

## **Memorial Policy and Regulations**

### **Definitions**

**Memorial:** Any headstone, gravestone, vase or any other erected item for the purpose of marking a grave of an interred remains.

**Grave:** Any space within the permitted and recognised cemeteries within Holbeach Parish Councils jurisdiction where an exclusive right of burial has been passed and the fee has been correctly paid at the time of interment of either cremated remains or a burial.

**Topple test:** The recognised practice for risk assessing any memorial or grave space to ensure that it is fixed to the ground in such a way as not to pose a risk of falling onto any individual, employee, or member of the public.

**Cemetery space:** Current cemetery spaces operated and managed by Holbeach Parish Council are Park Road cemetery and Hall Gate cemetery.

All gravestones, monuments, memorials, vases, and inscriptions shall be subject to the approval of the Council; and a drawing showing the form and dimensions of every gravestone and monument proposed to be erected, together with a copy of the inscription intended to be cut or made thereon, must be left at the office of the Clerk to the Council. All such gravestones, monuments, memorials, and vases shall be placed at the head/foot of the grave space and no kerb or other objects shall be placed on the rest of the grave. The Parish Council reserve the right to remove any items which infringe the cemetery rules.

Grave numbers on Monuments must bear the identification number of that grave, cut at the foot of all monuments and gravestones, so as to be visible when erected.

All Memorials should be insured (if required) and are the responsibility of the family. The Parish Council takes no responsibility for the Memorial.

### **Memorial Masons:**

1. All memorials will be made and erected to the National Association of Memorial Mason (NAMM) or British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM) standards. Including, in the case of a grave headstone, a ground anchor.
2. A Certificate of Conformity to BS8415 will be issued to the grave owner and to the Parish Clerk following installation.
3. The memorial mason will pay for any damage caused by them to Council property or to surrounding memorials.
4. All memorial masons will have appropriate public liability insurance in place (copy of certificate to be provided).
5. Memorial masons will remove all unused materials / rubbish from site and will leave the area neat and tidy.
6. No works to be carried out any work on site while a funeral is in progress.
7. Memorial masons will have explained to the owner of the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial that the memorial remains their property and that they are responsible for keeping it in good and safe condition.
8. Memorial masons should have advised the owner to consider insuring the memorial against accidental damage and vandalism.



9. Memorial Grants will only be granted where there is an Exclusive Right Of Burial.
10. All memorials/vases/headstones and tablets must contain, on the reverse, the grave space number. Failure to comply will result in the Council issuing a notice to the mason for the removal of the memorial. Photographic evidence of the grave space reference must be supplied to Holbeach Parish Council before the memorial is installed for approval.
11. Memorials on a single plot should be no more than 102cm (40") in height, 91cm (36") in width and no more than 30.5cm (12") in depth. Double plot headstone can span the space between the graves but must adhere to the above height and depth measurements.

### **General Policy Statement**

Holbeach Parish Councils aims are to ensure the health and safety of the staff and members of the public that use any cemetery within its duty of care, and to ensure the lasting amenity of the cemetery as a safe, inclusive space for all who wish to use it. Its secondary aims are to promote the amenity and heritage of the cemeteries, and the ecosystem that lives within them.

### **Policy Overview**

- Holbeach Parish Council already has a set of cemetery rules agreed for the maintenance and accepted activities within the cemetery spaces under its care. These will be the accepted rules within this policy.
- Holbeach Parish Council will conduct a risk assessment of all cemeteries under its care at least once every 12 months or immediately following a notifiable risk event within them.
- Should a memorial be reported to the Council by the member of the public, an individual visual test will be carried out as soon as is practical.
- These risk assessments will be carried out by the Open Spaces Committee and one member of office/WCPM staff trained to complete risk assessments.
- Holbeach Parish Council will always aim to not lay down memorials on a large scale unless there is an incident which causes this to be required and it is the safest course of action.
- Where immediate action is required, the best course of action will be taken to remove the risk. This action could be, but not limited to, cordoning off to allow family to complete remedial works within 60 days, removal & safe disposal of the memorial should it be in more than 4 pieces, supporting should it be possible to be done so with minimal cost to the Council with light remedial work or cordoning off the memorial for a period of 60 days before action is taken.
- Where action is required, the Council will take necessary action to ensure that family have opportunity to deal with it in the first instance. If an issue is found, a notice will be put onto the memorial giving the family 60 days to contact the Council and explain what remedial works the family has arranged. The Council will give 60 days from the last date of notice for works to be completed on the memorial.
- Where it is deemed necessary to monitor the memorial over 6 months, the Open Spaces team will be made aware of all monuments in this category. Should the memorials risk change, it will be required of the Working Parks and Cemeteries manager to notify the Clerk immediately and an assessment carried out to manage the risk via one of the other categories. Should no change occur in those 6 months, the memorial will be assessed again at the next full inspection.

- Holbeach Parish Council has taken advice from various sources, including the Government 1, the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM)2 and the Ministry of Justice to create this policy.

### **Memorials of historical significance**

It is recognised that there are Commonwealth War Graves in some locations under Holbeach Parish Councils care. Holbeach Parish Council will alert the Commonwealth War Graves Commission if any safety issue or damage is reported to the office.

### **Communication protocol**

Holbeach Parish Council has outlined this communication policy to ensure that their approach to memorial testing is both consistent and fairly promoted. The standard risk assessment testing will be notified via an announcement in the Parish Council meeting the month before the tests are due to be carried out, and will be promoted via a notification in the Parish noticeboard and the cemeteries in which testing will be carried out the next business day following this Council meeting.

The Council have a requirement of their Working Parks and Cemeteries manager to report any incident as a result of works of employees under their care on the same business day that they occur to at least the Clerk to the Council to enable a prompt risk response.

The Council ask that all members of the public adhere to the same following an incident that causes damage to a memorial in one of the spaces that are under their duty of care.

### **Complaints about the how the authority manages its cemetery spaces**

Holbeach Parish Council is committed to providing cemetery services in the best possible way. Should the services Holbeach Parish Council provide fall below those offered and expected, Holbeach Parish Council will endeavour to resolve any complaint or issue at first point of contact wherever possible. Where it is not possible to resolve with a member of staff, the complaint will be referred to the Chairman of the Council, who may or may not elect for it to be deliberated for a decision to be made at the next full council meeting. Should this go to full Council, their decision is the final response from the Council. This should take no longer than 8 weeks in process and a decision will be put in writing from the Clerk on the Councils behalf to the details supplied by the complainant.

Should you feel your complaint was not resolved from this final resolution offered by Holbeach Parish Council, you have the opportunity to take it further with the Local Government Ombudsman:

Website: <https://www.lgo.org.uk/>

Telephone: 0300 061 0614



Please note that in legal terms, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 no longer applies to identifiable data that relate to a person once they have died.

I\* / We\* the below agree to the terms and conditions relating to the cemetery rules & regulations as above.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Version	Date Approved	Amendments Made	Next Review Date
V1	14/05/2018		
V2	09/08/2021		11/04/2022
V3	19/04/2022		11/04/2023
V4	April 2023		April 2024
V5	08/04/2024	Photographic evidence of grave marker reference	April 2025