

# Thatcham Town Council



## Rules & Regulations for the Management of:

London Road Cemetery, Thatcham, RG19 4LQ

These regulations apply to all areas of London Road Cemetery. Copies of these regulations may be obtained from the Council offices at Brownsfield Road, Thatcham, or from the Town Council website: <https://thatchamtowncouncil.gov.uk/london-road-cemetery>

Please refer to Appendix 1 (page 6) for diagram indicating the three main burial sections of the Cemetery.

### **1. Opening Hours**

The Cemetery will be accessible for pedestrians during daylight hours, please note there is no lighting within the Cemetery. Thatcham Town Council reserves the right to make such closures as may be necessary for repairs, in emergencies or in the interests of public safety at any time.

### **2. Hours of Interments**

The hours for interments, of all denominations, are as follows:

- Mondays (and days immediately following a Bank Holiday) 12noon to 3.30pm
- Tuesdays to Fridays 10.00am to 3.30pm

No interment shall take place outside of these hours, or on weekends or a General Public Holiday.

### **3. Notice of Interments**

All notices of interment must be in writing on the Notice of Interment forms provided by Thatcham Town Council and requirements must be clearly and completely stated. The responsibility for any error therein is that of the person signing the notice.

Not less than five working days' notice shall be given of any interment.

Thatcham Town Council will refuse to allow interments when there is reason to believe details given on the Notice are incorrect, the disposal certificate is not available for inspection to authenticate the identity of the person to be interred prior to the burial, or if the necessary Notice mentioned above has not been given.

No burial shall take place, no cremated human remains shall be interred, no memorial shall be placed in the Cemetery and no additional inscription shall be made on any memorial without the written permission of Thatcham Town Council and after appropriate fees have been paid.

The scattering of cremated human remains, in any sections of the Cemetery, is strictly forbidden. Cremated remains may be interred under lifted turf, in this instance the Notice of Interment form will need to be completed.

### **4. Payment of Fees and Charges**

All charges and fees payable for anything in connection with the Cemetery shall be paid to Thatcham Town Council before an interment takes place, or any work commences.

### **5. Exclusive Right of Burial**

Purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial does not purchase the associated plot of land, only the right to use that plot exclusively for the burial of remains or ashes for the duration of the lease. It is advisable that once the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial has been interred within the grave, arrangements are made for transfer of ownership. No further burials, interments of cremated remains, additional inscriptions or installation of new memorials can be permitted until revised entitled ownership has been established.

No transfer of an Exclusive Right of Burial of any grave shall be deemed valid unless and until the same is verified and registered at the Town Council Offices.

## 6. Allocation of Grave Spaces

Grave spaces must be used in their numerical order, or such other order as may be determined by Thatcham Town Council from time to time. Selection of site of a grave space is not permitted.

A detailed plan of the Cemetery, showing the position of every grave, shall be kept at the Town Council Offices, and may be inspected during normal office hours without charge.

The New Lawn Section of the Cemetery is non-denominational. Where a blessing of a grave space is required, this shall be carried out by an appropriate person prior to, or during, the burial ceremony. If a blessing of the grave space is required to be carried out prior to the burial service, permission must be obtained from Thatcham Town Council.

## 7. Permanent Memorials and Inscriptions

No memorial shall exceed the following dimensions, please note height is measured from ground level:

- New Lawn Section: 100cm in height. 61cm in width. 30cm front to rear. (39x24x12)
- Old Chapel Section: 122cm in height. 61cm in width. (48x24)
- Lawn Extension: 92cm in height. 61cm in width. 30cm front to rear. (36x24x12)
- Cremation Section: 61cm in height. 45cm in width. 30cm front to rear. (24x18x12)
- Children's Section: 61cm in height. 45cm in width. 30cm front to rear. (24x18x12)
- Deskbook Design: 15cm in height. 45cm in width. 45cm front to rear. (6x18)

All memorials must adhere to the follow regulations:

- A person shall not install, repair, remove or re-install any memorial, gravestone, tablet, inscribed vase, kerb or railing in the Cemetery except with the written permission of Thatcham Town Council and after the appropriate fees have been paid in full.
- Installation, repair or removal of a memorial stone must be booked in advance with Thatcham Town Council.
- A full description including the material and measurement of every memorial, with copies of the proposed inscription thereon, must be provided to Thatcham Town Council for approval prior to install.
- No memorial, gravestone or tablet shall be allowed over any grave to which the Exclusive Right of Burial has not been purchased.
- All fixed memorials must be made of natural stone. Fixed memorials of any other material will not be permitted in the Cemetery.
- Where available, all memorials must be installed upon on the concrete plinth.
- The memorial shall be placed centrally within the grave space, with the inscription facing down the grave space and shall be erected vertically.
- Any ornamentation or vase that forms part of a memorial must be permanently affixed and thereby be an integral part of the memorial landing.
- No flat stones laid horizontally, nor metal vases, chippings, railings, fencing, kerbs or other structures enclosing graves, are permitted in lawn sections of the Cemetery. In particular, the installation of decorative borders is not permitted.
- The identification number of a grave must be cut at the foot of all memorials or gravestones so as to be visible when erected.

- A Memorial Mason must not inscribe on any part of a memorial, any inscription relating to his name, trade or business.
- All installations must be in accordance with current NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) recommendations, details may be obtained from [www.namm.org.uk](http://www.namm.org.uk) or Thatcham Town Council offices.

Please contact Thatcham Town Council before proceeding if in any doubt as to the specifications required.

Thatcham Town Council will remove any unauthorised memorials, kerbs, railings, ornamentation, or horticultural decoration without notice. Thatcham Town Council may recover the cost of removal of these items from the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial to that grave, in accordance with the powers and procedures set out in Article 14 of The Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977.

## **8. Repairs to Graves and Memorials**

The EROB holder must keep all memorials, gravestones, tablets, kerbs or other memorials in good repair. All repairs and reinstallations must be in accordance with current NAMM recommendations. In the event of any such memorial etc., becoming dangerous or defective from want of repair or neglect, Thatcham Town Council may, in accordance with the powers and procedures set out in Article 16(2) and Schedule 3 of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977, give notice to the owner, requiring them to repair or remove any such memorial. If, after the expiration of such notice, the owner has failed to repair or remove any such defective or dangerous memorial, or if Thatcham Town Council is unable to trace the owner(s) after taking such reasonable steps as it may consider necessary for that purpose, then Thatcham Town Council may remove the same without any rights of the owner to any compensation for so doing.

An ongoing process of memorial safety testing is in operation. Thatcham Town Council reserves the right to make safe any memorial which it considers is presenting a potential danger to the health and safety of members of the public.

## **9. Temporary Memorials**

A wooden marker or cross may be temporarily erected to mark a new grave where prior consent has been given by Thatcham Town Council. Thatcham Town Council reserves the right to remove any wooden memorial for which prior consent has not been obtained. The marker shall be positioned immediately against the concrete strip where available.

Thatcham Town Council reserves the right to remove any temporary marker.

## **10. Flowers, Planting and Tributes**

- Fresh cut flowers and wreaths may be placed upon the grave or placed in a vase/s sunk into the landing of the memorial stone, at any time. All dead floral tributes will be removed from graves at the Council's discretion if the owner first fails to do so.
- Silk or plastic flowers may be placed in an appropriate vase approved by the Council, however upon becoming damaged they should be removed by the appropriate person or will be removed by Council staff.
- No candles may be placed on any plinth, memorial stone or grave
- A single container may be placed on either side of the memorial stone. Items such as bedding plants or small shrubs may be planted in this container, however no plants may exceed the height of the memorial stone, impact upon the adjacent grave spaces, or obscure any wording on the memorial stone. All other types of containers will be removed by the council staff without prior notification.
- A single vase made of natural stone may be set in the area immediately in front of a memorial. This vase should not exceed 20cm in height and 20cm in diameter on a burial plot and 15cm by 15cm on a cremated remains or children's plot.
- No planting will be permitted directly into the lawn, at any time, in any part of the Cemetery.
- Glass, ceramic or other easily breakable containers of any type including jars, bottles etc or non-approved containers are highly dangerous and strictly prohibited.
- The use of hosepipes are strictly prohibited.

All tributes placed on graves are done so at the owners own risk. Please be aware that the Cemetery is a public space and Thatcham Town Council cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to tributes left on graves.

No further items of any description may be allowed to be placed upon the grave space, on the memorial stone nor the concrete strip. Any unauthorised items shall be removed by Thatcham Town Council staff without prior notification. These items shall be held at the Cemetery for a period of one month for collection before being disposed of responsibly.

## **11. Contractor Working Hours**

No workman, appointed by Thatcham Town Council or family members, employed in any works within the Cemetery, including fixing or restoring memorials or gravestones, will be admitted, or materials received into the Cemetery on weekends, General Public Holidays or on any other day before 9am or after 3.30pm

## **12. Damage**

If any damage is done to Thatcham Town Council's land or premises through bringing in any materials, gravestones, or memorial or from any other cause, anyone causing such damage will be held responsible for the same and Thatcham Town Council may recover the cost of repairing such damage from such person or persons and in addition take proceedings under Article 18 of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977.

## **13. Digging of Graves**

No grave will be made deeper than 7ft (2.13 meters) but Thatcham Town Council, if it is found to be impractical to dig as deep as 7ft (2.13 meters) in any particular grave space, reserve the right to specify the maximum depth which can be dug. All coffins or other receptacles shall be buried in accordance with the requirements of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Local Authorities Order 1977.

Each full burial plot allows two earth burials. In addition, up to three sets of cremated remains are permitted per full burial plot. Once cremated remains have been interred into the plot no further coffin burials can be interred or accepted in the plot.

Plots for cremated remains are excavated to a depth of 18 inches (0.46 meters). Up to three interments of cremated remains are permitted per cremated remains plot with the exception of the new cremated remains section (K), where memorials are installed onto a concrete plinth, the plots are excavated to a depth of 24 inches (0.6 meters) and 4 interments of cremated remains are permitted in each plot.

Where a concrete plinth is in place the grave shall be dug immediately in front of it.

Surplus spoil excavated from any grave must be immediately removed from the Cemetery.

## **14. Memorial Planting**

The planting of plants, shrubs and trees is not permitted within the Cemetery except in the designated memorial planting areas. An application form must be completed and approved by Thatcham Town Council before any planting takes place.

## **15. Damaged Wreaths**

Broken or damaged wreaths, ornaments or memorials shall be deemed litter and not allowed to remain on any grave in the Cemetery. Thatcham Town Council shall be at liberty to remove the same if the owner fails to do so. All dead floral tributes will be removed from graves at Thatcham Town Council's discretion if the owner first fails to do so.

Special Christmas tributes are removed at a set time after Christmas, on the date posted on the Cemetery noticeboard.

## **16. Gratuities**

No gratuities shall be demanded by any officer or servant of Thatcham Town Council

## **17. Conduct**

Visitors to the Cemetery are asked to conduct themselves in such a way as to respect the privacy of other visitors in order that a quiet and peaceful environment may be maintained for the benefit of all.

Dogs must be kept on leads at all times when within the Cemetery grounds and any clearing up required is the responsibility of the handler. Please do not allow dogs to walk on the graves.

No riding of bicycles or scooters will be allowed within the Cemetery.

Only authorised motor vehicles will be permitted to proceed passed the car parking areas onto the "loop roads" at any time.

The playing of ball, or any other games or sport within the Cemetery is strictly prohibited, in accordance with Article 18 (1) (e) of The Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977.

## **18. Reinstatement of Burial Surface**

As soon as practical after the interment of a body or cremated remains Thatcham Town Council shall sow grass seed or lay turf at its own expense over the grave. Thereafter no person other than the duly authorised officers or servants of Thatcham Town Council shall interfere with or alter the turfed or unturfed areas of the grave.

## **19. Grass Cutting**

Thatcham Town Council shall keep the grass areas mown at its own expense but will not undertake to keep clean or maintain memorials, which matter shall be the responsibility of the owner.

The foregoing Regulations were revised by Thatcham Town Council by virtue of its powers under the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977.

Town Clerk  
May 2025

Reviewed – May 2025

# Appendix 1

## Sections of London Road Cemetery

