



Media Release

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VANDALS RETURN TO STONEFALL CEMETERY

Harrogate Borough Council's parks and open spaces staff have vowed to help the police find and prosecute the criminals responsible for causing vandalism at Stonefall cemetery. A second attack in just one week has angered and upset families, councillors and council staff.

In this second attack vandals smashed two large memorials – they broke the wing off a very well known and admired Angel memorial and broke a large cross in two.

Harrogate's Stonefall cemetery is a peaceful oasis for those who have lost loved ones and the police and council are not prepared to let hooligans get away with destroying and desecrating this cemetery.

Head of Parks and Open Spaces, Patrick Kilburn, said: “We just won't countenance this type of vandalism. We have already had one tragic death in one of our cemeteries and those who are carrying out these attacks could seriously injure themselves or even worse. These memorials are extremely heavy and falling masonry can kill or seriously maim those who are smashing them in a despicable act of vandalism. We would urge parents to check if their youngsters are responsible and to warn them of the terrible consequences.”

Sergeant Mark Gee, Harrogate District Community Policing Team, said: “We talk about vandalism, but this is actually criminal damage of the worst possible kind and we simply will not tolerate it. Those responsible can expect to receive severe penalties through the courts.

“We are working with the council's parks staff and the community safety team. We are both increasing our security and as for the police, we are having extra Community Support Officers at the site and we have equipped the Community Beat Officers with mountain bikes so that they can quickly get into areas that vehicles can't reach in this beautiful cemetery.”

If anyone has information regarding this vandalism, they are urged to contact the local police or Harrogate Borough Council's Community Safety Team on 01423 556503.
ENDS

FURTHER INFORMATION: is available from Mr Patrick Kilburn, Head of Parks and Open Spaces and Sergeant Mark Gee, Harrogate District Community Policing Team on 01423 539482.