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Burial Ground Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

Moulton Parish Council is the Burial Authority for the Parish of Moulton and is responsible for the management and maintenance of the Moulton Cemetery, The Grove, Moulton.

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

This policy outlines the roles and responsibilities in relation to Moulton Cemetery and its upkeep.

2. Legal Responsibility & Policy Support

[Open Spaces Act 1906 s10,](#)

[Local Government Act 1972 ss214,215](#)

[Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 s2, s3,](#)

[Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977](#)

[The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)

3. Memorials

Memorial Masons have the responsibility to work in accordance with the Parish Council's conditions and specifications for memorials, as laid down in Moulton Parish Council's Memorial Application Form and must be registered with National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) or British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM).

4. Grave Owner Responsibilities

Whilst Moulton 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. Risk Assessments

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

6. Inspections and Testing

Memorial Headstone Testing will be carried out every two years. Testing will be carried out by specialist NAMM or BRAMM trained inspectors who have passed the City & Guilds Certificate of Competence for the safety inspection and assessment of memorials. The inspectors will record all details, such as the age, size and condition of the memorial and will notify Moulton Parish Council of any required works.

If, upon inspection, a memorial is considered to pose an immediate risk, the inspector will:

- Ensure the safety of the public.
- Instruct that the headstone be laid flat on the grave, inscriptions face up.
- Erect a sign to warn members of the public of the hazard.
- Notify the Parish Council, who will contact the memorial owner.

If, upon inspection, a memorial is considered to require repair work, Moulton 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, Moulton Parish Council will act to ensure the hazard is made safe.

This policy is reviewed annually by the Executive Officer and submitted to the full council for approval.

Last Reviewed: January 2024
Review Due: January 2025

BURIAL GROUND RISK ASSESSMENT (APPENDIX M)

No	Activity	Hazard	Risk	Control	Level	Additional Measures
1.	Grass Cutting	Grass cutting in cemeteries using ride on mowers, strimmer's, 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 of at least £5m. 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 members of the public, staff and contractors.	Specialist contractors are to be appointed to carry out Memorial Inspections. Inspectors must be NAMM or BRAMM trained and have passed the City & Guilds Certificate of Competence for the safety inspection and assessment of memorials. Untrained individuals are not permitted to carry out testing.	Medium	
3.	General Maintenance	General maintenance of vegetation, flower beds, footpaths, litter picking, and weed control.	Injury to members of the public, staff, and contractors.	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 council staff.	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	

No	Activity	Hazard	Risk	Control	Level	Additional Measures
5.	Weather	Sunburn or cold wet conditions.	Sunburn or hypothermia affecting contractors and council staff.	Contractors and council staff advised to wear appropriate clothing, use sunscreen, and keep hydrated.	Low	Create and install a safety notice about the hazards and the risk of walking on the closed churchyard wall.
6.	Uneven and/or slippery surfaces	Slips, trips, and falls. Walking on walls.	Injury to members of the public, contractors, and council staff.	Contracted Groundsman to ensure all footpaths are kept clear of trip and slip hazards such as branches, and dead leaves. Releveling of burial ground to be carried out periodically.	Low	
7.	Disregard for the Burial Ground and its Contents	Disrespect of the 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 council staff are advised to carry a charged mobile phone with them. The staff member to notify another staff member that they are to work alone in the cemetery and to contact the Police if they experience unwanted or aggressive behaviour from members of the public.	Low	