

# Vale of Evesham Civic Society

## Report on Property at risk within Cemeteries and Closed Churchyards

July 2019



### Introduction

Evesham Town Council is responsible for two closed churchyards and two cemeteries, all within the Bengeworth ward of the town, excepting Waterside Cemetery which is in Evesham South ward.

- Bengeworth Cemetery—Broadway Road
- Closed Churchyard, Church Street, Bengeworth
- Waterside Cemetery, Bengeworth
- Closed Churchyard—All Saints Churchyard, Evesham

There are various defects in all four locations which are identified in this report. In some cases it is suggested that urgent action is needed to prevent further deterioration and costly repair work.

This report is intended to inform Town Council members and to provide evidence of where funds need to be spent to preserve our heritage and improve our town.

The Town Council is also responsible for Hampton churchyard. This churchyard is ~~not~~ the subject of this report.

### The Vale of Evesham Civic Society

The Society has adopted this report and believes that urgent action is needed

### Broken Window Theory

The broken windows theory is a criminological theory that states that visible signs of crime, anti-social behaviour, and civil disorder create an urban environment that encourages further crime and disorder, including serious crimes. In two of the locations listed in this report there are actual broken windows and a third has a metal grille which looks broken. It is suggested that buildings which look neglected tend to attract more vandalism than otherwise.

### A principle to be adopted

It is suggested that the members of Town Council need to think of these buildings as in their personal ownership. Would they be happy with their state of repair if the properties were attached to their own homes?

### The way forward

Some specialised help is required. It is suggested that the Town Council needs to employ specialised consultants and to involve Historic England.

Some work can be carried out by non specialised contractors, to clean up the roofs of the lodge and chapels.

Suitable metal grills can be made to safeguard the Bengeworth Cemetery Lodge window and the rear of the Bengeworth old church porch.



### Bengeworth Cemetery, Entrance Lodge—Broadway Road

This is not a listed building. It is not within the Conservation area

The entrance lodge seems in fair repair except for the following:

- Three of the four windows are broken. One of them has lost the protective grille and there is a danger of vandalism damage
- The roof shows some deterioration with some tiles either missing or dislodged.

### **URGENT ACTION REQUIRED**

Replace grille on one window.

### Windows

The lodge has four windows. One is undamaged two are as shown in photo A with minimal damage, the other, photo B has no protective grille and all the glass has gone. The remaining lead glass frame structure is weak and could easily be torn away.

It is considered that the lodge is open to vandalism as a lighted object or firework could easily be thrown through the window and the old wooden bier destroyed.



### Bier

Through the window without a grille this wooden bier can be seen. Whether it has historical value or not, it does seem vulnerable



### Roof

The roof does seem to be showing signs of wear with missing or dislodged tiles or slates. It is suggested that the roof and gutters are cleaned and remedial works carried out.







Photo from 2012 before conservation works

**URGENT ACTION REQUIRED**

Replace grille at back of building

Bengeworth Old Church Remains, Church Street, Bengeworth

This is a grade 2 listed building and within the Conservation area. The listing details are as follows:

CHURCH STREET 1. 5249 (West Side) Bengeworth Porch of former Church of St Peter (Formerly listed as Porch to Old Churchyard) SP 04 SW 5/96 7.5.52. II The C14 remains of the west tower of the old church of St. Peter which was pulled down in 1870. The porch, which stood under the west tower of the church, is of rubble, the archway gabled and flanked by buttresses with truncated pinnacles. Steps up.

The structure has recently been conserved through a joint project between the Town Council and Historic England and is in good condition. However, there remains concern about the grille at the back of the porch as shown below.

The metal grille at the back of the building faces the closed churchyard and is easily seen by people using the footpath through the churchyard and by people spending time there.

Improvements should be made to the grille for three reasons:

- It looks out of place as it is not designed to fit the aperture.
- It looks tatty and appears to have been repaired out of dissimilar materials.
- It allows the ingress of rubbish including drink cans, see below. This rubbish can easily be seen but only removed by Town Council staff as the gates need to be unlocked.

It is suggested that a new grille be manufactured to properly fit the aperture.



← Litter inside the porch



### Waterside Cemetery Chapels

These are not listed buildings. They are not within the Conservation area

It is understood that the buildings were once a separate Church of England chapel and a Catholic chapel. The chapels are now used by the Town Council as an office for Outside staff offices and for storage.

The buildings appear basically sound but are in need of maintenance, particularly to the timber structure between the two chapels.

### **URGENT ACTION REQUIRED**

Carry out maintenance on timber structure after specialised survey



### Chapels Roofs

These photos show:

- C. Clearing required. The chapels are surrounded by tall trees and therefore frequent clearing of the roof and gutters is required.
- D. Clearing required. Decayed stonework where shown
- E. Missing coping stone from ridge of roof.



C



D



E



### Timber Structure between the two chapels

It is difficult to assess the condition of the structure as it is inaccessible from ground level. However, it is apparent that there is decay in the lower structure, see F and G and the timber needs painting, see H.

### Chapel windows.

There are a few broken windows not shown.



### Chapel Structure

It is believed there may be a large crack in one of the chapel walls. To be substantiated. It is suggested a proper survey is carried out by a specialist consultant on both of the chapels and the wooden structure between them.

### Future Use

The future use of the chapels may be considered. It should be noted that the equivalent cemetery chapels in Pershore were listed in 1999.

### Low cemetery wall fronting Waterside

The low wall has lost some of its capping stones which need replacing, see photographs J and K





### All Saints Churchyard Access Gates

This is a grade 2 listed structure and within the Conservation area. The listing details are as follows:

MERSTOW GREEN 1. 5249 (East Side) Gate Piers to Churchyard SP 0343 NE 1/14 II 2. Early C19. A pair of stone rusticated gate piers with cornice caps and urn finials.

Conservation needed to both gateposts



LH gatepost, June 2019



RH gatepost, June 2019

### Condition of the churchyard gateposts

The churchyard gates form the main entrance to All Saints church, St Lawrence church, the Bell Tower, Abbey Park and the remains of Evesham Abbey.

The listing dates from June 1977, and states that at that time ~~that~~ the gate piers had 'cornice caps and urn finials'.

The 1992 photograph shows the LH gate post has lost the finial but the RH gate post is intact. Damage can be seen on the RH gatepost at the upper hinge to the gate.



Gateposts, November 2012

The 2012 photograph shows that both finials have gone. It appears that the damage to the RH gatepost by the upper hinge had been repaired using a filler of some kind.

The 2019 photograph shows that the filler to the RH gatepost has come away exposing the iron work to the upper hinge.

Both gateposts appear to need attention. It is suggested that Historic England ~~are~~ consulted on the way forward.

### Photographs in this report

All photographs taken by Colin Tether in June 2019 except:

- Gateposts July 1992, by Brian Reid.
- Where otherwise dated



Prepared by B. A. Reid

Date 14.7.92

Gateposts, July 1992