



Media Release

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## **Cemetery repairs near completion**

Repairs to most cemetery headstones damaged in the 2010 and 2011 Canterbury earthquakes are nearing completion in Selwyn.

Repairs to 13 of the 19 cemeteries maintained by Selwyn District Council have been completed, with work on the five remaining cemeteries needing repairs scheduled to be finished by June 2016. One cemetery - Lake Coleridge - did not suffer any earthquake damage.

Many headstones were damaged in the magnitude 7.1 September 2010 earthquake, which was centred near Charing Cross, about 10km from Darfield. Some further damage also occurred as a result of the February 2011 Canterbury Earthquake.

Since the Canterbury earthquakes, Selwyn District Council has been working through a staged programme of cemetery repairs to fix damaged headstones in Council maintained cemeteries. Over the past year repairs to Prebbleton, Bishops Corner, Killinchy, Kirwee, Ellesmere Public and Ellesmere Catholic cemeteries has been completed. Repair work to Brookside, Springston, Lincoln, Shands Road, Weedons, Greendale and Dunsandel cemeteries was previously completed.

The cemeteries where repair work is yet to be undertaken are: South Malvern, Kimberley, Waddington, and Hororata. These repairs are planned to be complete by June next year. Work is currently underway on headstone repairs at Kowai Pass cemetery.

Around 1,100 headstones in total needed repairs as a result of the Canterbury earthquakes. Most local cemeteries were established in the 1870s or early 1880s and have graves dating back to that time.

"The amount of damage which occurred in cemeteries within Selwyn was quite varied and sites which suffered the most damage were repaired first," says Selwyn District Council's Earthquake Recovery Manager Douglas Marshall.

"The cemeteries which suffered the most damage were those with many older graves with ornate monuments like Lincoln and the sites close to the September 2010 fault line like Greendale."

Headstone repair work is being completed by Decra Art. The repair technique being used involves matten rods being installed which provide a secure foundation for headstones and monuments.

"The rods are extremely strong and after the repairs have been finished the headstones and monuments are actually stronger than a newly built headstone is required to be so they should be quite resilient in any future earthquake," says Mr Marshall.

Damage to cemeteries was part of the wider infrastructure damage that occurred in the earthquakes as roads, bridges, water and wastewater and community buildings also needed

to be fixed. The majority of infrastructure repairs in Selwyn have now been completed with all roads, bridges, water and waste water repairs finished and most community buildings fixed.

Ends

*Photos attached: Ellesmere Catholic and Kirwee Cemeteries are some of the cemeteries to have headstones repaired over the past year*

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