

# HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

The Mayor  
Cllr Helen Simpson  
57 Fairview Road  
Hungerford  
Berkshire  
RG17 0BP  
Tel: 07920 110980  
[Helen.simpson@hungerford-tc.gov.uk](mailto:Helen.simpson@hungerford-tc.gov.uk)



The Town Clerk  
Mrs Claire Barnes  
The Library  
Church Street  
Hungerford  
RG17 0JG  
[townclerk@hungerford-tc.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@hungerford-tc.gov.uk)  
[www.hungerford-tc.gov.uk](http://www.hungerford-tc.gov.uk)

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8<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Name  
Address

Dear Name

You may have seen recent reports from the BBC highlighting concerns of available space of Cemeteries in England and the proposed changes the Law Commission are considering.

We recently carried out an overview of the newest section of St Saviour's Cemetery (Section F) and whilst we currently have space, there will come a time when land shortages will propose challenges.

The review showed that whilst the cemetery is in good general order, and there are currently no major issues of subsidence or flooding, we noted that some of the graves have acquired additional items which will have an impact on available space and do not comply with the definition of a Lawn Cemetery.

Section F was designated a Lawn Cemetery, which provides the following benefits:

- Maximises the limited space available; this ensures we can offer spaces to residents for a longer period (many areas have run out of available ground in their vicinity)
- Enables regular maintenance and upkeep of the grounds and facilitates the use of a strimmer (a regular mower is too large for some of the areas)
- Not having stones reduces the risk of potential damage to memorial stones, maintenance team and their equipment
- The aim is to provide a pleasant visual effect of a large lawn. This layout enables the cemetery to be maintained to a high standard

St Saviour's Regulations state that in Section F, the following items are not allowed: ***'No flat stones laid horizontally, nor memorials, metal vases, chippings, railings, fencing, kerbs or other structures enclosing graves, other than headstones, are permitted in the newest section of the Cemetery (Section F). In particular, the erection of decorative borders is not permitted.'***

We have been asked by the Recreation, Amenities & War Memorials Committee, who are responsible for St Saviour's Cemetery, to contact all burial deed holders in Section F to respectfully request that all of the items listed above are removed.

**Flowers can be placed or displayed on the memorial stone base or immediately surrounding the Memorial Stone and must be fresh or made of biodegradable materials. Vases for permanent**

**displays of flowers should be made of suitable materials, not glass and should be placed on, or set fully into, the memorial base.**

St Saviours Regulations state that *‘the Council reserves the right to remove unsuitable vases or displays forthwith and dead or artificial flowers after a reasonable passage of time. The Council may also remove items which have become damaged, unsightly or potentially dangerous due to natural deterioration over time or any other cause.’*

Hungerford Town Council is keen to ensure that the Ceremony remains a calm, tranquil and pleasant space for all of Hungerford Community to enjoy and the benefits of it being a Lawn Cemetery will enhance our vision.

Whilst we request that you remove these items, we are mindful that many will be precious to you, so we are giving you two months’ notice so you can remove them for safe keeping. For some of you, may not be aware of all the items placed on the grave as they may have been placed in recent days/weeks by other family members or friends.

We would be grateful if you could remove any of the items listed by Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024 as we will be retuning the grave areas back to a Lawn Cemetery as originally planned.



These images are ‘stock images’ taken from the internet of the types of items that will need to be removed in order to return Section F of the cemetery to a Lawn Cemetery as shown below



This image is a ‘stock image’ taken from the internet of a Lawn Cemetery and remains the aim for Section F of St Saviour’s Cemetery

We appreciate this is a sensitive subject and we certainly do not wish to offend or cause any distress, however, we do need to preserve space for the future and a Lawn Cemetery is one way of achieving this.

Please ignore this letter if it does not apply to you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above number.

Yours sincerely

Hungerford Town Council