

# Cemetery Meeting November 2023

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- 1 A meeting was held at the Cemetery on Thursday 23 November 2023
  - i. In attendance were Kathryn Lloyd, Peter Richardson, Mike Weston and Nick Richards of David Davies Funeral Directors
  - ii. Topics were discussed as follows
- 2 Burial Plot Size
  - i. Coffin sizes are generally increasing
  - ii. The unconsolidated land in the cemetery is prone to collapse when graves are being dug
  - iii. It is evident that many cemeteries are moving to larger plot sizes
  - iv. A suitable larger plot would measure 10 feet X 5 feet
  - v. It is recommended that ORPC adopt a policy of larger plot sizes for the future
- 3 Reservations and Pre Purchases
  - i. Many cemeteries and graveyards have adopted a policy of no reservation or pre purchases
  - ii. Reservations and Pre Purchases cause a problem at the cemetery
  - iii. Opening a reserved plot that sits between two occupied plots has caused the unconsolidated ground on either side to collapse
  - iv. This causes problems
    1. The interference with the adjacent, occupied graves can cause settlement or an opening of those graves and possible distress to relatives.
    2. The excavation of the new grave is also made much more difficult
  - v. It is proposed that ORPC adopt a policy of no Reservations and/or PrePurchases

#### 4 Removal of Pathways

- i. Some of the pathways are located over both occupied and vacant plots
- ii. These pathways have to be removed to open a plot
- iii. This in turn leaves a trip hazard that cannot be rectified until the disturbed land has settled
- iv. The general layout of the cemetery with a pathway between rows of graves will be continued as future burial areas are developed for use
- v. It is proposed the ORPC approve the removal of any such existing pathways to be replaced with turfed or seeded grass

#### 5 Removal of trees

- i. It was noted that a number of trees have been planted inappropriately
- ii. Some are in areas that will be needed for future burials
- iii. Some are left untended by relatives and cause problems such as fruit dropping and spoiling adjacent graves and headstones
- iv. It is proposed
  1. That ORPC adopt a policy or reinforce any existing policy to ensure that sponsored trees be maintained by the sponsor and that failure to comply can result in the removal or relocation of any such tree
  2. Have the clerk investigate and write to any known sponsors of trees advising that trees be pruned and managed on an annual basis and the consequences of failure to respond or comply could be removal

#### 6 Booking Process

- i. The clerks duties include
  1. The arrangement of bookings with Funeral Directors
  2. A legal requirement to attend all interments
- ii. To avoid a repetition of past experiences it is possible that a booking procedure can be adopted whereby an appointed and trained councillor can make bookings ( but

cannot deputise for the clerk at a funeral) in the clerks absence

- iii. To be clear no funerals could take place in the absence of the clerk
- iv. It is proposed that ORPC adopt a policy that facilitates this revised booking arrangement

#### 7 Oversize American style coffins

- i. There is an increasing call for the use of oversize American style coffins
- ii. These are often wider and deeper than a traditional coffin and therefore require deeper and wider plots
- iii. This can cause problems due to high water table and flooding of the pit
- iv. Other cemeteries have adopted policies to cease the use of this type of coffin
- v. It is proposed that ORPC adopts a policy to preclude the use of oversize American style coffins

#### 8 Trial Pits

- i. The recent regulations announced by the government were discussed with regard to grave depth and water table height
- ii. Consideration was made of the need to investigate the nature of the ground in the land to the East of the current cemetery
- iii. The objective is to establish whether or not a burial pit capable of being used for two coffins can be successfully dug without problems of collapse or flooding
- iv. The contractor who excavates graves for David Davies has offered to dig a number of pits for the nominal sum of £50 to £100 plus VAT
- v. The pit locations will need to be pegged out and part of the boundary fence will need to be removed and replaced to facilitate this work
- vi. It is proposed that ORPC agree to commission this work

