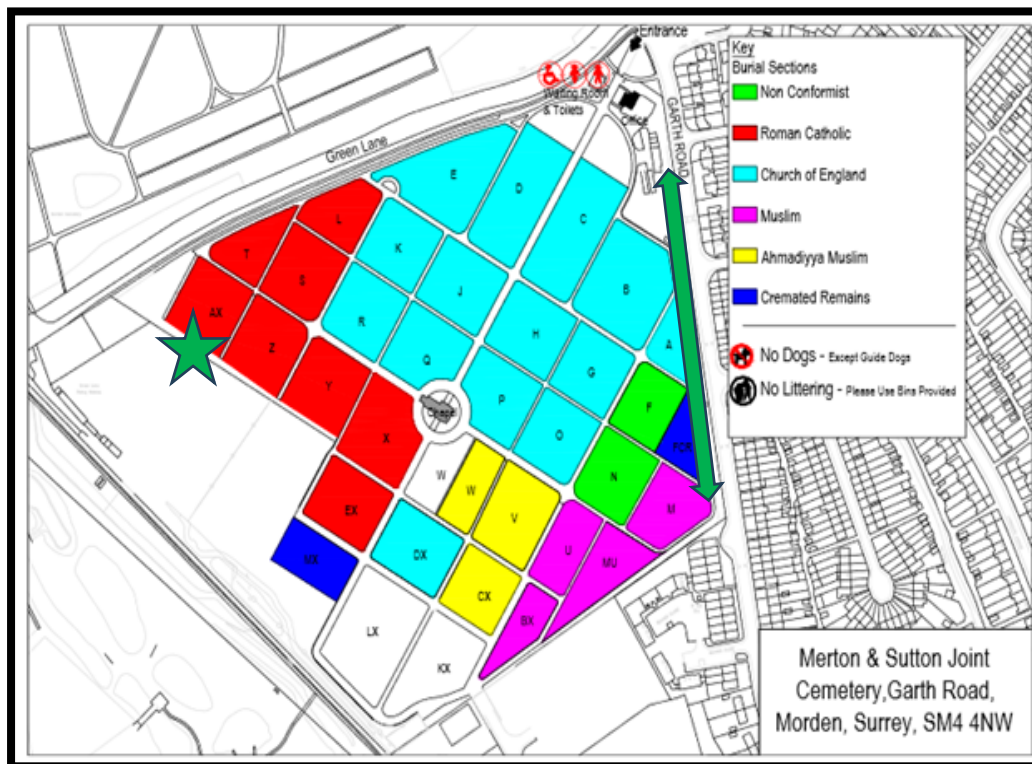




NEW MEMORIAL LANDING BEAMS



PATH WORKS SECTION C TO SECTION A NEW BEAMS SECTION AX

1.3. LBM Client side team and GM Service Contractor at Idverde UK and LBM have progressed a number of **Special Horticultural Projects** during the period **June 2023 and January 2024** in line with board approval being granted for these projects in June 2023.



LOCATION	PROJECT
	<p><b><u>New Perimeter Hedgerow</u></b>  <b>Section: Garth Road Perimeter</b>            Code: 00001763 - Horticultural / Biodiversity Improvements            Value: £31,440.00            Successful Contractor: IdverdeUK <b>All works now complete on site</b>  <b>Defect liability watering will commence from April 2024 and irrigation system will be implemented before this time</b></p>
	<p><b><u>Emergency Health and Safety Tree Works</u></b>  <b>Section: AX Perimeter</b>            Storm Henk Response <a href="#">Storm Henk: Clearing fallen and damaged trees for public safety   Merton Council Newsroom</a></p>



**Yew Hedge Garth Road perimeter / Railings Garth Road Entrance / Storm Henk Tree Works**

- 1.4. Under the terms of continued Memorial Safety Testing Procedure Idverde UK have completed Section M / MU / B / FCR.
- 1.5. In line with Board approval at the February 2023 Board Meeting, Idverde UK have now completed all the bases for the new Euro-Bins on site at MSJC and are being emptied weekly on a Thursday. Visitors to MSJC are now used to the bins and frequency of emptying and early concerns raised to cemetery staff now seems to have been dispelled and is reducing the impact of unsightly old memorials left beside the previous bins and has improved the site aesthetic.



*Black Euro-bins replace old bin stock at MSJC emptied weekly on Thursday by Veolia*

## 2 DETAILS

### 2.1. Managing the Service

- 2.1.1 Full business as usual operations are now conducted by service providers from IdverdeUK at MSJC
- 2.1.2 The governance of the service continues to be supported through regular monthly Operational and Management meetings which allows issues to be raised and associated Action Logs from the meetings are used to ensure jobs are assigned to relevant staff, resolved and actions closed.
- 2.1.3 In May 2023 a new cemeteries supervisor took over at MSJC, they previously managed the cemeteries supervision at Brandon Hill Cemetery in Sutton has taken over from previous supervisor and during the reporting period he has retired from IdverdeUK after 36 years at the MSJC
- 2.1.4 Weekly burial capacity updates by service provider continued to be received by Client teams to ensure suitable forward planning arrangements are made via special works projects to ensure we have suitable landing beam capacity at MSJC.
- 2.1.5 Scheduled works continue to be delivered in the MSJC cemetery during the period including grass cutting and back up works.
- 2.1.6 It should be noted during the period that the engagement of a Funeral Services delivery contactor has been formally engaged by IdverdeUK at MSJC supporting bespoke Grave Digging Services to support the in-house team during high demand. This partnership which was shown during Industrial Strike Action held in October 2023 when grave digging services were not affected by Industrial Action.



*Grass swathes cut on main access paths, new feature bed, bespoke grave diggers Section MU*

- 2.1.7 Linked to the impact of Storm Eunice in Feb 2022 . Council Tree Inspectors carried out a full survey of the trees within MSJC and priority works were completed in winter works period October 2022-March 2023. All this paid dividends when Storm Henk hit Merton on 2<sup>nd</sup> January and the impact was limited to 2 trees that boroughs term contractors Barkland Tree Specialist dealt with the same week in Sections AX and A
- 2.1.8 Please refer to Idverde UK Contractor Report **Section 2 Details** for full Grounds Maintenance Update for the period

2.2. **Memorial Safety Testing Programme**

2.3. Please refer to Idverde Contractor Report **Section 2.2 Health and Safety Audit of Headstone Testing** for full details on testing complete during this period.

2.3.1 Idverde UK continue to liaise with specialist monumental masons to expedite the process of memorial testing at the MSJC to support local operations teams.

**3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

3.1. Not applicable for this report.

**4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

4.1. Not applicable for this report.

**5 TIMETABLE**

5.1. See Section 1.2 for the 2023-24 Special Projects Update

**6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1. Please see the Budget Monitoring 2023/24 and Revenue Estimates 2024/25 Report elsewhere on this agenda

**7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1. The Cemeteries Service will continue to ensure that it fulfils its Health & Safety duties regarding memorial safety.

**8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

8.1. We positively welcome and aim to support the growing diversity of the community we serve and the people we employ.

8.2. We aim to provide an inclusive service and will not discriminate (indirectly, directly or by association) on the grounds of race, sex, gender reassignment, marital or partnership status, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, HIV status, or disability (e.g. sensory and physical disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health status).

8.3. Quality means equality in the services we plan and provide, and in the staff we employ to provide those services. The Cemeteries Service is culturally sensitive and is also respectful of faith and belief considerations.

- 8.4. See Section 4.1 – 4.2 of Contractor Side Report showing Complaints and Compliments received during the period

## **9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. Not applicable for this report

## **10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. Councils have a duty under Health & Safety legislation and under the principles of occupier's liability, both to members of the public and their own workers, to make sure that cemeteries and graveyards for which they are responsible are safe. Memorials can become unstable since erection and cause accidents to people.
- 10.2. The Memorial Safety programme process across the Partnership is based on *Ministry of Justice Memorial Safety Guidance (2009)*.
- 10.3. Staff undertaking the testing (MSTP) are suitably trained. All inspectors are trained to meet the standards specified in the Ministry of Justice guidance entitled "Managing the Safety of Burial Ground Memorials". Training is refreshed as required.
- 10.4. When memorial testing is being undertaken, staff wear appropriate PPE. This includes gloves, steel toe-cap boots and high-vis jackets.

## **11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

- 11.1. Please note Appendix 1 Board Members Briefing Note Public Waiting Room and Welfare Facility Upgrade MSJC Health and Safety Priced Improvement for consideration
- 11.2. Please note Appendix 2 Board Members Briefing Note Boundary Wall and Fence Line Risk Assessment Priced Improvement for consideration

## **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1. None

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**END OF REPORT**

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