

MUCH WENLOCK CEMETERY

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Risk management

This policy has been developed to ensure that the Council has adequate risk management in place at Much Wenlock cemetery and that risk is properly managed.

All contractors working for the Council will be required to provide proof of public liability insurance.













Risk Assessment

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require that risk assessments be made of all work activities and therefore, the Town Council has a duty to have controls in place to ensure the safety of all employees, contractors and members of the public.

Site Inspections

Periodic site inspections will be carried out on a regular basis, at least at 6-monthly intervals, in order to identify any hazards that may be present on the cemetery site. All hazards will be recorded on the Hazard Report Form and assessed for action.







The following property will be inspected for hazards and defects:

-  The chapel and outbuildings
-  Sheds
-  Gates
-  Water taps
-  Paths and driveway
-  Grave stones/memorials and kerbstones
-  Walls and steps
-  Trees
-  Cemetery grounds
-  Seating
-  Fencing
-  Newly dug graves

The aim of the inspection is to record any findings, identify required actions, and show that regular maintenance checks have been carried out.

Risk assessment

A regular risk assessment will identify the potential to cause harm by the following procedure:

-  Identify the hazard
-  Identify who might be harmed and how
-  Evaluate the risk
-  Record significant findings
-  Take steps to implement any precautions required from the findings
-  Review risk assessments periodically and update if necessary

Risk will be recorded on the risk assessment form.

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Memorial safety

All memorials installed in the cemetery must be installed by a NAMM approved fixing method and secured with ground anchors which conform to the required British Standard 8415.

Memorial masons who cannot provide proof that they are NAMM registered will not be allowed to install memorials in the cemetery.

Memorials will be inspected periodically to identify:

- ✘ Damaged or eroding bonding
- ✘ Movement from original position
- ✘ Undermined or unstable foundations
- ✘ Leaning, structural damage, or disturbance e.g. cracks
- ✘ Presence of vegetation which may lead to cracks or widening of cracks already present
- ✘ Kerbstones breaking apart

Visual inspections will help determine which memorials require a hand test or a specialist assessment. Hand tests in areas more frequently visited will have higher priority than will be required in less frequented areas.

Hand tests on memorials will be conducted by standing to one side of the memorial and a firm and steady pressure applied in various directions to determine stability. Hand testing should be sufficient for modern memorials but where much larger, heavier and older memorials and columns appear to be hazardous then a specialist engineer or competent memorial mason will be asked to carry out appropriate testing.

Those carrying out tests for memorial stability must have regard for their own health and safety in so doing.

If instability is detected from the hand test, but insufficient to present a high risk to people's health and safety, the movement will be recorded and monitored at regular intervals. If the memorial shows signs of significant movement the Council will contact the owner and insist that immediate action is taken to stabilise the memorial and prevent further movement. If the owner cannot be reached, or the owner refuses to undertake the necessary action, the Council reserves the right to effect repairs and re-claim the costs.

In making safe any memorial or monument the Council will have regard to potential upset and distress amongst mourners and the bereaved, as well as the potential for disfiguring the appearance of the burial ground.

If a memorial is deemed to be dangerous it will be cordoned off until it is made safe. The Council will endeavour to make a memorial safe as soon as the risk has been identified.

Grave-digging

All graves must be dug by trained grave-diggers who are suitably dressed in compliance with health and safety regulations. Newly dug graves will be inspected to ensure that they are properly shored to ensure no risk of collapse, and that a suitable platform is placed at the graveside to prevent visitors from falling into the grave.

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Newly dug graves will also be inspected to ensure that they are dug to the required depth.

Funerals

The Town Council will ensure that, prior to each interment, the correct body and/or ashes are being buried in the correct grave plot.

Funeral Directors will be requested to provide their risk assessments, safe systems of work and staff training information together with a copy of their public liability insurance certificates.

Managing safety in the cemetery

The management of risk will be prioritised. Memorials with structural faults will be monitored on a more frequent basis than those deemed to be sound.

An audit trail will be maintained to demonstrate that good risk management is in place. Proper and regular checks will identify risks and significant risks will be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

The audit trail will also record that necessary precautions have been put in place to reduce risk to users of the cemetery.

Memorial seats

Memorial seats installed in the cemetery must be of good quality and standard and suitably robust. They will be checked periodically for wear and tear and to ensure that they are safely secured to the ground.

The Town Council reserves the right to remove any seat which reaches a state beyond repair or poses risk to users.

Trees and hedges

Branches will be checked periodically to ensure that they do not pose any danger to users of the cemetery.

Access and walkways

In the event of snow and ice, the driveway, steps and paths will be gritted.