

BENHALL AND STERNFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND RISK ASSESSEMENT

CEMETERY

Approved 9TH March 2017

Reviewed 22nd February 2018

Reviewed 10th January 2019 (Minutes item 7)

Reviewed and approved 15th January 2020 (Item 7)

Reviewed and approved 14th January 2021 (Item 6)

Reviewed and approved 26 January 2022 (item 6)

Reviewed and approved 22 March 2023 (Item 4)

Signed.....Chair)

Signed.....P/O/Clerk

CEMETERY RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Benhall and Sternfield Parish Council (the Council) is committed to identifying and managing risks, using the following procedures, and to ensure that risks are maintained at an acceptable level. Any action that is felt necessary will be taken by the Council.

The Council will review risks at a minimum yearly, including any newly identified risks. The review will include identification of unacceptable levels of risk.

The Council will apply its risk assessment policy to ensure that there is adequate risk management in place at Benhall and Sternfield Parish Cemetery. In accordance with the Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Council will ensure that there are effective controls and procedures in place to ensure the safety of all those working in or visiting the cemetery. The security of memorials, trees and walls are checked regularly during routine maintenance, grass cutting etc.

Memorials

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. Memorials will be inspected periodically to identify damage or movement.

If a 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 refuses to undertake the necessary action, the Council reserves the right to effect repairs and reclaim the costs.

Grave digging

All graves must be dug by trained grave diggers in compliance with Health and Safety regulations. It is the grave diggers' responsibility to ensure that there is no risk of collapse of newly dug graves by using shoring as required. Grave diggers must also ensure that suitably stable platforms are placed at the graveside prior to funerals and that open graves are kept securely covered until immediately before funerals take place and that covers are replaced after the funeral if the grave cannot be filled in immediately.

Record keeping

It is the Parish Council's responsibility to ensure that all records are properly maintained including:

- Allocation of correct plots for graves or interment of ashes prior to funerals
- Grants of exclusive rights of burial
- Permissions to erect memorials and/or to add or change inscriptions
- Collection of correct fees for burials, interments of ashes, erection of memorials and grants of exclusive rights of burial
- Maintaining the registers of graves and burials
- Notifying registrars of burials
- Maintaining an accurate and up to date cemetery plan recording all burials and interments of ashes

General Safety

The Council will undertake periodic safety checks of the cemetery including security of memorials, the condition of the boundary wall and fences, overhanging trees, hedges and any other items within the cemetery that could cause injury to visitors or to members of the public using the public footpath along the north boundary. The Council has requested that when flowers are left on graves, these are left without glass vases. Visitors are also requested to remove old wreaths and pots in order to help the grass cutters.

February 2017

Risk Assessment for Benhall Cemetery

Activity	Hazard	Consequences	Control Measures	Risk Level	Additional Measures
Grass Cutting	Operating grass cutting equipment incl mowers, trimmers and other tools.	Injury to operator including cuts, bruises, broken bones, damage to hearing and eyes, dust inhalation, and being hit by projectiles.	Contractors to have their own risk assessment in place as well as public liability insurance. Contractors to use equipment fit for purpose and ensure it is well maintained and used to manufacturer's specification. Contractors to wear PPE and ensure area is clear of litter, stones, and debris before commencing any cutting/trimming.	Low	Have a copy of the contractor's insurance certificate and risk assessment on file.
Trees	Falling trees or branches	Injury to contractors and members of the public. Damage to structures.	Trimming or removal of unstable or overhanging trees and branches. Periodic tree inspections to ensure the safety and health of the trees.	Low	
General Maintenance	Overgrown vegetation, unkempt appearance. Breakage of glass vases	Injury to contractors and members of the public. Complaints from cemetery visitors regarding maintenance	Regular maintenance and trimming of vegetation, litter picking, and promptly addressing any identified hazards. Visitors are requested that when flowers are left on graves, these are left without glass vases. Visitors are also requested to remove old wreaths and pots in order to help the grass cutters.	Low	
Grave Digging	Physical injury from excavations/groundworks.	Falling, tripping, musculoskeletal injuries, cuts and bruises, exposure to infectious diseases	All graves must be dug by trained grave diggers in compliance with Health and Safety regulations. Grave diggers to wear PPE and ideally to be immunised against tetanus.	Medium	Grave diggers will be responsible for their own Health & Safety measures.
Memorial Installation	Physical injury from erection of memorials	Injury to installer including cuts, bruises, broken bones	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.	Medium	Memorial masons will be responsible for their own Health & Safety measures.
Memorials/ Gravestones	Unstable memorials/ gravestones	Cuts, bruises, crush injuries to contractors and members of the public.	Periodic checking of memorials/gravestones to ensure stability and identify damage and movement. Temporary warning signs erected as necessary. Any unstable structures will be notified to the grave owner in order that they can arrange refixing.	Low	
Walking	Slips, trips, and falls from walking on uneven ground and/or slippery surfaces	Injury to members of the public and contractors	Regular inspection and maintenance of pathways to ensure they are kept clear of trip and slip hazards	Low	

		including bruises, cuts and broken bones.	such as branches, and dead leaves. Releveling of ground to be carried out if necessary.		
Environmental Conditions	Sunburn or cold wet conditions.	Sunburn or hypothermia affecting contractors.	Contractors advised to wear appropriate clothing, use sunscreen, and keep hydrated.	Low	
Weather	Damage to graves and infrastructure due to severe weather events.	Risk to public or infrastructure.	Regular inspection of the cemetery, securing loose structures, and maintaining trees to minimize the risk of damage.	Low	
Environmental Impact	Inadequate waste management, pollution, or contamination.	Harm to the surrounding natural environment.	Implementing proper waste disposal and recycling practices, adhering to relevant environmental regulations, and avoiding the use of harmful chemicals or pesticides within the cemetery.	Low	
Security	Unauthorized access to cemetery premises	Anti-social behaviour and vandalism	Regular inspection of the cemetery. Check gates, boundary walls and fencing are in good working order. Gates kept shut when not in use.	Low	
Record-Keeping and Documentation	Loss or damage to burial records, administrative documents, or historical records	Failure to comply with cemetery regulations.	Establishing a secure record-keeping system, digitizing records where possible, implementing backups, and regularly reviewing and updating records to ensure accuracy.	Low	
Public Perception and Communication	Negative public perception due to inadequate communication, lack of information, or dissatisfaction or complaints from cemetery visitors regarding maintenance, cleanliness, or access.	Poor community relations	Regularly updating the cemetery notice board and Parish Council website with relevant information and contact details. Establishing clear communication channels for feedback and inquiries. Reporting any incidents and addressing them quickly.	Low	Work closely with the Church Wardens to ensure the area is visited regularly and problems dealt with swiftly.
Financial Sustainability	Insufficient funds for cemetery maintenance, repairs, or improvements. Unforeseen expenses related to repairs, restoration, or compliance with regulations.	Cemetery is not adequately maintained and falls into disrepair.	Developing a financial plan and budget. Periodically reviewing the cemetery fees and increasing the fees where necessary.	Low	

Completed by: Archie Bhatia

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