



Long Melford Parish Council

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The Upper Green, Long Melford

Background and work undertaken by Long Melford Parish Council and associated access arrangements

In 2019 a petition signed by approaching 200 residents of Long Melford was presented to the Parish Council, asking for something to be done to protect and preserve the condition of the Upper Green as vehicles were accessing it and churning up parts of the green.

Following a Parish Council meeting in February 2020 it was agreed that a working group be set up to seek a solution to the issues that were presented via the petition. This would include representatives from the Parish Council, Holy Trinity Church and the landowner, Melford Estates (ME).

Over the last two years Long Melford Parish Council (LMPC) has sought to work collaboratively with both Holy Trinity Church and ME to improve the parking area and to secure regulated vehicular access to the cemetery which is owned and managed by LMPC. In support of these two objectives ME granted LMPC a non-exclusive licence enabling it to provide improved community car parking at the car park by the Trinity Hospital and to install gates at the east end of the car park. The only purpose for which the LMPC requires vehicular access to the upper green from the car park is to facilitate funerals at the cemetery.

LMPC lodged a Planning Application, in consultation with ME and Holy Trinity Church, for the installation of sleepers/wooden posts around the car park, together with upper and lower gates. Ground restoration work was also carried out adjacent to the car park thus improving access to the cemetery. This included the addition of protective matting and reseeding of the area.

The reasoning behind the installation of the upper and lower gates was to be able to close off the green to any vehicular access when the ground was too soft, thus protecting and preserving the green for the village. At all other times the gates could remain open.

The costs of the project were as follows.:

Car park sleepers, wooden posts, upper gates, ground mesh and ground improvements – (all linked to car park licence and providing access to LMPC owned cemetery): £13,957.39

Lower gate/wooden posts and preparation of ground by gate: £ 2,945.98

Total shared project cost – £16,903.37

This cost was shared 50-50 by LMPC and Holy Trinity Church. It excludes the more recent cost of resurfacing the car park itself which was exclusively a LMPC project.

All payments referred to above were approved by the full council and were made in accordance with the powers available to the council.

Access to the Upper Green

Up until early December 2022 LMPC, Holy Trinity Church and ME worked together in ensuring the gates were open and closed at appropriate times. In early December ME informed LMPC that, as the landowner, it would be wholly their decision when the gates would be open and closed.

The cemetery manager, an employee of LMPC, has a key to the gate at the eastern end of the car park, enabling him to open the gate to facilitate the conduct of funerals. Other than for funerals, this gate will be open or closed at the discretion of ME.

LMPC has been advised that any queries in relation to the Upper Green should be directed to Melford Estates.

Signed: *C.Lee*

C.Lee

The Proper Officer, Melford Parish Council