



ODIHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MEMORIALS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Adopted on 17.03.26

Introduction

It is important for all cemetery managers to have a written policy in place to cover the safety inspection and assessment of existing memorials within their premises. This is a legal requirement covered by the Ministry of Justice under the "Duty of Care" umbrella and stated in BS8415:2018. Odiham Parish Council (OPC) is aware of the Health & Safety Executive's right to access inspection records.

The policy must satisfy the need to make sure all memorials are in a safe condition and all risks to individuals are minimised. This policy complies with the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons and covers everything from the initial decision to carry out a memorial inspection scheme through to having a suitable strategy in place to make safe any memorials deemed to be unsafe.

Frequency

OPC will comply with best practice by inspecting memorials at least every 5 years. The Deputy Clerk shall oversee the project with guidance from the Clerk.

Communication

It is important to publish notices of inspections in order to reach as many plot owners and families as possible to gain their understanding and support.

OPC Will publish notices on the cemetery noticeboard, and further notices will be published on OPC's noticeboards, website, Facebook page and (if timings permit) in the Parish Newsletter.

It is not practical for OPC to write to exclusive rights owners individually prior to inspections.

The Inspection

A trained, competent and qualified contractor will be appointed to carry out inspections.

Each memorial over 18 inches/457mm in height will be Topple Tested by hand to industry standards.

If it is not possible to complete all testing at once, burial areas within the cemetery which are most at risk will be prioritised.

Actions for memorials failing test

OPC will prepare and maintain a spreadsheet of failed monuments using the data provided by a qualified contractor; detailing monument, test date, risk level (high/medium/low), action taken and re-test date.

Identified high risks:

1. For failed memorials under 15 years old, the contractor shall stake and band the memorial as a temporary solution. The owner/family will be required to arrange repair by a NAMM or BRAMM registered Memorial mason within 12 months to avoid the monument being laid flat.

2. For failed memorials over 15 years old, the contractor shall lay the memorial flat. The owner/family will then have the opportunity to arrange repair by a NAMM or BRAMM registered Memorial mason.
3. Any memorial failing the Topple Test will be marked with a letter explaining the action taken and what further action the owner/family is required to undertake. A copy of this will be sent directly to the owner/family at the last known address.

Identified medium risks:

4. OPC will arrange for a competent person to re-inspect after a period of 12 months.
5. The memorial will be marked with a letter explaining that the memorial is being monitored and will be re-inspected after 12 months.

Identified low risks:

6. Memorials will be re-tested after 5 years.