



THETFORD TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC NOTICE 03/05/2018

Thetford Town Council is aware that there has been much discussion on social media over the past few days regarding the enforcing of lawn cemetery rules in the London Road Cemetery.

The Council apologises for the upset that this has caused to some members of the public but wish to assure deed owners again, that every effort will be made to relocate personal items left on the grassed areas, in front of lawn cemetery graves, onto the foundation stones where possible. Removal of items will be a last resort, after eight weeks notice is given, with the items being kept for a further four weeks for collection.

To provide clarity to a number of issues raised, the Council would like to inform the public of the following:

- **The lawn cemetery rules have been in place for 30 years, or longer, and this campaign to enforce them more effectively commenced in January 2017, with R plot in the cemetery extension. **The lawn cemetery rules have not been changed.** (Cemetery Minutes 16th November 2016, available on our website).**
- **The deed owner's rights are limited to the "exclusive right of burial" although we also allow the placement of a memorial according to the rules and regulations. The deed holder does not own the land but just has the right to inter a body or cremated remains.**
- **The Council have not banned flowers or artificial flowers, nor have vases been limited to just one or two. Glass vases are not allowed as they present a health and safety risk.**
- **The Council allow most memorial items as long as they are placed on the foundation stone and are not offensive, do not present a health and safety risk or impede maintenance. The Council recommend that items placed are sturdy enough to ensure they are not blown onto the grassed areas during inclement weather.**
- **The lawn cemetery rules only apply to lawn cemetery plots (N, P, Q, R, X, and W). Letters have not been sent to the non lawn cemetery plots or the**

cremated remains plot deed holders and these deed holders have not been asked to remove items from these areas.

- **Wreaths are not limited to one but should be placed on the foundation stone and not the grassed areas.**
- **The cemetery is non profit making and currently is subsidised by the residents of Thetford through their council tax. The cost of an "exclusive right of burial" (currently £525) covers maintenance costs for 100 years. It is therefore important that the maintenance costs are kept to a minimum to ensure this is sustainable.**
- **Mowers are used to maintain the lawn cemetery plots as this is efficient and cost effective. Other methods of maintenance are likely to increase costs significantly which would have to be financed directly by the deed holders or by a rise in council tax.**
- **If anyone wishes to make a complaint please do so directly to the Town Council as a telephone call may easily resolve an issue. If it does not, we ask complainants to write to the Council where their complaint will be considered in accordance with the Council's complaints policy (available on our website).**
- **The rules and regulations and a summarised version of the lawn cemetery rules are available on our website. The summary lawn cemetery rules are also available on our notice boards within the cemetery and outside King's House.**

Notices regarding the rows on P plot are currently being posted weekly on the notice boards, our website and on the affected graves, giving the plot numbers, date by which items need to be removed from the grassed areas and the date to which items removed will be retained. This is a rolling programme to make the enforcement of the rules manageable and it is hoped that deed holders will make the necessary adjustments to bring their plots within the rules without Council intervention.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter. Should you have any further questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact the Council on 01842 754247, or by email on mail@thetfordtowncouncil.gov.uk or in writing to King's House, King Street, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 2AT.

Website: www.thetfordtowncouncil.gov.uk