

East and West Hagbourne Cemetery Memorial Safety Policy

The Council has an overriding duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable the safety of the Cemetery for which it has responsibility. This includes the identification and control of hazards from unstable memorials.

1.0 Risk Assessment, Inspection and Test

1.1 The council will risk assess and test memorials in accordance with the principles issued by the Institute of Cemeteries and Crematorium Management.

1.2 All memorials will undergo a visual inspection. The inspection programme will be prioritised with attention directed at:

- Areas likely to contain significant numbers of unstable structures
- Crosses and larger structures which if unstable are likely to cause the most injury / damage
- Highly visited areas

1.3 Memorials under 500mm will not undergo another test unless the visual inspection and positional risk assessment of the memorial gives rise to believe that further testing is required, and it is considered safe to carry out a further test.

1.4 Memorials over 500mm and up to 1.5m will undergo visual inspection, risk assessment and a hand push test.

1.5 Records will be maintained relating to the inspection and consideration will be given to photographing the memorials.

1.6 Memorials will be subject to a re-inspection every 5 years.

2.0 Making Memorials Safe

2.1 Where an unstable memorial is identified, the Council will either provide temporary support or place notices or if appropriate cordon the memorial. Cordoning is a temporary measure and will only happen in areas of the cemetery visited less frequently.

2.2 Memorials will only be laid flat where this course of action is necessary to prevent a genuine hazard to health and safety that cannot be remedied or reduced to an acceptable level by temporary support or cordoning.

3.0 Action after Making Safe

3.1 The responsibility for maintaining a memorial in a safe condition is that of the grave owner.

3.2 Where grave owners have been traced the options available to them will be discussed.

3.3 Memorials where the grave owner cannot be traced or family are not forthcoming to resolve will be assessed and reviewed for further action. Further action may include continued support or respectfully laying the memorial flat within the grave space. This will be dependent on the location of the memorial within the cemetery and what is practical for the area and the safest option.

4.0 Provision of Information

4.1 The Council will give public notice in advance of carrying out a memorial inspection.

4.2 The Council will notify individual grave owners when a memorial fails the test. The notification will detail what action the grave owner is required to organise and any action taken or proposed by the Council.

4.3 Any memorial failing a test will have a notice placed on or near the memorial giving contact details and a period for contact.