

Dear Parent or Family Member,

Non-floral tributes on shared graves at Longden Road Cemetery, Shrewsbury

Thank you very much for taking the time to respond to Shropshire Council's consultation regarding tributes on shared graves at Longden Road cemetery, Shrewsbury.

Shropshire Council was petitioned to create and put in place a policy for tributes on shared graves to provide clarity to parents and families. Previously Shropshire Council did not have a specific policy in place and had no predetermined view on what a new policy should include. Shropshire Council, therefore, very much wished for this new policy to be shaped by those whose view point mattered the most, that is parents and family members and this is why a consultation exercise took place.

In total there were 52 responses to the consultation and Shropshire Council has considered very carefully what you have had to say about what you'd like to see happen regarding tributes and the area around the shared graves. The consultation asked a number of questions and in each case the policy adopted conforms with the view point put forward by the majority of consultees in their consultation responses.

The new policy you have helped to develop for tributes on shared graves is as below written in **bold**;

No more than one non floral tribute is permitted to be placed at any one time on a shared grave per family (to include the extended family) per baby interred in that shared grave. In the scenario where the parents of the interred are no longer in a relationship together, each parent is permitted to place a tribute if they wish to do so.

All tributes whether floral or non-floral must comply with all of the following principles;

- **Must not be likely to cause offence to other visitors**
- **Must not exceed a footprint of 10cm by 10cm and 20cm in height**
- **Must not be made of perishable material for example fabric and/or soft toys**
- **Must not include a naked flame**
- **Must not include or comprise of a Helium or other gas filled balloon**
- **Must not be made of material that may shatter e.g. glass, china or other ceramic or include or comprise of sharp edges**

All tributes must be placed either on the plinth of the memorial headstone or its base or within the current garden area for bedding plants or as close as possible thereto.

No kerbs or edging material may be installed around the grave.

Reasonable endeavour must be made to identify on the tribute to whom the tribute is placed in order that contact may be made with the family where necessary.

This policy applies to shared graves in the shared grave area at Longden Road Cemetery and may apply in new cemeteries in future as and when these are developed. The policy will co-exist with the current Lawn Graves Regulation for Shrewsbury General Cemetery adopted in 2008. Should a conflict arise between the policy and regulation the matter will be decided by the Shropshire Council.

UPDATE 3RD FEBRUARY 2016:

Some parents and families have asked for clarification on what the policy is with regard to floral tributes.

To clarify, floral tributes have always been permitted on the shared graves, whether these are planted in the small garden area in front of the headstone, bunches of flowers left on the grave or placed in the vases inset within the headstone and there is no change to this position.

The introduction of the policy for non-floral tributes has made no change to what floral tributes are allowed.

What will happen next?

The decision to adopt and implement this new policy was taken today (15th January 2016) by Shropshire Council's Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing and will come into force on 22nd January 2016 if unchallenged.

This means that if you wish to leave a non-floral tribute on a shared grave that complies with the new policy you may do so after 22nd January 2016. The new policy will be enforceable, if necessary, from **1st April 2016**, meaning if you currently have a tribute(s) on a shared grave that contravenes the new policy you have time in which to remove this and make arrangement for its replacement.

END