



SWANAGE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULATIONS FOR GODLINGSTON CEMETERY, SWANAGE

Although these regulations are a requirement for the management of the Cemetery every effort has been made to avoid restricting the rights and choices of the individual. Therefore, these regulations have been prepared with a balance between individual rights/information and the need to regulate for safe and tidy grounds. For example, the prohibition of glass and plastics is based upon these items becoming potential hazards when mowers are used. It is not based upon aesthetic considerations.

1. Conditions

- 1.1 Graves can only be purchased at the time of interment; they cannot be purchased in advance. The purchase of a neighbouring plot by a member of the immediate family of the deceased is permitted, as long as the plot requested is still available. The Town Clerk has delegated authority to determine whether the criteria for pre-purchase of a neighbouring plot have been met.
- 1.2 A wooden cross will be allowed to be placed on a grave following an interment, only until the ground has settled which is usually up to twelve months.
- 1.3 An application form for all designs for monuments, giving the measurements and full inscription showing the style of lettering must be submitted to the Clerk of the Council for approval and all appropriate fees paid, prior to any works being undertaken on site.
- 1.4 No alterations or additions to memorials, tablets or plaques may be undertaken without the written consent of the Town Council. Failure to abide by the above conditions may result in the removal of the memorial.
- 1.5 You may be required to remove any work that you do if it does not comply with the cemetery regulations.
- 1.6 The Council does not accept responsibility for damage or loss of any memorials, ornaments etc howsoever caused. The Council has a responsibility to ensure the cemetery is free of obvious dangers and hazards. Examples of hazards are glass, pottery items that break, sharp objects and items that are a tripping hazard. Such items will be removed with or without prior notification and will be available for collection from the Council Depot for a period of one month. In addition it may be necessary from time to time to remove items in the cemetery that cause a disturbance, such as wind chimes, or offence to visitors attending the cemetery. Please help the Council to provide a safe cemetery, which is an attractive and peaceful place to visit. As a responsible grave owner you have your part to play.
- 1.7 When graves are dug in certain areas of the cemetery, the Council may need to request the removal of the memorial to make room for equipment — this is a health and safety requirement.

1.8 Burial and cremation plots can only be opened and backfilled by Council staff or their appointed agent. All interments must be carried out under the supervision of the Council's staff.

1.9 Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times.

2. Grave Maintenance

2.1 Whilst a plot is well maintained, the gardening of graves is permitted up to a maximum area of 2'6" x 6' immediately in front of the headstone and centrally across the grave. If a grave becomes neglected, it will be cleared and turfed. The use of planter headstones is to be encouraged.

2.2 No trees or shrubs, including large rose bushes, to be allowed as planting on the grave.

2.3 All floral tributes will be removed 21 days following the interment unless the Council is notified in writing that the Family wish to arrange for their removal.

2.4 The Council will remove Christmas wreaths/decorations from 1st February each year.

2.5 The Council reserves the right to remove from any grave space, flowers, plants, floral tributes or wreaths which have deteriorated or become unsightly or where necessary for the purpose of allowing the grave or adjacent graves to be used again.

2.6 Wind chimes, night or solar powered lights, windmills or other ornaments or decorations will be allowed for a limited period of time (one month) following interment. Similarly a memento at specific periods can be placed close to the headstone at specific periods (anniversaries/birthdays) but will be removed after a period of one month. Any items removed will be held at the Council Depot for collection for a period of two weeks.

2.7 The placing of free standing ornaments, flower receptacles of glass, plastic, pottery or ceramic materials are not allowed for health and safety reasons, with the exception of Regulation 2.6.

2.8 The Council will carry out a programme of regular checks of memorials and reserves the right to lay flat or remove unsafe memorials at its discretion.

2.9 When a memorial has been identified as very unsafe and laid flat, every effort will be made to contact the Exclusive Rights holder, requesting them to carry out the necessary repair. If the owner cannot be traced after reasonable enquiry the Council may, instead of serving personal notice on the owner:-

a) display a notice in a conspicuous position in the Cemetery;

b) publish the notice on two successive weeks in one or more local newspapers, such notice having the same effect as if it were given to the owner on the date of first publication.

3. Permitted Memorials

- 3.1 All memorials and kerb sets must be fixed in accordance with the requirements of British Standard 8415, and any relevant industry codes of practice, such as the NAMM Code of Working Practice and the BRAMM Blue Book. All masons working in Swanage cemeteries must be suitably qualified and registered with either the NAMM Register of Qualified Memorial Fixers (RQMF) or the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM).
- 3.2 Sufficient time for ground settlement (which is between 9 – 12 months) must be allowed before fixing a grave memorial. For cremation plots there is no timescale.
- 3.3 For graves, a headstone or cross, not more than 3' high and 2' wide. If in the shape of a book, maximum depth 20" (allowing for flower vase) mounted on a secure foundation which should be spirit levelled and level with the immediate surrounding soil.
- 3.4 A kerb set of natural stone, must not exceed 6'6" x 2'6". Chippings must be levelled at least 1" below the kerbing.
- 3.5 Footstones not exceeding 2'6" x 2'6" x 6" are permitted.
- 3.6 For cremation plots a concrete slab measuring 24" x 24" must be fitted for all memorials and must be level and flush to the ground, with the memorial stone fixed thereon no higher than 14".
- 3.7 All memorials supplied to have the grave prefix and number incised on the back at the bottom right hand side. The stonemason's name may be displayed discreetly on the left hand side in ½" unlead block letters.
- 3.8 For memorial plaques by trees the dimensions permitted are 12" x 12" x 2" and should be laid flat and flush with the ground.
- 3.9 For ceramic photo plaques on memorials (one portrait for each person commemorated) up to a maximum size of 12cm x 9cm, subject to approval of the photograph of the person to be commemorated to be supplied with the memorial application form.
- 3.10 Nothing may be affixed to or hung upon any monument such as crosses, images, models or paintings.
- 3.11 When a memorial is ready for fixing, please email depot@swanage.gov.uk with details. Memorials must not be placed at the Cemetery without the Town Council's permission or knowledge.

Please note that for operational reasons it may be necessary for earth from a neighbouring plot to be placed temporarily on a steel platform over the grave that you have purchased. This is standard practice in cemetery management and every care is taken to safeguard your plot when the work is undertaken.

