

## ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL ROADSIDE MEMORIALS POLICY

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Often families and friends will place memorials on the highway in memory of loved ones who have died in road accidents. The Isle of Wight Council (“council”) recognises and respects the wish of the bereaved to mark road deaths in this way but also has a duty to keep the public highway safe for all road users. The council therefore has to balance the wishes of the bereaved with those of public safety. The distraction of motorists and the safety of those placing or maintaining memorials are the overriding safety issues in the consideration of road side memorials.
- 1.2 The Highways Act 1980 contains no express provision to licence or permit memorials on the highway.
- 1.3 It is the council’s aim for all situations such as this to be dealt with in a sympathetic, understanding and sensitive way and that, where and when appropriate, staff will liaise with those who wish to place memorials on the highway via the Hampshire Constabulary Roads Policing Unit family liaison officer.
- 1.4 The Hampshire Constabulary Roads Policing Unit endorses the approach outlined in this policy.

### 2. Relevant legislation and information

2.1 Please see the following:

- Highways Act 1980 Section 132.
- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016.
- RoadPeace. The national charity for road crash victims - web site address [www.roadpeace.org](http://www.roadpeace.org)

### 3. Our policy

- 3.1 Low key memorials such as the discrete placing of a small floral tribute or small soft toys at certain times of the year and for a limited duration at the roadside may be acceptable provided that there is no significant risk of driver distraction or undue risk to the individual visiting the location. Any items should be placed clear of any locations where highway maintenance is likely to be undertaken, e.g. grass cutting and verge maintenance. Such memorials should also be placed away from locations that are hazardous to access, such as carriageway central reservations, roundabout central islands and other road junctions. Where the council considers that any such memorial is not in compliance with this provision it shall be removed.

- 3.2 Any memorial which is considered by the authority to constitute a permanent monument is not permitted on the highway and will be removed on safety grounds.
- 3.3 In these circumstances the bereaved will be contacted and encouraged to accept an alternative low key memorial for example the appropriate planting of flowers or shrubs in keeping with the location. Where the bereaved are looking to provide a more permanent memorial to a loved one then the council's Bereavement Services department can be contacted, which may be able to assist with identifying locations within local authority managed cemeteries where such a memorial can be accommodated. Contact will be made through the Hampshire Constabulary Road Policing Unit family liaison officer.
- 3.4 Hampshire Constabulary Roads Policing family liaison officers are aware of this policy and can provide advice as appropriate as part of their role.

**Dated: September 2017**  
**Isle of Wight Council**