

## **Council's Headstone Safety Programme Update**

As part of our legal obligations regarding public safety, as a Burial Authority we are required to carry out a programme of safety inspection of headstones within our cemeteries and churchyards. This programme is undertaken in accordance with the Burial Ground Memorial Safety Guidance issued by the Scottish Government in June 2019. These inspections are required as part of our duty as a Burial Authority to ensure public safety within cemeteries and burial grounds.

More information on the Headstone Safety Programme can be found on the SBC website. <https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/environment/headstone-testing> We would like to inform you that from Tuesday 5 May 2026 Scottish Borders Council will begin headstone safety inspections at Coldingham Priory. Public notices advising of our intention to carry out this work will be displayed at Coldingham Priory from Tuesday 7 April 2026.

### **What to Expect**

Inspections will be carried out by specially trained Council staff following strict safety procedures. Should any headstone be deemed unsafe, Scottish Borders Council are required to make it safe. This is done by either socketing, laying flat, or – in exceptional circumstances – cordoning off. To improve communication and awareness our procedures now include enhanced signage and engagement.

Any memorial that is laid flat will have a notice placed beside it, informing the headstone owner and providing information about what to do next – the same information is available online via the link above.

Memorial owners who wish to arrange their own repair work ahead of the Council's inspections may also find this online information helpful. Please contact us if you have any questions.

### **Community Council engagement and demonstration**

We understand that there is a Community Council meeting on Tuesday 21 April 2026. If it would be of interest, Council officers would be happy to attend to explain some of the background to the programme and the Council's approach to headstone safety.

In addition, we are planning to hold a headstone testing and safety demonstration on Tuesday 28 April 2026 at 10am at Coldingham Priory. Elected Members, Community Council representatives and members of the public are all invited to attend. If you intend to come along please let us know in advance by emailing

[Placecemeteries@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:Placecemeteries@scotborders.gov.uk)

## **Community engagement**

We would appreciate your support in helping us to share this information with any relevant local groups or individuals. We will also promote this initiative through our social media channels and the dedicated webpages.

## **Respectful approach**

The Council fully appreciates the sensitive nature of this work. Please be assured that all actions will be carried out with respect, care, and only where absolutely necessary.

## **Contact information**

If you require further information, please contact us on 0300 100 1800 or [Placecemeteries@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:Placecemeteries@scotborders.gov.uk)

Thank you for your cooperation.

Kind regards  
Diane Munro  
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