



# Pilning & Severn Beach Parish Council

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## **PILNING & SEVERN BEACH CEMETERY GRAVE DECORATION POLICY**

Pilning & Severn Beach Parish Council need to adopt a policy to be able to carry out Statutory Duties to comply with Health and Safety Legislation within the Cemetery.

All memorials will be risk assessed and monitored regularly. This inspection process might highlight items which are not permitted on the grave as per the "Rules and Regulations" of the Cemetery.

These items are very special to families, and the Parish Council hopes that as it is slowly being introduced you will appreciate the hard task in hand.

For the preservation and enhancement of the Cemetery the introduction of this Policy is of special importance and your cooperation is respectfully requested.

It is really important to commemorate your loved ones and grave decorating is one way to do this. Pilning & Severn Beach Parish Council's goal is to keep the Cemetery grounds and plots in good condition for all visitors. Together we can maintain a beautiful, well-kept, safe, environmentally friendly and contemplative environment for everyone.

Cemetery decorations should enhance the serene and contemplative environment. We allow grave decorations but are mindful of our responsibility to all visitors to the Cemetery. (Large decorations, too many decorations, etc., can lend to others' discomfort and/or unsightly areas within the Cemetery.) and whilst we would like to allow everyone to do what they wish, the reality is, few would be happy if that were allowed.

We have a duty to make sure that this area is safe for you to visit and for staff to work.

If you are uncertain about something you wish to do, please contact the Cemetery Clerk 01454 201205, or look on Pilning & Severn Beach Parish Council website for the rules and regulations.

We wish to avoid anything being removed and discarded that may have special meaning to you.

General Tips, Regulations, Responsibilities and Removal.

- Items should be able to hold up against rain, wind, sleet and snow.
- Items should not pose a risk or threat to the environment.
- Please limit grave decorations to one per grave.

- Artificial or fresh flowers are acceptable if they are in permanently installed Cemetery approved vases. (Types attached to Headstones or tablets).
- Loose flowers placed directly on the ground will be removed if they become unsightly.
- Excessive decorations can be a safety hazard and will be removed.
- Items such as stands, boxes, easels, pots, shells, toys, pinwheels, birdboxes, frames, fencing, border edging, metal designs, ornamental stones, ornaments, chairs, vases, glass, wood or iron cases, shepherd crooks, alcohol bottles or cans, figurines and similar items are not permitted and with no obligation for preservation.
- Lost, misplaced or broken flower vases are not the responsibility of the Burial Authority.
- The Burial Authority cannot be responsible for damage caused by the elements, thieves, vandals or causes beyond its control.
- The Burial Authority instructs staff to remove anything that does not conform with these regulations, including unsightly, dangerous and wilted items- notice will be given by advertising asking Grave Owners to make contact where possible (old records and people move away, every attempt will be made).
- Wooden/ Plastic fencing/ kerbs with chippings/ stones / bark are not permitted, any grave which has such items existing will be asked to remove. Notice will be given by form of advertising or contacting the Grave Owner where possible (old records and people move away; every attempt will be made).
- Christmas Decorations, Christmas wreaths or flowers no longer than 2ft are permitted on a grave from the 2nd week in December until the 3rd week in January, after this time seasonal decorations will be removed and disposed of.
- Other seasonal decorations, e.g. Easter, will be permitted for one week prior to the event and for one week after the event
- Special dates (Mother's Day, Father's Day, Birthdays). Cards will be removed within 3 weeks, please take these home if they have special meaning.
- When it has been established a decoration is to be removed, it may be destroyed, removed, or disposed of without liability - notice will be given by advertising asking Grave Owners to make contact where possible (old records and people move away, every attempt will be made)

We appreciate that some items have been within the grounds for many years, items have been added to graves without permission and others have done similarly. Looking forwards we now must put safety first and introduce and enforce this policy over an 18-month period, to allow those that have moved away, or unable to visit, the opportunity to remove and take home any precious items.

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