

CEMETERY HEADSTONE SAFETY PROJECT - CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Previous reports to this committee have described the position regarding headstone safety in Bute and Cowal.
- 1.2 This report advises of the current position in this area.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members note the information contained and the remedial actions proposed.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 A report presented in April 2011 report listed a number of proposed actions at cemeteries, subject to staff and resource availability and trials of new materials. These are summarised in Table 1.
- 3.2 "Wet Grab" adhesive has been trialled and is now considered appropriate for use on smaller stones as a short term fix to eliminate the need for lowering headstones until a more permanent proposal can be identified and funded. This is being utilised at the sites shown in Table 1.
- 3.3 Further discussions have taken place with the Employability Team and external funding is being sought to allow their continued involvement with this project.
- 3.4 Information is now available to be sent to monumental masons and lair holders requesting them to rectify problems with loose headstones at their own expense. It should be noted that some lair holders have already had their headstones repaired to the appropriate standard when requested.
- 3.5 As staff are now available, following completion of summer maintenance, works will commence to lower the worst of the loose stones for subsequent re-erection.

- 3.6 In the worst affected areas, where loose stones are widespread, then sections of cemeteries will be closed to public access, with visitors having to make appointments through the area office prior to gaining access to the site.
- 3.7 Repairs in Cowal cemetery are complete.

TABLE 1 - Number of stones in each area by cemetery

Area	Cemetery	Already lowered	Stones currently unsafe & still standing	Proposal
Bute	Kingarth	21	94	Restrict access or lower stones in older section
	Barone	0	151	Trial adhesive on smaller stones
	North Bute	36	173	Restrict access or lower stones in older section. Trial adhesive on smaller stones
	Townhead	150	386	Restrict access or lower stones in older section Trial adhesive on smaller stones
Cowal	Millhouse	0	232	Trial adhesive on smaller stones
	Kilmodan	0	74	Restrict access or lower stones
	Strachlachlan	18	0	Identify resource for phased re-erection
	Kilmorlich	0	38	Restrict access or lower stones
	Colintraive	0	9	Trial adhesive on smaller stones
	Kilmun	100	0	Identify method of work for steep ground
	Lochgoilhead	0	65	Restrict access or lower stones

	Strachur	0	116	Restrict access or lower stones in older section Trial adhesive on smaller stones
	Dunoon	540		Identify resource for phased re-erection

4. SUMMARY

- 4.1 The actions summarised above in Table 1 are those currently proposed at each site.
- 4.2 Where larger stones are present then lair holders and monumental masons are requested to rectify loose stones at their own expense prior to Streetscene teams taking substantial action, unless there is a threat of immediate danger, in which case Streetscene will lower the appropriate stones.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy Service Asset Management, Cemetery Management Rules
- 5.2 Financial Resources need to be identified to enable safe re-erection of stones, although a proportion of work may be completed by Streetscene staff. Contributions can initially be sought from lair holders and monumental masons. Resource required for investigation of large stones and subsequent repair programme.
- 5.3 Personnel Additional staff trained to inspect stones and rectify dangerous examples.
- 5.4 Equalities Impact Assessment None
- 5.5 Legal Argyll and Bute Council duty of care.

For further information, please contact: Iain Welsh, Amenity Asset Manager 01631 569180

Jim Smith
Head of Roads and Amenity
September 2012