

Crewkerne & West Crewkerne Joint Burial Committee
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Townsend Cemetery General Rules

1. Definitions

For the purposes of these rules:

- 'council' means Crewkerne Town Council.
- 'committee' means the Joint Burial Committee comprising Crewkerne Town Council and West Crewkerne Parish Council.
- 'cemetery' means Townsend Cemetery, Crewkerne.
- 'ashes interment' means the interment of cremated remains in a cremation plot or full-size burial plot.
- 'full burial' means the interment of a body in a full-size burial plot.

2. Conduct

- 2.1 These rules apply to all persons entering or using the cemetery. All persons are expected to comply with them, whether or not they have read or been made aware of them.
- 2.2 All persons shall conduct themselves in a quiet, decent and orderly manner and must keep to the paths except when visiting a grave and must not disturb or interfere with funerals, interments or other persons visiting graves.
- 2.3 The committee reserves the right to temporarily close all or part of the cemetery where necessary for maintenance, repairs, emergencies or in the interests of public safety.
- 2.4 Only waste arising from the care or maintenance of a grave or memorial may be placed in the bins provided. Any other waste or litter must be removed from the cemetery by the person responsible.
- 2.5 Cycling, skateboarding, roller skating or playing of sports/games is not permitted in the cemetery.
- 2.6 The taking of commercial photographs and filming is not permitted in the cemetery except with the prior approval of the committee for which a fee may be charged. This includes but is not limited to the use of photographs and/or filming for business purposes and any situation where the images would result in any financial gain.
- 2.7 No person shall unreasonably interrupt council staff, or any volunteers appointed by the committee whilst they are engaged in their duties nor seek to employ them privately to execute work within the cemetery. Council staff are not allowed to receive gratuities.
- 2.8 No persons shall canvass or solicit orders in the cemetery grounds.
- 2.9 Alcoholic drinks shall not be consumed in the cemetery.
- 2.10 No smoking or vaping within the cemetery grounds.
- 2.11 The setting off of fireworks or other pyrotechnics is strictly forbidden, unless explicit permission is granted beforehand by the committee.
- 2.12 The release of Chinese lanterns, helium balloons or any other balloons into the air is prohibited within the cemetery grounds.

- 2.13 Dogs are allowed in the cemetery provided that they are kept on a lead and are under the supervision of a person who will exercise control over their behaviour.
- 2.14 All vehicles are restricted to the main drive except for vehicles authorised by the committee and mobility scooters used by disabled visitors.
- 2.15 No grave, ashes plot or other part of the cemetery may be excavated, opened or disturbed except by persons authorised by the committee. All excavation and preparation of graves and ashes plots must be carried out by the committee, or its appointed contractors or other persons authorised by the committee.
- 2.16 Any person who causes damage to any boundary wall, fence, ground, path, memorials or other part of the cemetery may be required to repair the damage to the satisfaction of the committee and may be liable for the costs incurred by the committee in carrying out or arranging such repairs.
- 2.17 No glass containers may be placed on any grave. Seasonal items may be placed but must be removed after two months or they will be removed by council officers.

3. **Interments**

- 3.1 All interments and the scattering of cremated remains are to be arranged through the council's office, and at least two working days' notice must be given prior to a burial or the scattering of cremated remains taking place. Working days do not include Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays, other occasions introduced by legislation pertaining to England, the day notice is received or the day of interment.
- 3.2 Before a grave or ashes plot may be opened, a completed Notice of Interment must be received. Where the plot has previously been purchased, the Exclusive Right of Burial Certificate must be provided or otherwise verified by the committee or officer of the council. No interment may take place without the prior approval of the committee or officer of the council.
- 3.3 Cremated remains may be commemorated at the cemetery in the following ways:
 - a) interment in a dedicated cremated remains plot, with an approved tablet or flower holder;
 - b) interment in an existing burial plot; or
 - c) commemoration in the Garden of Remembrance by means of an approved plaque.
- 3.4 The scattering of cremated remains requires the prior approval of the committee and may only take place in areas designated by the committee for that purpose.
- 3.5 Only caskets of wood or other biodegradable materials shall be used for interment.
- 3.6 Following an interment, floral tributes (including artificial flowers and decorations) placed on the grave will be removed after three months if they become unsightly.
- 3.7 With effect from 1 January 2027, the maximum number of interments permitted in new plots in the New Section shall be as follows:
 - a) Double-depth burial plot: two burials and six sets of cremated remains.
 - b) Triple-depth burial plot: three burials and six sets of cremated remains.
 - c) Ashes plot: four sets of cremated remains.

These limits apply only to new plots in the New Section purchased on or after 1 January 2027. Applications for further interments in plots in either the Old Section or the New Section where an interment took place before 1 January 2027 shall be considered on a case-by-case basis by a council officer.

- 3.8 A double-depth grave is intended for the interment of two separate coffins, one above the other, subject to the suitability of the ground and the dimensions of the coffins.
- 3.9 Where an application is made for two deceased persons to be interred in a single coffin or casket (including a double casket), this must be agreed with the committee in advance. The committee will determine whether the proposed interment is suitable having regard to the dimensions of the coffin or casket, the grave, applicable regulations and any other relevant requirements.
- 3.10 Some disturbance of the ground may be necessary if further interments occur in the same area.
- 3.11 Cremated remains may only be scattered within the Garden of Remembrance, or within the cremation plot or full grave plot.
- 3.12 The holder of an Exclusive Right of Burial must notify Crewkerne Town Council of any change of name, address or other contact details, to enable the council to maintain accurate records and contact details.
- 3.13 New Exclusive Rights of Burial are granted for a period of 99 years. Upon expiry, an application may be made for a further grant of Exclusive Rights of Burial, subject to the committee's current policy and the provisions of the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 or any succeeding legislation. Any new grant of Exclusive Rights of Burial shall not exceed 99 years. This does not apply to Commonwealth War graves.
- 3.14 The transfer or assignment of an Exclusive Right of Burial must be undertaken in accordance with applicable legislation and the committee's procedures. Applications for the transfer or assignment of an Exclusive Right of Burial must be made to the council and are usually subject to an applicable fee.

4. **Memorials**

4.1 **Memorials in the New Section:**

Upright lawn memorials are permitted in the New Section. Headstones and memorials for cremated remains must not exceed 2 ft 6 ins (76 cm) in height or 2 ft (61 cm) in width, including the plinth. Kerbstone surrounds, fencing, railings, borders, chippings, gravel and shingle are not permitted.

4.2 **Memorials in the Old Section:**

Upright headstones and kerbstone memorials are permitted in the Old Section. Headstones and memorials for cremated remains must not exceed 5 ft (152 cm) in height or 3 ft (91 cm) in width. Kerbstone surrounds must not exceed 7 ft (213 cm) in length or 3 ft (91 cm) in width and must not include rails, chains or palisades. Chippings may only be used within a kerbstone surround approved by the committee or the Town Clerk.

- 4.3 Inscriptions should be simple and reverent. Photographs, images, engraved drawings and other decorative or individual design features may be permitted where included in the memorial application and approved by the council or the Town Clerk. Any such design should be discreet, appropriate to the memorial and reflect the life of the person commemorated. Photographs, including porcelain photographic plaques, must not exceed 10 cm in height and 8 cm in width.

- 4.4 Applications for new memorials or additional inscriptions on existing memorials must be submitted in writing on the committee's prescribed application form by a person acting for a business that is a full retail member of a NAMM or an accredited member of BRAMM. Details of the proposed memorial, including dimensions, materials, inscription and design, must be provided. Headstones and other stone memorials may only be installed by a suitably qualified and competent memorial mason. No stone memorial may be installed until the memorial application has been approved by the council or committee. All memorials must be installed and fixed in accordance with BS 8415, or

any replacement or relevant British Standard, and the current applicable NAMM or BRAMM code and guidance.

- 4.5 Wooden crosses require the prior approval of the Clerk to the Committee. Once approved, they may be installed by the grave owner or their representative without the use of a qualified memorial mason, subject to the Cemetery General Rules. Wooden crosses must be maintained in good order and kept in a safe and presentable condition. The committee reserve the right to remove a wooden cross if its condition deteriorates to the extent that it becomes rotten or unsafe.
- 4.6 Only the holder(s) of the Right of Burial may apply for permission to erect a memorial, add any further plinth, tablet or vase, or add a further inscription to an existing memorial.
- 4.7 Memorials are the private property of the holder(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial, who are responsible for their maintenance and upkeep and must ensure that they are maintained in a good and safe condition. Whilst the committee takes reasonable care when carrying out its duties, it cannot accept responsibility for loss of or damage to memorials, however caused, or for any third party claims. Holders are therefore strongly advised to arrange appropriate insurance.
- 4.8 Where a memorial is not maintained in a good or safe condition, the committee may take such action as it considers reasonably necessary to ensure the proper order and safety of the cemetery. This may include requiring the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial to repair or make safe the memorial or, where necessary, securing, repairing, removing or otherwise dealing with the memorial. The costs of any action taken by the committee may be recoverable from the holder(s). The committee will make reasonable efforts to contact the plot holder(s) before taking such action, except where immediate action is necessary for health and safety reasons.
- 4.9 The committee reserves the right, on health and safety grounds, to take immediate action in relation to any memorial which it reasonably considers may present a danger to persons or property. This may include making the memorial safe, securing it, repairing it, removing it or taking any other action considered necessary.
- 4.10 The committee may cause, without notice, removal from any grave, any object that is considered to be a hazard to public safety or to cemetery staff, or to any committee appointed volunteer.
- 4.11 Plants and flowers placed on the grave space must be maintained in a tidy condition. Flowers and containers must be placed so that they do not obstruct the maintenance of the cemetery or interfere with grass cutting. The committee reserves the right to remove any flowers, containers or other items placed in a position that obstructs maintenance or presents a hazard.
- 4.12 The committee may authorise the pruning, cutting down or trimming of any shrubs, plants or flowers where they have become unsightly or overgrown and may remove any dead shrubs, plants or flowers. The committee may also remove or require the removal of any permanent planting where it considers this necessary for the proper management, maintenance, appearance or safety of the cemetery. Where reasonably practicable, the committee will seek to inform any person it considers to be an interested party before such action is taken.
- 4.13 No memorial tree, shrub or bench may be purchased, planted or installed in the cemetery without the prior written approval of the committee. Applications must be made in accordance with the committee's Memorial Bench and Tree Policy and the relevant application form. The committee reserves the right to determine the location, specification and installation requirements of any approved memorial tree, shrub or bench.
- 4.14 The erection or installation of fences, borders, railings or any other form of surround around a grave is not permitted. The use of stone, chippings, gravel or shingle to create a surround, or cover around a grave is also not permitted.

- 4.15 The committee may remove from any grave or memorial any item which has not been authorised, does not comply with these rules, or is considered unsuitable, unsightly, or likely to interfere with the maintenance, appearance, safety or proper management of the cemetery. This includes, but is not limited to, lighting, ornaments, images, models, paintings, toys and other objects. Where practicable, any item removed will be retained for a reasonable period and may thereafter be disposed of by the committee.
- 4.16 Items placed on graves, including but not limited to lanterns, ornaments, photographs, toys, flowers and other personal items, are placed entirely at the owner's risk. The committee cannot accept responsibility for any loss of or damage to such items, howsoever caused, including damage arising from weather, wildlife, cemetery maintenance or the actions of third parties. Holders of the Exclusive Right of Burial are advised to arrange adequate and suitable insurance where appropriate.
- 4.17 Nothing may be hung, attached or fixed to any tree, shrub, memorial, fence or other structure within the cemetery without the prior written approval of the committee. This includes, but is not limited to, memorial ornaments, decorations, ribbons, wind chimes, bird feeders, bird boxes, lights, lanterns and other personal or commemorative items. Any such items placed without approval will be removed and disposed of by the committee without further notice.

5 Garden of Remembrance

- 5.1 No plaque may be affixed to the Garden of Remembrance wall without the prior written permission being obtained from the committee.
- 5.2 The committee cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage to plaques in the Garden of Remembrance, howsoever caused.

6. Reclamation

- 6.1 The committee will manage and administer the cemetery in accordance with applicable legislation and its policies. Where an Exclusive Right of Burial has been granted but has not been exercised or has been exercised but not further used, for the prescribed period of years, the committee may take such action in relation to the grave as is permitted by law.
- 6.2 No human remains or cremated remains may be removed from the cemetery except in accordance with applicable legislation and any necessary licence, order or other statutory authority.

7. General

- 7.1 As the cemetery is situated in a rural location it is occupied by a variety of wildlife which may occasionally cause damage to paths, graves and floral arrangements. The committee will seek to repair such damage to the best of its ability but cannot guarantee the effectiveness of any repairs or that further damage will not occur. The committee accepts no liability for any loss or damage arising from such damage or any repairs undertaken. Holders of the Exclusive Right of Burial are advised to consider obtaining adequate and suitable insurance cover for memorials and other items placed in the cemetery to protect against damage or loss arising from such events.
- 7.2 In all matters concerning memorials, inscriptions, forms of service and other activities in Townsend Cemetery, the decision of the Committee shall be final, subject to any rights of appeal or other remedies available under applicable legislation.
- 7.3 All fees and charges, including, but not limited to, interments, Exclusive Rights of Burial, memorials and other cemetery services must be paid in accordance with the committee's current scale of fees and charges.
- 7.4 Searches of burial and cemetery records may be undertaken by the committee or officer of the council upon application and subject to any applicable fee.

- 7.5 The council will process personal data relating to cemetery administration in accordance with applicable data protection legislation and the council's Privacy Notice.

Version Control:

Reviewed by the Joint Burial Committee: 6 June 2023, Minute No. 12 23/24

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These rules supersede and replace all previous versions of the Townsend Cemetery General Rules.

These rules will be reviewed every four years, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or council practice.

Review Date: **October 2030**