

Basrah Military Cemetery.

I have been in contact with [REDACTED] Deputy Director Outer Area, Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC).

The permission I sought from CWGC was to make the War Graves more aesthetically acceptable.

At present there is a large area of the graves covered by brambles, gorse and weeds.

Our intention (Padre 1 RRW) is to employ local labour to clear the site. The costs for this project will be met by monies collected from 1RRW.

1RRW have made donations via quiz nights and the sale of Coke a cola, as well as personal donations.

G4 1RRW had suggested that our costs could be reduced if we could possibly utilise some of the labourers currently employed. If you don't ask you don't get.

I am in contact with [REDACTED], whose father is buried in the cemetery and is keen to help in the clearing of the site.

I also have a contact with [REDACTED] (the Fire Chief) who again is very keen to help in the restoration of the cemetery.

I am eager to include the good will and support of the local community, as hopefully after our departure at tourex, they will continue to tend the graves and area.

The CWGC have a five year plan to restore the cemetery to its previous glory and work will begin when the security situation here in Iraq permits.

It is the CWGC statutory responsibility to restore all masonry and headstones and as such we will not involve ourselves in this area of the project.

The majority of headstones have been removed to Basrah Palace for safe keeping, although they are all damaged beyond repair. (Replacement is in the CWGC 5 yr plan).

Our proposal, in short, is to employ local good will and labour to clear the sites of both the Indian/ Turkish and British cemetery of undergrowth. To clear the site of rubbish and remove the other damaged headstones that are lying on the ground. We hope also to mark the area of the graves to try to prevent locals playing football on them.

We intend also to put up signs in English and Arabic to remind and inform people that the cemetery is Hallowed ground and as such due respect should be afforded.

Attached photographs of cemetery and register plans.

[REDACTED]