



# Bridgwater Town Council

## **Guidance notes on practices and Rules and Regulations with St Johns, Bristol Road Cemetery and Quantock Road Cemetery.**

These notes are for the guidance of those purchasing or inheriting the Exclusive Right of Burial. We understand that at such a distressing times rules and regulations are far from your mind, however they are necessary to enable the Council to maintain the cemeteries in a condition that is acceptable to all visitors. The information may be of assistance to you in the future, so we suggest keeping these notes with your grave deed for reference. Please note that the Rules and Regulations are subject to change, therefore please see noticeboards within the Cemeteries for updates.

### **Rules and Regulations**

This is an extract of the main rules and regulations; the full policy document can be provided upon request.

The Right of Burial which you have purchased gives you control over the burials on the grave space for the period of 100 or 50 years and, once the appropriate fee had been paid, the right to erect a memorial in accordance with the rules and regulations on the grave space. The land itself remains in ownership of Bridgwater Town Council, as burial authority, which is empowered to set our regulations for the proper management of the cemetery.

- No planting of any plants, trees, shrubs, bulbs is permitted on a grave
- No mounds or raised turf areas are permitted
- No artificial grass
- No items on the length of the grave space or outside the base of the memorial that is within the Lawn Section
- Garden of Rest grave space – no items outside the foundation base
- No plastic flowers, solar lights (unless incorporated within the memorial by a memorial mason), lanterns, items on sticks, windmills, Ornaments, candles, balloons, and glass are permitted on a grave space.
- The Council has the right to remove from any grave any items (such as fences or gravel etc.) that may interfere with the ground's maintenance of that area after serving notice to the registered grave owner. Any item causing immediate hazard (such as glass) will be removed immediately.
- The Council has the right to remove any unauthorised items left on or around a grave space. The grave space will be photographed and unauthorised items will be removed and kept for 1 month. The Council will attempt to inform the registered grave owner. If items remain uncollected after 1 month the items will be disposed of.
- The Council has the right to remove and dispose of any floral tributes, plant etc. that have withered or died or become unsightly on any grave. Christmas wreaths will normally be removed by the beginning of February.
- No interments shall take place without either the deed or consent in writing of the owner/applicant of the Exclusive Right of Burial.
- All interments shall take place in accordance with the statutory requirements laid out by the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 or any subsequent legislation/guidance that comes into force.

## **Information following the interment**

After the burial has taken place, the floral tributes will remain on the grave for around 14 days, after which they will be removed by the cemetery staff. After this period the grave bed should be kept clear at all times, to allow the ground to settle and for access of the grounds staff. Small floral tributes can be placed at the headend of the grave space.

If authorised items are found on the grave space, the grave space will be photographed and the Funeral Director contacted and they will speak with the family. If the items are still there after 1 month then they will be removed and stored for 1 month. If after 1 month they are not collected the items will be disposed of. The registered owners will not be notified.

The grave will be turfed or grass seed sown, depending on season and conditions, 6-12 months after the burial has taken place. It is normal for the grave to subside during the first months after a burial as the soil settles, especially after periods of heavy rain, and staff regularly check the graves and reinstate them as necessary.

## **Lawn Section graves**

The Lawn Sections are laid out to enable mowing to take place easily between the rows of memorials.

Kerbs and ledgers are prohibited in such a layout.

## **Traditional Section graves**

The Traditional Sections are laid out the same as the lawn section and rules and regulations are the same but you are allowed kerbs and ledgers in this section.

## **Garden of Rest Section graves**

The Garden of Rest Graves is for cremated remains and the rules and regulations are the same. Each plot is marked by a concrete slab which remains there until the permanent memorial is placed and a new foundation base is supplied by your mason replaces the concrete slab. All items must be kept on the foundation base.

## **Children's area**

The Rules and Regulations for these graves are the same as the rest of the cemetery. However, due to the very sensitive nature of these graves, and in recognition that this is a difficult time for parents and there is often a desire to place items in memory of their loss this area is treated sensitively.

## **The Council is not liable for any damage to or loss of items left on a grave space**

## **The memorial**

If you wish to place a memorial upon a grave you must first purchase the Exclusive Right of Burial (normally your Funeral Director would do this for you) and then you must purchase the Right to erect a memorial (permit).

A memorial may be erected, from **6** months after the burial this is to allow the ground to settle. A Garden of Rest memorial can be placed almost straight away. All memorials must be constructed and fixed to the requirements BS8415 by either BRAMM or NAMM registered mason. Your memorial mason will be able to advise you on the styles of memorial that can be placed in the cemetery.

All applications to place a memorial requires the signature(s) of the owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial and the appropriate fee. Having received this, a permit to place the memorial will be issued to the memorial mason.

**The memorial remains the property of the deed owner(s) and they are responsible for the maintenance of the memorial, keeping it in good order and safe condition. Therefore, we recommend you insure the memorial.**

The Right to Erect a Memorial is initially granted for 10 years and will be extended at the end of the 10-year period subject to the memorial being in a safe condition when inspected by a trained cemetery staff and relevant fee being paid.

If the memorial is found not to be in a safe condition, then the owner of the memorial will need to organise its repair by a registered mason. When this has been done the memorial right will be renewed. If repairs are not carried out in a reasonable time, then the Council will make the memorial safe and any cost will be recharged to the grave space.

Should a memorial be found unsafe at any time the Council has a legal right and obligation, under the Local Authority Cemetery Order 1977, to remove any danger immediately. This is usually done by cordoning off or laying down. We will contact the owner(s) to inform them of the action that has been taken and giving them the opportunity to organise the repairs necessary to the memorial.

### **Opening of adjacent graves**

When a grave is prepared the excavated soil is placed to the side of the grave, if there is unused land to the side of the grave then the soil will be placed there. However, when opening a grave between existing graves, we may need to place boards and soil over the adjacent grave for a short period of time, rest assured that we only do this if we cannot place boards and/or soil elsewhere. After the funeral, we clean the grave and leave the area neat and tidy.

Occasionally a memorial will be needed to be removed for health and safety reasons and/or access for excavation. Where possible the Council will contact the owner of the rights in these circumstances to inform them and the Council will fund the removal and re-fixing of the memorial after the burial has taken place.