Memorial Health and Safety Stability Testing

Information regarding Old and New Cemetery Apton Road Bishop's Stortford

Bishop's Stortford Town Council is due to begin memorial inspections known as 'Topple Testing' at the Old and New Cemetery from February 2026.

The Council is responsible for ensuring that visitors and staff are kept safe whilst visiting the Old and New Cemeteries. Over time memorials deteriorate and can become unsafe and may topple over. Topple Testing will be carried out by a specialist contractor in line with Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management (ICCM), Ministry of Justice (MoJ) guidelines to ensure that a memorial is safe. The process involves a visual inspection and applying pressure to a memorial to ensure there is no risk of it falling over and causing injury to staff and visitors.

If a memorial fails an inspection, the Council will write to the grave owner, usually relatives, to inform them the memorial has failed it's 'topple test' and a temporary make safe solution has been installed by the Council. It is therefore important that the Council has up to date details for grave owners so please get in touch if you believe your details may not be up to date.

The make safe method the Council will be using in the short term will be proportionate to the risk of people suffering harm. This may include, cordoning off the area, staking and banding or for high-risk memorials laying the memorial flat on the ground. These are temporary solution to allow the grave owner or families time to make a permanent repair.

The Council anticipates the inspections to take around 2 weeks to complete, after which they will be carried out at least once every five years.

The Council's specialist contractor Cemetery Development Services (CDS) will be happy to answer any queries face to face at the Cemetery or by telephone on Tel.01525 864387, alternatively please contact the Bishop's Stortford Town Council direct cemetery.admin@bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk

We understand the sensitive nature of this work, please be assured that every effort will be made to carry out these checks with the utmost care and respect