

Fenstanton Parish Council
Cemetery and Closed Churchyard Policy

1. Fenstanton Parish Council is the Burial Authority for the parish and is responsible for the management and maintenance of the cemetery and Closed Churchyard at the church of St. Peter and St. Paul.

2. Fenstanton Parish Council has health and safety responsibilities to its employees, contractors, and visitors to the cemetery. There is also a legal duty on the council to assess the risks from cemetery structures and work activities and ensure that the risks are controlled. A detailed risk assessment is attached.

3. Memorial masons have the responsibility to work in accordance with the council's conditions and specifications for memorials, as laid down in Fenstanton Parish Council's cemetery regulations.

4. Whilst Fenstanton Parish Council has overall responsibility for the safety of the cemetery, including risks from unstable memorials, it does not own the memorials. The owner of the memorial will be the grave owner. An owner, the Deed Holder or successor in title of a memorial, has the responsibility to maintain it so as not to present a hazard.

5. Annual risk assessments will be carried out by Fenstanton Parish Council as part of a planned exercise or when a change has taken place. This inspection will include pathways, the church, grave areas, trees, vegetation, and memorial headstones.

6. If, upon inspection, a memorial is considered to pose an immediate risk, the Fenstanton Parish Council will:
    - Ensure the safety of the public.
    - Instruct our groundsman/handyman to lay the headstone flat on the grave, inscriptions face up.
    - Erect a sign to warn members of the public of the hazard.
    - Contact the memorial owner.

    If, upon inspection, a memorial is considered to require repair work, Fenstanton Parish Council will contact the memorial owner, giving details of the defects found and requesting the memorial to be repaired within 3 months of the request date. If after this date no such work has begun, the Parish Council will be at liberty to arrange for repair works to be completed and for the cost to be charged to the registered contact. The Parish Council will use the Burial records contact details for this purpose.

In cases where there is no identifiable owner, Fenstanton Parish Council will act to ensure the hazard is made safe.

No	Activity	Hazard	Risk	Control	Level	Additional Measures
1	Grass Cutting	Grass cutting in cemeteries using ride on mowers, strimmers and other tools.	Injury to operator; burns, cuts, bruises, damage to hearing and eyes, including broken bones, 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/strimming.	Low	Risk Assessment and Policy to be reviewed annually. Always have a copy of the contractor's insurance certificate and risk assessment on file.
2	Memorial Inspection	Checking memorials for stability and repair	Injury to contractors, members of the public and PC representatives	Memorial headstones to be checked annually	Medium	
3	General Maintenance	General maintenance of vegetation, flower beds, footpaths, litter picking, and weed control.	Injury to contractors, members of the public and PC representatives	A contractor is appointed to maintain all green areas and footpaths. Weed killing is only to be carried out by a specialist contractor as and when required.	Low	Contractors to be made aware of any risk within the site and ideally to be immunised against tetanus.
4	Tree or Branches Falling	Working on trees with machinery, ladders and hoists including felling, pruning, and lopping.	Injury to contractors, members of the public and PC representatives	All trees are maintained and inspected by a qualified tree surgeon contracted to the Parish Council. An arboriculturist carries out a regular tree survey to check for defects, to ensure the safety and health of the trees.	Low	

5	Weather	Sun burn or cold wet conditions	Sun burn or hypothermia affecting contractors and the Burial Superintendent.	Contractors advised to wear appropriate clothing, use sunscreen, and keep hydrated.	Low	
6	Uneven and/or slippery surfaces	Slips, trips, and falls.	Injury to contractors, members of the public and PC representatives	Contracted Groundsman to ensure all footpaths are kept clear of trip and slip hazards such as branches, and dead leaves. Relevelling of burial ground to be carried out periodically.	Low	
7	Disregard for the closed churchyard, burial ground, and its contents	Disrespect of the closed churchyard and burial ground	Dogs being exercised off their leads. Anti-social behaviour resulting in bottles, cans, and other litter. Drug related activities and associated litter. Gravestones being vandalised.	Notices have been installed informing all visitors of the rules.	Low	Regular review of the burial ground to ensure rules are being followed. Work closely with the local PCSOs to ensure the area is visited regularly and problems dealt with swiftly.
8	Lone Working	Accidents, aggression, or intimidation from others. Illness.	Psychological and physical injuries.	All contractors and Parish council representatives are advised to carry a charged mobile phone with them in case of emergency.	Low	

Version	Description	Originated	Reviewed	Approved
Version 1	Cemetery Risk Assessment	28.09.2023	28.09.2023	28.09.2023