



## **Cemetery Regulations**

### **October 2022**

#### **1. General cemetery Information**

##### **1.1. Windrush Cemetery Access**

1.1.1. Windrush cemetery is permanently open to members of the public with parking available near the entrance to the cemetery. The road around the grave sections is only designed as an access road for works vehicles and funeral cortège.

1.1.2. The cemetery isn't open for vehicles during ceremonies.

1.1.2.1. A sign will be placed on the entrance and car parking controlled by cemetery operatives.

1.1.2.2. No notice will be issued of closure for a ceremony.

##### **1.2. Tower Hill Cemetery Access**

1.2.1. Tower Hill Cemetery is open Monday through to Friday between the hours of 09:00 – 16:00. The gates are unlocked and locked by Town Council staff and contractors. On request, the bollards gaining access around sections 6, 7 and 8 can be removed for vehicles. This must be requested on the day prior to visiting the cemetery through WTC offices.

1.2.2. During weekends the gates are unlocked between 7:00 – 11:00 and the bollards are removed for access around sections 6, 7 and 8.

1.2.2.1. For ceremonies, the main vehicle gates and the north pedestrian gate will be locked.

1.2.2.2. No notice will be issued of closure for a ceremony.

##### **1.3. Cemetery Rules**

1.4. The following general rules are applicable across both cemeteries and are considered an offence within the cemetery grounds.

###### **1.4.1. General Rules**

1.4.1.1. Dogs are permitted in the cemetery but must be on leads at all times and all waste must be cleared up.

1.4.1.2. No parking in any areas of the cemeteries that are not the designated parking spaces.

1.4.1.3. Bicycles must not be ridden within the cemetery

1.4.1.4. All rubbish must be cleared away

1.4.1.5. The amplifying of any music or disturbing sound

### **1.4.2. Offences within the cemetery**

- 1.4.2.1. wilfully create any disturbance in a cemetery
- 1.4.2.2. commit any nuisance in a cemetery
- 1.4.2.3. wilfully interfere with any burial taking place in a cemetery
- 1.4.2.4. wilfully interfere with any grave or vault, any tombstone or other memorial, or any flowers or plants on any such matter
- 1.4.2.5. play any game or sport in a cemetery

## **2. Burials and Interment of Ashes**

### **2.1. Lawn Burials**

Lawn burials are the standard burial plot offered at both Windrush and Tower Hill Cemetery. They can accommodate one or two full interments depending on the cemetery. All lawn burials can have a memorial installed along with a small garden area, subject to the purchase of EROB.

2.1.1. At Windrush cemetery lawn burials are at double depth to accommodate two full interments.

2.1.1.1. Only once two full interments have been completed can the remaining grave space be used for ashes interments.

2.1.1.2. No ashes interments are permitted until the plot space has been fully buried, at Windrush this is two full interments and one single interment at Tower Hill. This is to best utilise the available grave space in Witney Town.

2.1.2. Tower Hill lawn burials are at a single depth

2.1.3. All bodies must be interred within a coffin.

2.1.3.1. The coffin must have a nameplate for the interred.

2.1.3.2. Due to burying a double depth, it is required that cemeteries staff can correctly identify an interment at the 1<sup>st</sup> level before interring the second body.

2.1.3.3. This will also be signified with depth tape

### **2.2. Muslim burials**

Muslim burial plots are provided which are correctly orientated in accordance with religious beliefs. All Muslim plots are single-depth burials.

2.2.1. Burials are permitted in either a coffin or wrapped in a shroud

2.2.2. In the case where a burial shroud is used the funeral organisers must backfill the grave so that the body is not visible to council staff to complete the backfill.

2.2.3. When wrapped in a shroud a suitable container must be used to transport the deceased to the graveside.

2.2.4. The funeral organiser can line the base of the grave with brushwood or softwood boards to a depth no greater than 30mm.

2.2.5. On the expiry of exclusive rights of burial, any headstone may be removed by the council, but no further interments will take place in any available plot space.

### **2.3. Meadow burials**

A wildflower meadow is in place at Windrush Cemetery for interments. The overall concept of this area is to grow and maintain a flowering meadow. The meadow can have up to 3 cuts each year these are in the spring, summer and autumn with the main summer cut being a collection. Further cuts for winter maintenance may be used to help maintain weeds and supplementary seeding in March and April. Once the ground has recompacted in the meadow section a wildflower mix will be sown.

2.3.1. Rules differing from standard burials for meadow burials are as follows

2.3.2. Exclusive rights of burial cannot be purchased

2.3.3. Plots cannot be reserved

2.3.4. No embalmed bodies

2.3.5. No form of grave marker can be installed

2.3.6. Identification

2.3.6.1. As no grave maker can be placed the record of burial will be the standard council process but additionally, a grave marker peg will be buried in the ground.

2.3.6.2. The plots will be identified if needed in future through a grave maker peg that contains an electronic readable tag (RFID tag).

2.3.6.3. This RFID tag will be recorded across the burials book and cemetery management software.

### **2.4. Woodland Burials**

Woodland burials are interred at the bottom section of Windrush cemetery. These offer an environmentally friendly burial option but are also a cheaper burial option. The option has been designed to have the lowest carbon footprint option across both Witney cemeteries.

2.4.1. Only single-depth interments

2.4.2. Exclusive rights of burial cannot be purchased

2.4.3. Plots cannot be reserved

2.4.4. No embalmed bodies

2.4.5. No form of grave marker can be installed

2.4.5.1. This includes immediately after an interment; all flowers will be removed directly following the interment by town council staff.

2.4.5.2. The intended purpose of the area is to be as environmentally conscious as possible, so it is encouraged that flowers are not organised for a funeral.

2.4.6. All burials must take place in an eco-friendly coffin or burial shroud

2.4.6.1. Bamboo, banana leaf, willow, cardboard

2.4.7. In the case where a burial shroud is used the funeral organisers must backfill the grave so that the body is not visible to council staff to complete the backfill.

2.4.8. Oversized coffins are not permitted

2.4.9. The plots will be identified if needed in future through a grave maker peg that contains an RFID tag.

2.4.10. Once a predefined section has reached capacity trees and wildflower perennial bulbs will be planted to create small woodland areas.

## **2.5. Children's and Baby Plots**

Separate smaller children's and baby plots are offered at Windrush Cemetery which are used for the children's funeral fund. They have been designed to inter at a later date the ashes of the parents/guardians.

2.5.1. Baby: 0.9m length x 0.66m width

2.5.2. Children's: 1.5m length 0.99m width

2.5.3. Children's and babies' plots EROB are sold at 90 years

2.5.4. Once a full interment has taken place the interment of 2 sets of ashes can be completed on top.

2.5.5. Memorials are a smaller size which is listed on the separate memorial sizes document.

## **2.6. Ashes Path**

Windrush Cemetery has a paved ashes path for the interment of ashes caskets. Each ashes plot can accommodate two caskets.

2.6.1. The EROB must be purchased

**2.6.2.** Only a sloping desk tablet can be installed.

## **2.7. Family Ashes Plots**

Tower Hill Cemetery has family ashes plots for the interment of ashes, each plot can accommodate up to 8 ashes caskets.

2.7.1. Only a standard lawned grave memorial can be installed here.

## **2.8. Scattering of Ashes**

Ashes may be scattered at cemeteries with permission from Witney Town Council. There are designated ashes scattering beds at both cemeteries.

2.8.1. Written permission must be obtained from Witney Town Council, this can be in the form of an email

2.8.2. A date and time must be agreed with the council offices

2.8.2.1. Witney Town council staff are regularly carrying out maintenance in the cemeteries and if they have not been made aware they will stop the scattering of any ashes.

2.8.3. The scattering of ashes onto grave plots is not permitted even if the EROB are purchased for that plot.

2.8.3.1. The scattering of ashes is not accurate, and the ashes can easily be distributed onto neighbouring plots by the weather or inaccuracy in the process. This can be seen as offensive by those interred into other plots.

2.8.3.2. If the scattering of ashes onto a plot is requested a standard ashes casket interment hole will be dug by town council staff. The ashes can then be distributed into the area and covered with soil and turf.

2.8.3.2.1. This will be charged as an ash's interment

2.8.3.2.2. There must be available burial space within a plot

2.8.3.2.3. All full interments must have taken place

### **3. Schedule of Interment**

The Town Council will follow the below process for all interments in its cemeteries. The interment process will be managed in cooperation with the undertaker and/or funeral organiser.

- 3.1.** A completed interment form must be submitted to the council as the notice of interment.
  - 3.1.1. This must be complete with both grave plot number and date and time of interment.
    - 3.1.1.1. If the grave plot to be used is not owned by the deceased, the EROB owner must provide written permission for its use.
    - 3.1.1.2. This must be submitted along with the interment form.
- 3.2.** The date and time of interment will be arranged with the Town Council.
- 3.3.** All efforts will be made to offer the time and date requested.
- 3.4.** As the burial authority, dates and times of interment are entirely at the discretion of the Town Council.
- 3.5.** A burial time should first be organised with the Town Council before any other party.
- 3.6.** Times and dates are managed based on the below factors
  - 3.6.1. Other interment bookings
  - 3.6.2. Staffing
  - 3.6.3. Equipment availability
  - 3.6.4. Grave location
  - 3.6.5. Proximity to open graves
  - 3.6.6. Excavation time
  - 3.6.7. Public holidays
- 3.7.** After a completed interment form has been received cemetery operatives will then begin the process of excavating and preparing the grave space.
- 3.8.** All paperwork must then be submitted 24 hours prior to the time of interment before the interment can proceed on the time and date listed on the interment form.
- 3.9.** Once the interment has been completed the burial will be recorded by cemeteries operatives in the relevant cemeteries burial register.
  - 3.9.1. This must be signed off by the undertaker/funeral organiser.

### **4. Graveside preparation and backfilling**

- 4.1.** All graves are prepared for interment to avoid the sight of excavated soil
  - 4.1.1. All excavated soil will be covered with a tarp
  - 4.1.2. The graveside will be dressed with artificial grass, this includes the ashes interments in the ashes path at Windrush Cemetery.
  - 4.1.3. The excavated soil is placed on the neighbouring grave.
    - 4.1.3.1. If the funeral organisers wish for the excavated soil to be located away from the interred grave this must be requested at the first notice of the burial and confirmed by Witney Town Council.
    - 4.1.3.2. An additional charge will be charged for this service.

## 5. Cancellations and additional charges

### 5.1. Changing interment dates

- 5.1.1. Any amendment to a final submitted date will be charged at the fee listed on the burial charges list.
  - 5.1.1.1. The date submitted on the interment form is the final submitted date.
  - 5.1.1.2. A funeral director/funeral organiser by booking a date is removing availability to others.
- 5.1.2. Reasonable changes to times will not be charged.

### 5.2. Cancellations

- 5.2.1. If an interment has to be cancelled by Witney Town Council due to any paperwork not being submitted the full burial charge will be charged to the undertaker/funeral organiser
- 5.2.2. The final submission for any paperwork is 24 hours before the time of interment and by this time the burial plot would have been prepared and in some circumstances require to be backfilled.
- 5.2.3. It is the responsibility of the undertaker/funeral organiser to ensure the arrival of the procession arrives on the times detailed on the interment form.
- 5.2.4. Certain considerations will be made if the cancellation is a result of exceptional circumstances, but this will be at the discretion of the Town Council.

### 5.3. Late Arrival and departures

- 5.3.1. Additional fees will be charged for late arrivals and departure.
  - 5.3.1.1. The undertaker/funeral organiser is responsible for the timekeeping of the ceremony.
- 5.3.2. These fees will be charged in increments of 15 minutes.
- 5.3.3. The fee is listed on the burial charges as the late fee.
- 5.3.4. The time allocated for a ceremony is 45 minutes.

### 5.4. If the interment is the second interment into a lawn or ashes plot the undertaker/funeral organiser must pay any associated charges for the removal of a memorial.

- 5.4.1. This should be identified at the first notice of interment.
- 5.4.2. This is exclusive for memorials in situ on the grave plot of interment

### 5.5. Oversized burials

- 5.5.1. Oversized burials will be charged an additional fee above the maximum casket sizes stated below.
  - 5.5.1.1. Maximum length (feet to Head) 213cm
  - 5.5.1.2. Maximum width (Commonly the shoulders of the coffin) 71cm
  - 5.5.1.3. Maximum depth 58cm
- 5.5.2. The oversized burial fee is listed on the burial charges lists as oversized burials.

## 6. Burial Times

### 6.1. Burials are available in both cemeteries Monday – Friday excluding public holidays.

Available burial times change through the year based on daylight saving.

6.1.1. **November to March:** 11:00 – 14:00

6.1.2. **April to October:** Monday – Thursday 11:00 – 15:00, Friday 11:00 – 14:00

### 6.2. The times listed above are not inclusive of the entire ceremony time a booking can be accepted at the latest time listed.

- 6.3. In exceptional circumstances, burials can be arranged for a weekend, but this will be at the Town council's discretion and will normally be based on the availability of staff.
- 6.4. In such an event that a weekend burial is requested an additional charge will be charged.
  - 6.4.1. This will be the hours worked by 3 cemetery operatives plus the standard burial fee and all other associated charges.
- 6.5. There are no assurances that a weekend burial can be arranged and would entirely be based on staff availability.

## **7. Burial Notice**

A minimum of 3 working days' notice is required prior to any burial, not including the date of burial. This time is required to complete the administration, excavation and preparation of a grave space including ashes plots.

- 7.1. Witney Town Council cannot ensure that every interment can be accepted with 3 days' notice, some factors will affect this time frame
  - 7.1.1. If a headstone needs to be removed the funeral organisers will be responsible for its removal and only once removed can cemetery operatives complete the excavation and preparation of the grave space.
- 7.2. The certificate for burial or cremation is commonly known as the 'green form' or 'registrar's certificate' must be delivered to the Town Council office no later than 24 hours before the date of interment.
- 7.3. This can be emailed, sent via post or delivered in person.
- 7.4. Witney Town Council accepts no responsibility for lost certificates for burial in the post.
- 7.5. It is an offence of the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953 if the certificate of burial has been lost, failed to be delivered or forged.
- 7.6. No burial will take place if the certificate for burial has not been supplied 24hrs before the time of interment.

## **8. Exclusive rights of Burial**

- 8.1. The exclusive rights of burial permit the grantee the right of burial within a grave plot and to anyone they give permission. It also gives the grantee permission to erect a headstone.
- 8.2. The exclusive right of burial grant will list the burial authority (this will always be WTC for council cemeteries), cost of the grant, grave space, section, cemetery, date of EROB, term of EROB and personal details including email address. The grant will be issued to the grantee and a copy retained by Witney Town Council which will also be stored digitally.

## **9. Limitations**

- 9.1. The EROB does not give the grantee a right to the land but only the exclusive right to say who can be buried and erect a headstone. All other rules and regulations must be followed.

## **10. Term of Exclusive Rights of Burial**

- 10.1. The length of the EROB will run for a set period from the date of purchase that will be stated on the grant. Currently, this length of time is 30 years for Windrush Cemetery and 30 years for Tower Hill Cemetery. WTC may make amendments to the EROB period this would only affect the sale of new EROB and the renewal of any EROB.
- 10.2. As a burial authority, the council cannot issue or extend the rights of burial in perpetuity or for a period beyond 100 years. Witney Town Council would not extend the EROB period beyond the terms aforementioned for each cemetery.

10.2.1. The exception is for Commonwealth War Graves of which EROB in perpetuity will be granted or assumed.

## **11. Transfer of the Exclusive rights of Burial**

- 11.1.** At any time, a grantee of the EROB can transfer back the grant to the council. The council will purchase the rights back at the cost of first purchase. This will be the cost listed on the grant of the EROB.
- 11.2.** The council will only purchase back the EROB if there is unused grave space for example plots are in a re-usable condition as below.
  - 11.2.1. Windrush, only a single burial has taken place at double depth.
  - 11.2.2. Tower Hill, a minimum of 4 or more remaining ashes plots within 1 grave space.
- 11.3.** The exclusive right of burial is considered the personal estate of the grantee and may be assigned in his lifetime or bequeathed by his will. Alternatively, a grantee can in writing to the council transfer the EROB to another grantee.
- 11.4.** WTC will charge a fee for the transfer that is listed in burial charges.
- 11.5.** The remaining term of the EROB will not be renewed on transfer.
- 11.6.** A new deed will be issued to the new grantee and a copy retained by WTC and stored digitally.

## **12. Renewal of Exclusive Rights of Burial**

- 12.1.** A grantee of EROB can renew the EROB once at the expiry date or for a period of up to 30 days prior to the expiry. The renewal fee and term of EROB will be the current cost and term set by WTC.
- 12.2.** WTC will attempt to contact grantees of EROB where their period of exclusive rights is due to end. Attempts to make contact for renewal will only be made if there is usable grave space within a plot where the intent by WTC is to reutilise this space. This process will only happen in such a place that previous burials will not be disturbed and as aforementioned, there is unused grave space.
- 12.3.** Contact will be made through all forms listed on the EROB and any updated contact details held by WTC that can be found. If a period of 30 days has passed since the first contact was attempted, then no further contact will be attempted.
- 12.4.** This will include standards form of contact over phone, post and email but may also involve attaching a letter to the headstone of the plot.
- 12.5.** If all reasonable contact has been attempted and a period of 30 days has passed, then the council will start the process of reutilising the plot for further burials.

## **13. Re-use of Grave space**

- 13.1.** The Town Council will reclaim and resell unused grave spaces once the EROB has expired without interfering with a burial that has previously taken place.
- 13.2.** this will be done as detailed in 12.3.
- 13.3.** It is also within the power of the council to raise the level of the ground above a single interment to accommodate further burials. This would only be done where the EROB has expired.



#### **14. Commonwealth war graves**

- 14.1.** As the burial authority, the Town Council may grant the right to the Commonwealth War graves Commission to provide a memorial on an identified Commonwealth war grave.
- 14.2.** The exclusive right of burial on these graves will be in perpetuity
- 14.3.** The Town Council's power to remove memorials cannot be exercised without the consent of the commission.

#### **15. Public graves**

- 15.1.** Public graves, also known as common graves or paupers' graves are grave spaces of which no EROB or memorial rights exist. The graves are organised by West Oxfordshire District Council as part of their statutory duty to arrange for a burial or cremation where no suitable alternative arrangements are being made.
- 15.2.** No flowers or markers of any type can be placed on the grave
- 15.3.** These graves are only available at Windrush Cemetery, and all will have two interments in each plot

#### **16. Record Keeping**

- 16.1.** All interments will be recorded on the date of interment in the cemeteries' burial register.
  - 16.1.1. This must be signed by the undertaker/funeral organiser
- 16.2.** Interments will then be recorded separately in the register of burials by a council officer, with details to include.
  - 16.2.1. Surname
  - 16.2.2. Forenames
  - 16.2.3. Address
  - 16.2.4. Profession
  - 16.2.5. Age
  - 16.2.6. Date of death
  - 16.2.7. Place of death
  - 16.2.8. Date of burial
  - 16.2.9. Section and grave number
  - 16.2.10. Woodland and meadow burials will have the RFID number stored in the burials book and digital system.
- 16.3.** Full detail of the interment will also be stored on the councils' digital burials system
- 16.4.** Cemetery mapping
  - 16.4.1. Plans of all graves are stored digitally and physically at Town council offices. Details include.
    - 16.4.1.1. Plot numbers
    - 16.4.1.2. Grave numbers
    - 16.4.1.3. Number of burials
    - 16.4.1.4. Location of ashes

## **17. Residency**

Double rates are charged for the purchase of EROB and interment for non-residents of Witney.

- 17.1.** The rate will be double what is listed on the burial charges list.
- 17.2.** When reserving a grave space, the EROB must be purchased, the charge for the EROB will be based on the residency of the purchaser.
- 17.3.** When charging for the burial rate the town council will charge a rate based on the residency of the deceased and not the EROB holder if not already the deceased.
- 17.4.** To be classified as a resident of Witney must be defined as below.
  - 17.4.1. Lived within the Witney town boundary.
  - 17.4.2. Lived in Witney in the last 5 years or been a resident of Witney for a 30-year cumulated period.
  - 17.4.3. Acceptable proof of residency will need to be provided if requested.

## **18. Reserving grave spaces**

- 18.1.** When reserving a grave space, the EROB must be purchased.
  - 18.1.1. The EROB term will run from the date of purchase and not the date of the first interment.
  - 18.1.2. If the EROB expires before an interment has taken place it must be renewed at the current stated price and period.
  - 18.1.3. This length of term may have been adjusted from the previous purchase.
- 18.2.** One person cannot be the owner of more than two EROBs across all cemeteries so no one person can reserve more than two grave spaces.
- 18.3.** The next available grave space will be issued to those reserving.
  - 18.3.1. Consideration will be paid towards reserving spaces next to family members, but this is entirely dependent on availability.
  - 18.3.2. Grave spaces are normally allocated on excavation operation at the time, and it is not always possible to adhere to a request for a specified grave space.

## **19. Children's Funeral Fund**

- 19.1.** The Children's Funeral Fund for England can help to pay for some of the costs of a funeral for a child under 18 or a baby stillborn after the 24th week of pregnancy.
- 19.2.** The children's funeral fund can help pay for the following
  - 19.2.1. Burial fees
  - 19.2.2. Cremation fees, including the cost of a doctor's certificate
  - 19.2.3. Coffin (up to the cost of £300)
- 19.3.** Responsibilities to make a claim
  - 19.3.1. A claim for the burial through the scheme is made by the council as the burial provider.
  - 19.3.2. A claim for a coffin will be made by the funeral director or if not using a funeral director the funeral organiser must make this.
  - 19.3.3. Cremation claims needed to be made by the cremation provider.
- 19.4. Limitations**
  - 19.4.1. The children's funeral fund will cover the cost of an appropriately sized grave to the size of the body. Full interments are currently only possible in Windrush cemetery which offers adult, child and baby sized plots.

- 19.4.2. Witney town council will only use the fund to cover an appropriately sized plot for burial.
- 19.4.3. In the instant, a full double-depth adult plot has requested the difference in cost will have to be paid to the council.
- 19.4.4. If a required child or baby plot is unavailable a full adult plot will be offered.

**19.5. Children's & baby plots**

- 19.5.1. Windrush Cemetery offers specified smaller children's and baby plots. These accommodate a smaller headstone and overall reduced plot size. They are all single-depth and can accommodate additional ashes interments.

**20. Cemeteries Maintenance**

**20.1. Grave levelling**

- 20.1.1. From the date of interment for 1 year a mound of soil will be maintained at 20cm above ground level.
  - 20.1.1.1. This is necessary as the backfilled excavated soil recompacts over a period of one year.
  - 20.1.1.2. This area cannot be planted in, and any plants will be moved to the head of the grave.
  - 20.1.1.3. Flower and wreaths may be laid but this will be moved to the head of the grave during levelling
- 20.1.2. Periodical historic graves, those interred for over 1 year may require a re-levelling process to relevel the surface of the ground for maintenance purposes.
  - 20.1.2.1. This is typically done in sections and notice will be issued via staked signs.

**20.2. Memorial Testing**

- 20.2.1. All memorials are tested every 5 years
- 20.2.2. The testing uses non-intrusive methods such as a hand push.
- 20.2.3. Prior notification to testing will be in the form of staked signs in the relevant cemetery.
- 20.2.4. Any memorials that require remedial action from testing will be the responsibility of the EROB grant owner.
  - 20.2.4.1. The Town Council will contact the EROB owner with the required remedial works to be carried out.
  - 20.2.4.2. If an adequate amount of time has passed from the initial contact the town council will make the memorial safe through the most economic means.
    - 20.2.4.2.1. Laying the memorial flat on the ground.
    - 20.2.4.2.2. Fencing of the grave area for safety.

**20.3. Damage to Memorials**

- 20.3.1. The Town Council accepts no liability for damage to memorials that is caused by any means other than gross negligence of cemeteries operatives.
  - 20.3.1.1. For example, the council will not be held responsible for minor damages caused by mowing activities.
    - 20.3.1.1.1. In an event of damage caused by gross negligence by a cemetery operative, such as plant equipment hitting and fracturing a memorial, the council will cover the cost of repairs.

20.3.1.1.2. The incident would have to be documented for the council to accept liability, an incident report or photographic evidence of the incident would be required.

20.3.1.2. It is recommended that EROB owners takes out an insurance policy on memorials against damage including public liability.

#### **20.4. Excavation process**

20.4.1. In the process of excavating a grave for interment, the excavated soil will be placed on the nearest neighbouring grave and access over adjoining graves is unavoidable.

20.4.2. Removing headstones

20.4.2.1. To gain access to certain reserved grave spaces, it may be required to remove headstones.

20.4.2.2. Notice will be issued to the EROB owner listed on the grant.

20.4.2.3. An EROB owner cannot refuse the removal.

20.4.2.4. The Town Council will cover the costs of any removal and offer to the EROB owner to have the memorial cleaned.

#### **20.5. Holiday items clearance**

20.5.1. Periodically throughout the year more thorough item clearance will be carried out, typically these are 1 month following Christmas, Easter and Mother's Day and Father's Day.

#### **20.6. Tree works**

20.6.1. Any damage caused to a memorial by falling tree limbs is classed as an act of God and the town council accepts no liability.

### **21. Memorials**

#### **21.1. Process**

21.1.1. The EROB must be purchased to install a memorial at both cemeteries and rights granted by the EROB owner.

21.1.1.1. For memorials spanning two plots, the EROB must be owned for both plots

21.1.2. Full details on measurement for memorials can be found in the separate Memorial Sizes Document.

21.1.3. Memorials can be installed on all lawned plots 12 months after the date of interment. This leaves time for the ground to recompact and grass seed to germinate and grow.

21.1.4. During this 12-month period, a small plaque or wooden cross can be staked in the ground to identify the plot.

21.1.5. This will be removed on the date of grass seeding and stored in the relevant cemetery depot

21.1.5.1. The wooden crosses must be no bigger than 10cm wide and 25cm high

21.1.6. Before the installation of any memorial, a completed memorial application form must be submitted for approval.

21.1.6.1. Only once a 12-month period has passed and approval has been granted can a memorial be installed.

21.1.6.2. The submitted approved memorial application form will be checked against the physical memorial before installation at the relevant cemetery by a cemetery operative.

- 21.1.6.2.1. If any details of the memorial do not match that of the approved document, installation may be refused.
- 21.1.6.3. Any memorial found to be installed without approval will be removed and the cost recovered from the person who ordered the tombstone.
- 21.2. Approval**
  - 21.2.1. All memorials except wooden crosses must be manufactured from stone.
  - 21.2.2. All memorials must be within the sizes listed on the memorial sizes document.
  - 21.2.3. A memorial must not cause offence.
  - 21.2.4. The section number/letter and plot number in 15mm engraved writing on the rear of the base stone.
  - 21.2.5. The stone mason must be registered with the Town Council.
- 21.3. Headstones**
  - 21.3.1. All headstones in Town council cemeteries must be made up of a foundation slab, base stone, and headstone.
  - 21.3.2. The top surface of the foundation slabs is level with ground level and its purpose is to stabilise the headstone and to protect the base and headstone from potential damage caused by cemetery maintenance.
  - 21.3.3. The total height of any memorial cannot exceed 111cm measured from the top of the foundation slab to the top of the headstone.
- 21.4. Monoliths**
  - 21.4.1. Monoliths must be installed with 1/3 of the total stone height underground level into a cradle.
  - 21.4.2. The max height of a monolith is 111cm with an additional 37cm sitting below ground level.
  - 21.4.3. Memorial requirements and restrictions
  - 21.4.4. The purpose of the foundation stone is to protect the main headstone from potential damage potential caused by cemetery maintenance.
- 21.5. Wooden Crosses**
  - 21.5.1. Wooden crosses are permitted in the cemeteries but must be constructed in a workmanlike manner.
  - 21.5.2. An application for a memorial still has to be made and approved by the Town Council
    - 21.5.2.1. The following condition must be met for approval.
    - 21.5.2.2. Within the maximum sizes of memorials
    - 21.5.2.3. An additional 1.3 of the total height is staked below ground level.
    - 21.5.2.4. Manufactured from a hardwood.
    - 21.5.2.5. No ornate details
    - 21.5.2.6. Must have a plaque or be engraved with the name of the interred.
    - 21.5.2.7. Section and grave number on the back of the.
  - 21.5.3. Wooden crosses will be inspected on a yearly basis for their condition.
    - 21.5.3.1. If a wooden cross has deteriorated contact will be made with the EROB owner for its restoration or removal.
    - 21.5.3.2. Once a period of 6 weeks has passed from the first notification, cemetery operatives will remove the cross and store it in the cemetery depot.
- 21.6. Babies & Children's**
  - 21.6.1. Due to a smaller grave size, there are reflected smaller memorial sizes of a maximum height of 75cm.

**21.7. Memorial Tablets**

- 21.7.1. Memorial tablets are only permitted in the ashes path of Windrush cemetery
- 21.7.2. These are restricted to just slopping desk tablets
- 21.7.3. Size details can be found on the memorial sizes document.

**22. Placement of items on graves and gardens**

**22.1.** Graves can only be adorned with flowers and small items made of non-hazardous unbreakable materials such as wood, ceramic, or plastic.

- 22.1.1. All adorning items should be placed in the garden area (see 22.5) or the area of the foundation slab of the memorial.

**22.2.** Any other items will be removed by Town Council staff and stored safely in the cemetery depot for collection if requested.

- 22.2.1. This will be done without notification and Witney Town Council takes no responsibility for damaged or lost items.

**22.3.** The following items are not permitted, this is not an exhaustive list but contains items that have been commonly found in the cemeteries.

- 22.3.1. Glass objects including items containing glass such as candle holders and photo frames

- 22.3.2. Any shrubs or trees

- 22.3.2.1. These will be removed at the earliest convenience without notification potted and stored for collection if requested.

- 22.3.3. Electrical items such as solar lights

- 22.3.4. Balloons and large flower displays

- 22.3.4.1. On the date of internment, these may be left and will be cleared away by the town council 7 days following the internment if not done so already.

- 22.3.5. Any form of fencing/kerbing signifying the burial area

- 22.3.6. Large items such as statues

**22.4.** Witney Town Council will communicate with EROB where large items have to be removed from graves.

- 22.4.1. The notification will first give the chance for the EROB owner to remove the items.

- 22.4.2. Once a period of 6 weeks has passed from the first notification, cemetery operatives will remove the items and store them in the cemetery depot.

**22.5. Garden area**

- 22.5.1. All lawned graves have a designated garden area in which the EROB grant owner can plant in and place items.

- 22.5.2. The permitted garden area is the width of the foundation slab and has a depth of 45cm starting at the base of the foundation slab.

- 22.5.3. If the EROB owner doesn't wish to install a memorial and only wishes for a garden area the area can encompass the location of the headstone increasing, it to a 90cm square.

- 22.5.3.1. The EROB must still be purchased for a garden area.

- 22.5.4. No form of fencing/kerbing can be installed marking the area of the garden.

### **23. Hermetically sealed caskets**

- 23.1.** Hermetically sealed caskets are permitted in both Tower Hill and Windrush cemetery. Most will incur the charge of an oversized grave space. At the time of booking, the sizes of both the coffin and hermetically sealed casket must be supplied to ensure it fits into the grave space.
- 23.2.** Cemetery operatives will place on the lid before backfilling the grave.
- 23.3.** Due to the H&S risk of entering a shored grave, it is only cemetery operatives that can carry out this process.

### **24. Vaults**

- 24.1.** No vaults are allowed in the cemeteries, there are a few remaining historic vaults but no more will be permitted. For any interments into an existing vault, the funeral organisers are responsible to arrange excavation and full interment into a vacant vault space. WTC will assist in the administration of this task and supervise the excavation.
- 24.2.** The charge for this service will be a full burial cost to cover administration and staff attendance on the date of the funeral.
- 24.3.** In accordance with standard contractor procedures, any contractors working in the cemetery must provide insurance and risk assessment documentation to the council before carrying out any work.
- 24.4.** Details of any plant equipment will be collected to ensure it is appropriate for the cemetery. Excavators and dumpers are limited to 1.6-ton models.