



MANAGEMENT OF MEMORIALS POLICY

The City of Ely Council will identify any memorials posing an immediate danger to the public through an inspection programme.

Staff will carry out inspections and records will be maintained showing the date of inspection of each section. Steps will be taken to ensure the immediate safety of the stone.

Stability of Memorials.

The frequency of inspections will be determined by the age and condition of memorials and any ground movement in specific areas. For monuments that are in a good condition and stable, four years will be adequate before the next inspection needs to take place. For stones where there is some deterioration, but are still stable, re-inspection will be carried out yearly. All other conditions will require immediate attention.

The inspection will look for cracked, weatherworn or leaning stones and where visible, should be ensured that joints do not have missing or loose mortar and that dowel pins are not corroded. If foundations can be seen these should be checked for cracks and crumbling pointing. Any nearby, recently disturbed ground; will be taken into account. Both the inspection and any subsequent action taken will be formally recorded.

Inspection Programme.

The following details will be recorded:-

- Grave number and section
- Size and type of stone
- Type of damage
- Steps taken to make safe
- Date and signature of person inspecting

The main inspection criteria are as follows:-

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|---------------|--|
| 1. Shape/Size | a) Height |
| | b) Thickness |
| | c) Material (e.g granite, sandstone etc) |
| | d) Type (e,g headstone, cross, other) |
| | e) Special features (sculptures etc.) |
| 2. Stonework | a) Cracks (measure length and width) |
| | b) Perished, frost damaged etc. |
| | c) Lean |

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| 3. Joints | a) Check for rocking (gentle pressure)
b) Open joints
c) Size and condition of dowels (where used) |
| 4. Foundation | a) Type of foundation
b) Condition of foundation |
| 5. Surrounding | a) Level (e.g. Sloping, uneven etc.) ground
b) Condition |

The database of the information will provide useful reports on:

- Those memorials requiring immediate attention
- Those memorials needing attention within a specified time
- Those memorials requiring attention by memorial masons

Re-inspection of memorials will then be classified into three categories

- Category 1 Re-inspect in four year's time
- Category 2 Re-inspect in one year's time
- Category 3 Requires immediate attention

Memorials in immediate danger of falling over

This initial check will seek to identify and remove any immediate dangers. For memorials in immediate danger of falling over the following three options are available.

1. The memorial could be laid flat prior to any further action.
2. The area around the memorial could be cordoned off and a label placed on the memorial advising the memorial is dangerous.

The above two could be carried out prior to any further action. Schedule 3 of the Local Authorities' cemeteries order 1977 states, "that such powers should not be construed as authorising any action in relation to any vault, tombstone or memorial." Once the memorial has been made safe all steps should be taken to contact the owner of the exclusive right of burial and ensure the memorial is suitably repaired.

A third option does exist.

3. An immediate repair could be affected, assuming the authority is willing to accept the costs and resources available. This would result in a charge being recorded against this grave.

Memorials unstable, but unlikely to become an immediate danger to the public.

Memorials that are unstable to some degree, but still with dowels intact, or with a crack in the stonework that does not run throughout, may require repairs to ensure their future safety, but do not require immediate action. It is essential not to class these as presenting an immediate danger and laid flat without following prescribed notification as per the LOCAL AUTHORITIES CEMETERIES ORDER 1977. Every available effort will be made to trace the owner, with consideration being given to placing a label on the memorial, advising that the memorial is potentially dangerous.

In the event that the owner of the exclusive right cannot be contacted, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Assets Committee for discussion.

Completion of Memorial Risk Assessment Form

The risk assessment form will be completed for the inspection of each section and will be categorised into one of the 3 categories listed above and detailed on the assessment form. The necessary action will then be taken.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Reviewed and approved 22nd May 2023

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Cllr C Phillips – Chairman of the Council

Risk Assessment Notes.

1. Is the grave number inscribed on the memorial?

If not, make a note of the graves either side of the memorial as you face the main inscription, and the name inscribed on the memorial. This will allow us to identify it at a later date.

2. Test is the memorial loose?

Test if the memorial is loose, by hand.

3. Is the memorial broken? To what degree?

Pieces broken away. Whole section broken off.

4. Is the inscription legible?

If the lawn grave memorial is old it may be made of sandstone, in which case the inscription may be lost.

5. Is the unit in which the memorial is fitted damaged?

In some instances when the memorial has been removed and refitted the unit becomes damaged.

6. Is the memorial firmly fixed but slanted due to the unit sinking into the soil?

Indicate in which direction – right, left, forward or backward.

7. Are there any sunken soil areas on or around the grave?

8. Is there anything about the memorial or grave which is cause for concern?

A memorial which does not conform to cemetery standard, e.g home made wooden memorials, dangerous structure, structure which affects the neighbouring grave or memorial.