

Memorial Safety Inspections - Frequently Asked Questions

What are Memorial Safety Inspections?

Memorial Safety Inspections are a statutory requirement and are carried out as part of a rolling five-year programme.

Trained staff check memorials to ensure they do not pose potential or immediate risk to cemetery users.

Will inspections cover all open and closed cemeteries?

Yes

What should be communicated to families regarding the Memorial Safety Inspection process?

If during a process of safety testing on the stability of the memorial, it is identified that a headstone has failed the inspection, families should be informed that the memorial is not adequately anchored to the ground and could present a risk of falling and causing injury. We would recommend that families get in contact with a qualified memorial mason who can advise on the necessary repairs.

What does an inspection visit involve? What exactly happens and who does it?

A simple hand test is carried out, applying gradual pressure, increasing in strength, to determine if the memorial will fall. Inspections are carried out by officers who are ICCM trained. Any memorials that fail the inspection are banded on site to warn visitors of the potential risk.

What actions follow after an inspection identifies an issue? What are the outcomes and next steps?

Memorials that will fall or are discovered to not be pinned by ground anchors will be flagged as failures. The plot number (if known) along with the section, name and date of death will be recorded. Failures will be reported to the Bereavement team where if known, the Exclusive Rights Holder will be contacted.

If the person making an enquiry is not the registered plot owner, what do we legally need to do?

If the original owner of the grave is no longer alive, a relative of the deceased may instruct a qualified stonemason to carry out repairs.

Can the council recommend stonemasons? If not, who should families be signposted to?

Although we cannot recommend masons, we encourage the use of a mason who is a member of the National Association of Memorial Masons or the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons

Can customers repair memorials themselves?

No, customers can call our Bereavement Department for any help or advice on 01354 654321.