

Marlborough Town Council

Grave Digging Management Policy for adjacent graves



Draft Agreed: AOS 15 4 24

Date Adopted: Full Council 3 9 24

Review Date: 2027 or as required

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Grave Digging Management Policy for adjacent graves

This policy sets out the procedure for grave digging at Marlborough Town Cemetery with particular reference to burials taking place amongst other graves.

Before the Burial

- Once the grave space has been identified the grounds team will contact the Cemetery Administrator to inform them which graves may be affected by the burial.
- The Cemetery Administrator will contact the owners of adjacent grave spaces informing them that there will be a burial in a nearby grave and that their grave may be affected and give them a copy of this policy.
- The grounds teams will set down a metal template in the precise location of the grave to be prepared.
- The metal template is edged using an edging iron.
- Where possible the turf is lifted, ready to be re-laid after the burial.
- Where access is required to graves that sit adjacent and near the required grave, a ground guard will be laid to minimise the impact on surrounding graves by the vehicle used (currently the Izeki TG6490 - 5 tonnes) driving over them.
- The grave will be dug from the head or foot end, depending on location.
- The spoil from the prepared grave will be placed on ground guards positioned on a pathway, if this is not possible then it will be placed on the nearest best placed adjacent accessible grave.
- The spoil will be covered with a tarpaulin, the tractor will be removed, and the ground guards lifted.
- The ground where the tractor has driven will be inspected and if any damage is found at this time, the surface of the ground will be made good as far as possible to the original form.
- More ground guards / tarpaulins will be placed around the grave to act as protection for the adjacent graves to the burial from footfall.

After the Burial

- The grounds team will replace the ground guards for the purpose of backfilling the grave. Once the grave has been finished the tractor and ground guards will be removed.
- The grounds team will tidy around all of the affected graves, refilling any impacted areas on the adjacent graves, by the tractor or footfall, with subsoil (if needed), topsoil and grass seed.

- The Grounds Manager (or in their absence the Grounds Foreman, or in their absence the Senior Groundsman) will take a photograph of the grave and send it to the Cemetery Administrator as confirmation that the burial has been completed as per this policy.
- If the Cemetery Administrator is unavailable, the grounds team will report to the Office Manager or the Deputy Town Clerk.
- If there has been some damage to the surrounding graves, or matters of concern, the grounds team will report this to the Cemetery Administrator (or Office Manager or the Deputy Town Clerk) with photographs of the affected area. This information will be logged alongside the photographs of the affected area.
- The Cemetery Administrator (or Office Manager or the Deputy Town Clerk) will attempt to proactively contact the owners of the affected graves by email, telephone, or letter, detailing the damage done but reassuring them that it has been rectified as per this policy.

The Council recognise that this policy is more relevant during the winter months or during extended periods of wet weather.