

Update to work on Cemetery and Churchyard

The current fees, charges and regulations were approved by Wickhambrook Parish Council in November '20, and a specification for memorial furniture which could be sited on parish council open spaces (but not in the cemetery) was adopted by the Estates Committee in December '20.

In addition to this, the following work has been completed in the past year:

- Levelling of thirty six grave spaces
- Allowing spring flowering bulbs and flowers to set prior to first cuts
- Work to trees leading up to the Chapel of Rest, including removal of two near entrance to open up views
- New posts and refurbishment of the gates leading up to the War Memorial
- New railings commissioned leading to gates at War Memorial entrance
- Remedial work to fill chips and re-point War Memorial
- Purchase of a new Memorial Bench to commemorate 75 years since the end of World War II
- Cleaning of guttering on Chapel of Rest
- Purchase and fitting of two new waterbutts at Chapel of Rest
- The Clerk is now ensuring that new and refurbished memorials are marked with their grave space numbers.

Ongoing work in the cemetery includes:

- maintenance, tidying and memorial testing;
- transcription of records. Burial and Grave Space records held at Suffolk Archives have been imaged prior to transcription, which is currently taking place before the records are input to the cemeteries database; and
- Transferring existing records to the cemeteries database
- Cemetery Extension project

Two volunteers have been recruited who are assisting with elements of this work.

Work identified for the next financial year which would require budgetary provision or changes to the cemeteries regulations includes:

- A plan of the cemetery at the entrance
- A specially designed Memorial Wall to be set into one of the walls of the Chapel of Rest for displaying any (metal) memorial plaques which are removed once a consent has lapsed.
- Considering whether the parish council should move to engaging its own grave digger, to ensure good practice compliance and recover full costs as part of the burial fee. One advantage of this would be improved local knowledge of the cemetery and consistency in layout of grave spaces, thus facilitating ease of mowing and weeding between spaces, and a more efficient use of the space available, increasing the number of grave spaces that could be used over time.
- Smaller signs to indicate where the parish council is delaying cuts to promote biodiversity and sustainability within the cemetery
- Work to the Chapel of Rest gate entrance gates and drive
- Additional time spent on transferring records to the cemeteries database

WPC.21.09. Update on Cemeteries Work

The clerk has recently received a request from a local funeral director on behalf of a relative whose family member is interred in the cemetery. They wish to include within the memorial headstone a porcelain plaque photographic image of the late family member. There is nothing in our current regulations to prohibit such plaques, but to date no memorial headstones have included photographic images.



example porcelain photographic image

Other imagery has been included on memorial headstones within the cemetery, for example:



It is important to ensure that the cemetery and its approach to memorials is inclusive to the wide range of belief systems, denominations and cultures within society. One approach might be to note that any images on memorials should be restricted to a certain size, for example:

- Not more than 6" x 4"; or
- Not more than one third height of the memorial.

Actions:

The parish council is asked to consider

- 1. Whether to note that** photographic plaques of either ceramic or other material, of an approved size may be fixed to memorials with the council's written approval.