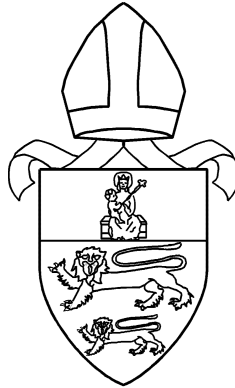


DIOCESE OF LINCOLN



***GUIDANCE ON
TOPPLE TESTING IN CHURCHYARDS
AND CONSECRATED CEMETERIES
2007***

***Issued on the direction of the
Chancellor of the Diocese***

December 2007

These notes relate to the testing of memorials by hand or by a 'topple tester' or similar device in a churchyard or consecrated portion of a cemetery.

1. The relevant authority, either PCC or Local Authority, must make an application for a recommendation for Faculty to the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches (DAC) to undertake topple testing in a churchyard or consecrated portion of a cemetery. The Secretary can be contacted by writing to: The DAC Secretary, Edward King House, Minster Yard, Lincoln LN2 1PU.
2. Before any such testing takes place a Faculty must be obtained from the Diocesan Chancellor after a recommendation has been given by the DAC.
3. A method statement must be supplied detailing the memorials that are to be tested and also outlining the extent of the force to be exerted to the memorial. This should comply with BS 8415 and should not exceed a lateral force of 35kg being applied to its apex. Further details relating to the type of machine to be used (if relevant) should also be submitted.
4. A publicity campaign should be undertaken prior to any testing. Such a campaign must include the placing of notices at the churchyard at least six weeks prior to the date of the planned testing and the inclusion of an advert in a local newspaper for a period of not less than two weeks.
5. Prior to such testing, written notice must be given to the person listed in the churchyard or cemetery record as responsible for the maintenance of the relevant memorial.
6. The temporary securing of any memorial found to be unsafe should usually be through the use of a stake or

- similar. A warning notice should also be erected at the side of the failed memorial with a contact number for the PCC or the local authority, depending upon who is the relevant authority.
7. Upon such temporary securing of a memorial, written notice must be given to the person identified under (5) above requiring the making safe of the memorial within four months of the date of the notice.
 8. In the absence of a response to the notice referred to in (7) above, or in the event that there is no person identified under (5) above, there should be a further display of public notices listing the memorials which should be made safe within four months. These notices should be in two or more conspicuous places in the churchyard or cemetery and on the church or cemetery notice board. It should also be published in the church/parish magazine in respect of memorials in churchyards; and
 9. In the absence of any response to (7) and (8) above, the PCC or relevant Local Authority may lay flat the memorial or leave the stake in place pending implementation of an improvement plan. The aforementioned improvement plan should be set in place within six-months of emergency works being undertaken to memorials and must include details of the re-erection of memorials which have been laid flat.
 10. In the event that anyone objects to the laying flat of any memorial after this procedure is employed, the matter should be placed before the Chancellor for directions.
 11. This guidance only applies to memorials that are not more than 2.5 m high. Special directions would need to be sought from the Chancellor for taller memorials that have to be tested.