

Mortonhall Memorial to be a water garden



The Multi-Agency Working Group made up of bereaved families affected by the Mortonhall 'Babies Ashes' scandal, representatives from other groups such as stillbirth and neonatal death society, SANDS Lothian, and SIMBA, the Simpson's Memory Box Appeal, have agreed upon a design for one of the two planned memorials.

The proposal is to site one memorial at Mortonhall Crematorium although recent discussions have also centred around where a second memorial would be placed. This is deemed necessary as some parents thought it inappropriate to have a memorial at the crematorium where working practices led to the 'Babies Ashes' scandal. Parents were told no ashes remained after cremation of their babies and young children which led to an enquiry headed up by Dame Elish Angiolini as well as a nationwide enquiry instructed by the Scottish Government.

A design based on a walled circular water garden for the Mortonhall Memorial is being recommended to councillors who are expected to approve the proposals next Tuesday. The other elements of the memorial may be a memorial tree or plaques to record the babies names.

The memorial will be surrounded by a clipped beech hedge and central columbarium, which is intended to be a peaceful and private place for 'personal contemplation'. The centre of the pond may be deeper if parents would like water lilies planted there. The designer feels that the simple clean lines compliment Sir Basil Spence's design of the crematorium itself which is an A-listed building. This decision has to be ratified by the full council when they meet next month. The

council will fund the costs of both memorials estimated at £250,000.

The site for the second memorial will be reported at next month's council meeting although it is believed that Princes Street Gardens is favoured. Other sites considered have included Inverleith Park, Calton Hill, Arthurs Seat and Blackford Hill.