

Memorial Stability Testing Report- Summary

According to Ministry of Justice and I.C.C.M testing should be carried out a minimum of every 5 years.

Ministry of Justice-Managing the safety of Burial Ground Memorials Practical advice for dealing with unstable memorial.) states that: 'Ownership of memorials remains with the family of the deceased'.

Notices were put up at the cemetery 4 weeks before to advise visitors that testing would be taking place.

A Memorial Stability Test was carried out on the 8th April 2025 at Arlesey Cemetery by The CDS Group.

CDS Group use the following method of test:

Memorials between 0.625m and 1.5m in height

Following an initial visual inspection to ensure the memorial is safe to test, a hand load test will be performed to establish the stability of the memorial. If significant movement is noted on application of the load, then the memorial will be considered unsafe and recorded accordingly. If the memorial is severely unstable and considered an imminent risk of failure then immediate steps will be taken to reduce the risk, which could comprise attaching of a warning sign, cordoning off the memorial, making safe or where required laying down of the memorial. After the memorial has been made safe and recorded, a before and after photograph will be taken.

Should the memorial be deemed as High risk the headstone will be laid flat or fenced off with supports in place so posing no threat of falling over and every effort will be made to contact the owner of the headstone.

129 memorials were tested of which 24 failed. All that failed were tagged, listed and reported back to Arlesey Town Council.

8 were deemed low risk and 16 moderate risks. Photographs and videos of those identified were taken for future reference.

There were none at immediate risk of toppling over, therefore none needed immediate attention.

The report showed that those of low risk were loose at base or joint and those of moderate risk loose at anchor.

The CDS group advise that any memorials at moderate risk should be rectified within 6 months of notification and low risk within 6-12 months.

Following the report, the owners of Exclusive Right of Burial of the listed memorials were contacted and informed of the results as any repairs must be carried out by a qualified stonemason under the instruction of the owner of the Exclusive Right Deed.

Of the 24 – 8 lessees had moved and left no forwarding address-checked by electoral register.
(7 moderate, 1 low risk)

2 letters returned as 'not known at this address' (Moderate risk)

9- no response to letter (5 low risk 4 moderate risk)

1-Contact was made by new address owner stating previous owner and lessee would now be 105 years of age and had no contact details for their descendants known. (moderate risk)

4- Contact made and headstones were repaired.

Further contact will be attempted and the remaining headstones will be monitored by the groundsman.