

**BLAKENALL AND BLOXWICH LNP**

**20<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2006**

**BLOXWICH CEMETERY, FIELD ROAD**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members of the Local Neighbourhood Partnership on the issue of vehicular access into Bloxwich Cemetery.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 Members of the Local Neighbourhood Partnership are asked to note that the measures introduced for a trial period will now be made permanent.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 At your meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2005, a report was discussed which outlined proposals for new traffic management arrangements that were to be introduced for an initial trial period of approximately three months from the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2005. These were to minimise the opportunity for the irresponsible behaviour of vehicle users that occurred over the Christmas 2004 period and consequent distress caused to other cemetery users and grave owners.
- 3.2 Concerns were expressed that these arrangements provided limited accessibility for visitors, and particularly those visitors with mobility difficulties who relied upon parking on the internal roads to enable access to the grave side. Consequently, during the trial, additional access arrangements were provided for Blue Badge holders to park within the cemetery at weekends, and also on Wednesdays.
- 3.3 It was also agreed to monitor comments and complaints from the public over the trial period and provide a report to the back to the Local Neighbourhood Partnership. The Partnership was invited to consider funding any additional staffing that might be required to increase access.

**4. ACCESS DETAILS DURNG THE TRIAL**

**4.1 Access during the week**

- 4.1.1 The main Cemetery gates in Field Road remained open to allow vehicular access and some limited parking. Double yellow road markings were painted along the accessible road within the cemetery gates in order to help prevent double parking.
- 4.1 .2 Traffic barriers were installed near to the Chapel and Lodge, across the internal roadways preventing vehicle access into the parts of the Cemetery where there are relatively narrow single-track roads. Arrangements were made to open and close these barriers to allow funeral corteges and following vehicles access to the vicinity of the graveside.

4.1.3 As these measures reduced the previously unlimited access to all parts of the Cemetery for disabled vehicle users a prior appointment system was introduced, operated on Wednesdays, being midweek, to enable disabled vehicle users to park on the internal roadways near to the grave being visited. Any disabled driver with an appropriate badge who telephoned the Bereavement Services office (telephone number 0121 353 7228) prior to a Wednesday was able to make arrangements for a member of staff to meet them at the barrier to let them further into the grounds to visit the grave and then to lift the barrier when they wish to leave.

#### 4.2 **Access during the weekends and Bank Holidays**

4.2.1 The main Cemetery gates were closed for all vehicles except for disabled vehicle users with an appropriate badge gaining access by prior appointment with Bereavement Services during weekends and Bank Holidays.

### 5. **FEEDBACK DURING THE TRIAL**

5.1 Over the period since the introduction of the trial the number of appointments being made on Wednesdays and weekends each week have averaged just over seven and two respectively. Bereavement Services have been able to meet this demand from existing staff resources.

5.2 There were a number of enquiries about the reduction in access, but the majority of enquiries were easily resolved once the basis for reducing access was explained, and the additional measures for access for visitors with disabilities was explained.

5.3 At the start of the trial there was a difficulty in providing the additional access arrangements due to the theft of the internal barriers.

5.4 However, on balance, the trial has had the desired affect in that there has been no repetition of the damage caused to graves by inconsiderate drivers mainly during the Christmas period in 2004.

### 6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The cost of the installation of barriers and double yellow road markings has been met from existing budgets.

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