



LONDON STONE CONSERVATION

STONE CARVERS STONE CONSERVATORS STONE MASONS

www.londonstoneconservation.co.uk
tel:0845 500 2501

12/11/2010

Condition Report for the William George Fidge Memorial Highgate East Cemetery

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Objects Details Description

Title: William George Fidge Memorial
Type: outdoor stone memorial
Material: marble; Yorkstone; brick; lead lettering
Weight: 4 metric tonnes (approx)

This memorial is built in marble and has an approximate weight of 4 tonnes. Its structure consists of two sections, each sitting on a Yorkstone raft/plinth.

The first section (approx size 6 feet by 4 feet) sits at ground level. It would have comprised a marble surround of four straight sections, cornered by four marble obelisks and a central flowerbed. This section has been largely lost: the marble surrounds have dislocated and the Yorkstone raft subsided into the ground. The entirety of the section is no longer visible.

The second section (approx size 4 feet by 4 feet) is built up vertically over the Yorkstone raft. It consists of four separate marble units, measuring approx 1.6 metres from the



Reg. Office: Unit 25, Enterprise Row, Rangemoor Rd. Ind. Area, London N15 4LU
Director: Florian Kirchertz GCGI
VAT Reg.No. : 877 4192 81
lse@londonstoneconservation.co.uk

Secretary: Sae Na Ku GCGI
Company No. : 04912178
Fax: 0870 236 0564





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Yorkstone base. This part of the memorial is suspended over a brick structure, creating an elevation of approximately one foot above ground level.
The brick structure is open at the front.

The weight of the memorial is suspended over the sides of the brickwork with a thickness of half a brick, and at the back of the brickwork with one brick thickness.
The entire upright section of the memorial is tilting forward.

Condition Prior to Treatment

In its current condition the memorial has become unsafe.
The entire upright section of the memorial is tilting forward by approx seven degrees.
Both sides of the load-bearing half-width of brick wall have cracked due to the increased pressure of the memorial at the front edge.
In addition, the bricks have started to sink into the ground, as there does not appear to be an obvious structural framework in place below.
The condition of the upper section of the memorial itself is sound and there appear to be no losses or faults with either the ornate stonework or the lettering. All of the joints between the stone sections are solid and have not failed.
Attempts to stabilise the structure have been made in the past, by wedging in thin marble sections between the bottom of the memorial and the top of the brickwork.

Treatment Carried Out

After careful observation of the overall structure it was decided to stabilise and level out the existing memorial.

We cast a 400mm thick double-reinforced concrete raft in situ below the existing elevated section of the memorial, followed by further reinforced concrete shuttering to the insides and outsides of the half thick brick wall.
Once the concrete had gained enough setting strength (one week after pouring), the levelling-out process began.
Two large hydraulic lifts were put into position at the front edge of the memorial.



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At the same time, a power pulley system was stationed at the back of the memorial, secured to a large group of trees, allowing it to take up the slack. Thus the memorial was secured during the lifting process.

This system offered a very controlled lifting and gradual levelling-out of the memorial. After the levelling process was completed, we decided to secure the memorial using engineering bricks between the concrete raft and the front edge of the memorial, while also using reinforced concrete lintels spanning from one side of the brick wall to the other.

The rest of the gap was made up using natural slate slats.

Once the memorial was secured in its new position, we decided to excavate the sides of the brick wall all the way to the back in order to apply further reinforcing measures. Any future movement would be therefore be minimised accordingly.

On completion of the structural alterations, a second brick wall was built to bridge the gap between the concrete upstands. This was done purely for visual effect, to enable the application of an even render coat to the entire base section.



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