

Ancaster Parish Council Cemetery Management Instruction

Cemetery Management and Memorial Safety Testing

Version 1.5

This Instruction defines the Parish Council responsibilities and Test procedure associated with Cemetery Management and Memorial Safety in Ancaster Cemetery

Cemetery Management

Purchase of Exclusive Rights of Burial and associated costs

Purchase and payment of the following are granted by the Burial Officer for Ancaster Parish Council -

- Exclusive Rights of Burial
- Internment
- Approval for work undertaken by a Memorial Mason

Maintenance of Cemetery

Ancaster Parish Council is responsible for all Work carried out at Ancaster Cemetery and the management of any Contracts placed for the Maintenance of Ancaster Cemetery.

Maintenance of the Cemetery will be carried out in accordance with the requirement of the latest Conservation and Enhancement Scheme Agreement with Natural England, the Agreement shall be issued to all Funeral Directors, Contractors and Grave Owners.

Natural England Conservation and Enhancement Scheme Agreement, Section 4, is displayed on the Ancaster Parish Council Notice Board and in full on the Parish Council Web Site.

The CES Document shall be referenced within any Contract associated with the maintenance of Ancaster Cemetery.

All persons issued with exclusive rights of burial for a purchased / reserved Plot within Ancaster Cemetery will be issued with a copy of this Instruction by the Ancaster Parish Council Burial Officer.

Contractors will formally notify the Burial Office / Clerk to the Council in advance of any work being carried out within the Cemetery so that compliance to the requirements of the Contract / Approval may be monitored by Ancaster Parish Council.

Contractors will provide a Statement of Work upon request to the Burial Officer in advance of any work being carried out.

All Contractors and their Sub Contractors are required to comply with the rules and regulations of the Cemetery, contained within this document or posted at the Cemetery, failure to do so may result in further action being taken by the Parish Council and the Contractor being refused permission to carry out any works within the Cemetery.

Note 1: Graves must be excavated by “Hand” and Double depth Graves by a minimum of two persons.

Note 2: All burial graves excavated in the new Cemetery Annex are to be witnessed by the Burial Authority or nominated individual. This requirement will be stated on the approved Internment Form issued to the Funeral Director, it is the responsibility of the Funeral Director to cascade this requirement to their sub-contractor and notify the Burial Authority when the excavation is to take place.

In the event that suspected Human remains or Artefacts, other than minor pottery shards, are observed work will cease and Heritage Lincolnshire notified by the Burial Authority.

Grave will be secured and the Contractor and Public excluded until such time a corrective action has been agreed and implemented.

In the event that the Grave is deemed to not be fit for purpose by Heritage Lincolnshire an alternative grave will be agreed with the Funeral Director / Deed of Grant Owner and the Cemetery Records amended to reflect the change.

Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial

Owners of the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial are responsible for notifying the Burial Officer should any change take place to their contact details.

Any person wishing to transfer the ownership of the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial should contact the Burial Officer to obtain the necessary Forms.

Two Interments of Cremated Remains are permitted for each Cremation Plot, an additional two Interments of Cremated Remains are permitted within a burial Plot, owing to the size of the Plot and the Memorial.

The current Cemetery Management Instruction will be issued with the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial and an acknowledgment Receipt retained by the Burial Authority.

Any changes made to the Cemetery Management Instruction will not result in a re issue, the latest version being available on the Parish Web Site and Cemetery Notice Boards, if required a paper copy can be requested from the Burial Officer.

It is the responsibility of the Owner of the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial to manage the Grave in accordance with the latest version of the Cemetery Management Instruction.

Maintenance Burial Plot

Individuals, other than Contractors, are not permitted to bring into the Cemetery any Grass or Hedge Cutting equipment
Water Butts / Cans are provided and maintained by Ancaster Parish Council for general use.

The storage / use of private Water Containers are not permitted without prior formal approval of the Ancaster Parish Council Burial Office and may be removed without prior notice.

In accordance with the requirements of the Conservation Enhancement Scheme (CES) Agreement the following are not permitted;

- Re Seeding of Burial Plots, original Turf to be replaced after interment
- Kerb Sets to enclose Grave
- Flat Stones exceeding 0.4m x 0.4m or equivalent area for Cremation Plots
- Flat Stones exceeding 1m x 1m or equivalent area for Burial Plots
- Surface application of Gravel
- Use of Herbicides for Weed Control
- Mesh Cages to exclude Vermin
- Planting of live Flowers or Shrubs on open ground

Vermin Control

Vermin Control directly within Ancaster Cemetery is managed under Contract by Ancaster Parish Council, those areas surrounding the Cemetery are the responsibility of Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust.

Introduction Memorial Safety Testing

Ancaster Parish Council Burial Authority manage and operate the Cemetery in accordance with Section s.214 of the Local Government Act of 1972 and the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (SI 1977/204

Councils have an overriding duty of care as far as is reasonable and practical to prevent injury and death from unstable Memorials

Councils must consider the Risk of injury on one hand and the certainty of distress and outrage when determining the course of action to be taken when a Memorial is identified as unstable.

Notice of Testing

Notice will be issued a minimum of 14 days prior to Testing to notify the General Public that Safety Testing is to take place and that the General Public are to be excluded from the immediate test area, the same Notice also being placed on the entrance to the Cemetery and within "Around Ancaster" Magazine.

Period of Test

Maximum period between Memorial Safety Testing shall not exceed 5 years. New Memorials will be subject to an annual Safety Testing check for two years. Any Memorial which has failed the Safety Test, once repaired and tested, will be subject to an annual check for two years

Where certain Memorials give cause for concern due to their stability or ground conditions, the frequency of Testing shall be reduced and the agreed frequency recorded in the Cemetery Audit Record.

Safety Test Record

An electronic Audit Record will be maintained for each Grave / Plot to demonstrate that the Safety test has been conducted and that any corrective action that may be required has been carried out.

Maintenance of the Audit Record is the responsibility of the Burial Officer.

Responsibility for Repair

Owner of any Memorial which fails the Safety test will be formally notified by the Burial Officer.

Any Memorial which fails the Safety test will be subject to Repair at the Owners Cost.

Repair is to be carried out by a recognised Monumental Mason, who will provide Documentation to demonstrate when the Repair was completed and by whom, and that the Memorial passes the required Safety Test criteria.

Method of repair is at the discretion of the Memorial Mason.

In the event that Ownership of the Memorial cannot be established / notified to an individual it is the responsibility of the Burial Officer to organise the repair and payment.

No work shall be carried out in these circumstances without a formal quotation and approval of Ancaster Parish Council.

Safety Test Procedure

Safety Test will only be carried out by a recognised Memorial Mason or Member(s) of the Ancaster Parish Council Cemetery Working Group.

Protective Hand and Foot ware must be worn when carrying out the Safety Test.

A minimum of two persons must be present at all times when the Safety Test is being carried out, one of which must be a member of Ancaster Parish Council. General Public are to be excluded from the immediate test area.

Test criteria

Person conducting the Safety Test must place two hands on the top of the Memorial and spread feet forward and apart to obtain a strong stance.

Person conducting the Safety Test shall apply reasonable pressure forward and backwards at the top of the Memorial, sufficient so that the Memorial if unstable at its base would move an appreciable amount

A Record for each Memorial, Pass or Fail, will be completed

Sentencing

Pass

Frequency of Safety test will be set at 5 years, should minimum movement be noted or ground condition cause concern a shorter Frequency determined by the Safety Test person shall be applied

Fail

Person conducting Test will place a warning Notice on the Memorial and Stake and secure the Memorial in a manner which will prevent the Memorial “toppling “ over.

Person conducting the Safety Test will formally notify the Burial Officer of the Failure.

Burial Officer will notify the Memorial Owner that a Memorial has failed the Safety test will be subject to Repair at the Owners Cost and that the Repair is to be carried out by a recognised Monumental Mason, who will provide Documentation to demonstrate when the Repair was completed and by whom, and that the Memorial passes the required Ancaster Parish Council Safety Test criteria. Once repaired and satisfactorily tested the Safety Test frequency will be set annually for two years.

Note: i) Historically various mechanical testing equipment has been Trialled / Tested to remove any subjectivity regarding the method and forces applied as part of the Safety Testing process, this was costly and time consuming and found not to be practical. Therefore it is accepted that this Test Procedure contains elements of subjectivity, but it is considered that the Test will be carried out only to ensure the Safety of the Memorial, and without prejudice.

Note: ii) This Procedure is only effective from the 01 January 2014 regarding Records and frequency of Testing.