CLUN TOWN COUNCIL
with CHAPEL LAWN

Wednesday, 26 March 2025

Clun Closed Churchyard

Note for Council 1 April 2025

The following is an update on the current state of play with the Churchyard.

1. The contract for Grass Cutting - Long Grass has been let - done once a year in the Autumn. The short grass areas are done by the Church's contractor and Council is billed for the agreed proportion.
2. Initial Discussions were had with the Diocesan Conservation adviser in the Autumn. It was recommended a specialist Conservation survey was completed.
3. The Conservation survey was let Elliott Ryder Conservation and has recently been completed (24 March 2025). This is very detailed and the Mayor and Clerk have a copy.
4. A draft Strategy and Plan has been drafted by Cllr Angell with the support of the Cllrs Davies and Andrews. This is in draft form and will need updating soon. Some suggested actions have been superseded and others will need to be added. There has been insufficient time to fully revise this following from the Elliott Ryder Conservation report.
5. The Elliot Ryder report provides guidance on the prioritisation of maintenance work to the 34 Listed Memorials, the Wall and Listed Gated Posts. It also provides a Cost Estimate of the work suggested of approx. £33K. It does not cover the work required to the Lychgate, Steps and War Memorial (also both Listed)
6. From an initial reading of the Elliott Ryder Report there is work recommended to remove or reduce the ivy ingress in the walls and for removal of ivy on some of the monuments. Exactly which elements need doing and when needs careful reading and decisions based on this report. In addition proper inspection of some of the listed memorials and structures will only be possible once some of the ivy and vegetation has been removed.
7. The report also provides guidance on the priority to be given to work to monuments based on conservation value, risk to public and degree of degradation. A plan of how to progress this will need to be considered by a future Council working group in consultation with the Local church Warden and potential Shropshire Council Historic environment officers. Note: as listed

Memorials if any deliberate damage occurs to them the council could be liable for prosecution.

8. Work is required to be done to the Lychgate there are two slipped missing stone slates at least one of which is held safely in the vestry. In addition work is required to the railings, steps and baseline timbers. This work needs agreeing with the Church first following from the new Quinquennial report due to be undertaken by the new church Architect.

9. As consequence I suggest the following **recommendations**:

    1. **Council seek permission to share the report with the Church Warden once full consideration of its implications are fully understood.**
    2. **Council reform the Working/Advisory group as soon after the appointment of the new council as possible.**
    3. **The new Working Group address the following without further delay:**
        a. **Fully review the Elliott Ryder report in detail and recommend to council a programme of work. Once agreed discuss agree with the Church Warden and Caring For Gods Acre.**
        b. **Review and Revise the Strategy and Management document and familiarise themselves with the official requirements.**
        c. **Initiate discussions with the Church Authorities on the Repairs to the Lychgate.**
        d. **Develop protocols for routine inspection and risk assessment of memorials and monuments.**

Cllr Brian Angell