

## HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

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**Date:** Monday, 8 November 2021

**Title:** Tower Hill Cemetery - DDI Audit Access Requirements

**Contact Officer:** Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer - Angus Whitburn

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### Background

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2021, the council had an external access audit carried out at Tower Hill Cemetery. The purpose of this was to understand first to gain a better knowledge if an additional access point would improve the ease of access at Tower Hill Cemetery and secondly to find other area's where the access could be improved.

The new access path in the northwest section of tower hill has now been commissioned. On recommendation from the access audit, the path width has been increased to 1.2m to allow for easier access for wheelchair users.

### Current Situation

Discussion were held with the auditor over vehicle access and parking. From the action, it was recommended the council maintain its current policy's around parking and vehicular access. It was highlighted on the day of the audit the parking situation is not suitable. The current bays are not sufficiently marked and there are no identified disabled parking bays. These works have been programmed in and are due for completion before the end of November 2021.

It was recommended in the report to seek out the feasibility of reducing the gradient of the slope and if so programme it into future works. Due to commissioning the new entrance the cost for such works would not outweigh the benefit of reducing the gradient. This was recommended by officer's as an alternative if approval wasn't granted for the northwest entrance. Minor improvements were recommended to help with the steep slope from the kissing gate. The handrail should be made compliant in accordance with appendix 2 from the report. Additionally, the slope was icy and it had not been salted. To help alleviate this it has been agreed slating of this area will be included in Witney Town Council's Emergency plan.

From the finding's, there was a list of actions all relating to the available mapping of the cemetery for visitors. There are no notice boards with maps of the section's, benches, bins, steep slopes etc available. If a disabled user was to access the cemetery to locate a grave they had never visited they would be required to wander around aimlessly. A simple facility as a map should be available and could make a great difference.

### **Environmental impact**

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

### **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Without actioning certain points from the audit the council could be held liable in an accident as it had prior knowledge of certain insufficiencies.

### **Financial implications**

Described here or as stated in the report above.

The property maintenance budget from 2020-21 was rolled into the 2021 – 22 budget to help fund the improvements highlighted in the audit.

Tower hill has a glass-fronted notice board of wear a suitably designed map could be placed. It would be recommended to have the map professionally created of which there is no available budget.

### **Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Council consider a budget for 2021-22 for a map designed for Tower Hill Cemetery. That can if needed be professionally developed.