

Dear John/Leah

Please forward the following request to the Green Spaces Committee members for consideration at the meeting on the 21st September.

I ask that further to our previous requests, that frost proof stand pipe taps are provided as soon as possible at the allotment site, to allow the allotment tenants access to clean running water all year round. Growing fruit and vegetables is an all season activity, and although the need to water crops diminishes in the winter months, the need to tend the plot does not. Running water is needed to wash muddy tools and to wash muddy hands and produce before leaving site.

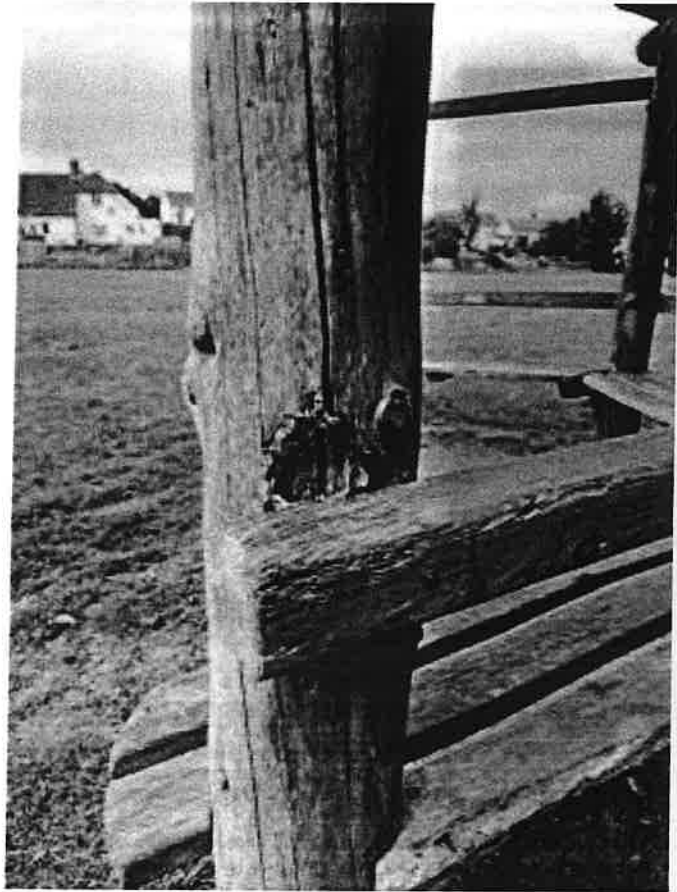
Provision of year round running water is recommended in the LGA,s 'Growing in the community' guide to providers of allotments (attached for reference), quote.

"Allotment providers should aim to ensure access to a mains tap water supply for every plotholder, with one outlet shared between no more than six to eight plots. Outlets should be situated in a convenient location, bearing in mind the difficulties elderly and disabled gardeners may face in transporting water any distance."

I do hope the committee can find the small amount of funds needed to provide this vital resource and support the allotment tenants in their endeavours to grow local, sustainable food (and get all the other physical and mental health benefits attributed to tending an allotment).



Pictures taken 13/09/21 - Highfields Play Area



Survey of Wooden Crosses in Kingshill Cemetery Carried out on 9th March 2021

Following on from the report presented to the Green Space Committee, dated 17th May 2021, it was agreed to make contact, where possible, with the ERB owners of the graves where wooden crosses have been in-situ for over 12 months to establish whether the ERB owners have plans for a more permanent memorial. The results of the feedback from the ERB owners would be reported to the next Committee meeting to allow the possible revision of the current Cemetery Regulations to be considered.

The results are as follows:

Our initial survey in March 2021 revealed that there were 50 plots which had crosses installed.

Based on the dates of the interment of the deceased, we estimated that 16 were installed prior to the change in regulations on 15th March 2016 and 34 after the change.

The number of ERB owners who could be invoiced at the time of the initial report was:

Prior to the change in the regulations – 15 Following the change in the regulations – 14

Letters were posted to ERB owners at the beginning of June (where we have current contact details), in cases where wooden crosses have been in situ for over 12 months, asking whether they had plans for a more permanent memorial. Of the 24 letters posted, we have received the following responses:

No reply/letter returned to sender	9
Considering permanent memorial in the future/undecided	4
Application for permanent memorial received	2
Memorial application in hand with Funeral Director/Memorial Mason	1
Cross to remain until deceased estate finalised	2
Intends to make arrangements for permanent memorial	3
Cross to remain indefinitely	3

For information - extract from Cemetery Regulations:

26. Memorial applications

26.1 Without prejudice to any detailed provisions specified in the remainder of this Part of the regulations:

a) The Grant Holder must complete an application form (obtainable from the Council Office), and receive written authorisation from the Council before:

- 1. any Memorial may be erected in the Cemetery, or*
- 2. any inscription is placed on any Memorial in the Cemetery*

29. Erection of Memorials and placing Inscriptions

29.2 Any works to memorials shall not take place until 11 months from the date of interment to allow for settlement of the grave space (this may be waived in the case of interment of ashes, but authorisation of Council must be granted). The Council will not normally object to the marking of a grave by a simple wooden cross pending the erection of a permanent memorial, but reserves the right to remove any such grave marker.

29.3 The Council will permit a simple wooden cross to mark graves for an indefinite period of time if requested by the grave owner. Following, the first anniversary of any wooden cross being insitu, a fee will apply and a maintenance inspection will be carried out and repeated on an annual basis until such times as the cross is permanently removed. In the event of any maintenance works being required the grave owner will be contacted and requested to repair, remove or replace the wooden cross. A three year review period will apply to wooden crosses.

29.4 The Council reserve the right to remove any unsafe wooden crosses without prior notice to the grave owner, to maintain the safety of staff and visitors in the cemetery.

32. Memorial construction

32.1 All Memorials must be able to bear continuous exposure to the weather and must be made of durable natural stone. Teak and similar hardwoods may be permitted but the Council reserves the right to remove the memorial when its condition has, in the opinion of the Council, deteriorated below that which is acceptable to the Council.

The current Burial Ground Fees and Charges read as follows:

WOODEN CROSSES

To erect or place on a grave in Kingshill Cemetery including an inscription:

1.	A simple temporary wooden cross including inscription, in-situ for less than 1 year, pending the erection of a permanent memorial (not less than 2 ft. in height and not exceeding 3 ft. 6 inches in height)	No charge
2.	A simple wooden cross including inscription (not less than 2 ft. in height and not exceeding 3 ft.6 inches in height) This fee will be payable following the first anniversary of the installation of the wooden cross	£42.00

11th August 2021

Appendix 3 - Health and Safety information provided by Alan Price comprising: Method Statement dated 25th May 2016 and grave digging risk assessment dated 6th June 2016.

Note: We have recently requested that contractors working in the Cemetery review the H&S information that they have previously supplied to the Council and provide any required updates.

Grave Shoring

Dursley Town Council do not have any grave shoring equipment. Our current contractor provides his own equipment and no longer uses the shoring equipment provided by the previous grave digger.

We have taken some advice from Teleshore regarding the type of shoring equipment available. <https://teleshoregroup.com/cemetery>

They advise as follows: The method of digging is one thing to consider when selecting the type of shoring. e.g. when hand digging only, a panel and brace system could be used.

The type of soil determines at what depth to start installing the shoring. With cohesive soil (the best type), the minimum quantity of depth that should be shored is 50% of the complete depth. The most vulnerable area of an excavation is approx. 3rd of the way up and the shoring should finish flush with the surface. Some grave diggers will leave the 18" above the bottom of the excavation un-shored, as the grave floor is the most stable area.

Teleshore would be pleased to visit Kingshill Cemetery to advise further and provide a quotation, but from the information we have given them, they would recommend a hydraulic system for use in Kingshill Cemetery, as our Contractor uses a combination of a mechanical digger and hand digging.

To give a very approximate idea of price, Teleshore suggest the purchase of a minimum of 3 sets of shoring equipment (to get the depth coverage) plus hydraulic cylinders, pump and hoses approx. £3,500 - £3,600 +vat. On-site training is included within the price from Teleshore.

Teleshore have also suggested that we review the depth of our triple graves and whether we want to continue to offer these. 10ft depth would be on the limit of structural shoring. Teleshore would not recommend that their products are used for depths over 10ft 6inches.

In addition, they advise that the H&S regulations state that the operative must be able to immediately backfill or safely secure a grave. They have suggested that a grave covered by a sheet of plywood is not a safely secured grave and recommend that a lockdown excavation safety cover is used once the grave is dug.

Do the Committee consider that the current Grave Digging contractor should continue to provide his own shoring equipment or do Council wish to consider the purchase of shoring equipment for use in Kingshill Cemetery?

Do the Committee also wish to consider the purchase of a lockdown excavation safety cover?

14th September 2021

Grave Depth Review

Our grave digging contractor, Alan Price, has asked that we review our grave depths in particular for triple graves.

Alan advises that with the equipment he has, which is transported around various sites by van, the deepest that he feels comfortable in digging is 7ft 6 inches. He advises that the requirement of 8ft depth for a double grave is difficult. Alan uses a combination of mechanical and hand digging when preparing a grave.

We currently offer the option of graves dug to the following depths in Kingshill Cemetery: **Single - 6ft, Double - 8ft and Triple - 10ft.** These depths are based on historical precedence and are in line with advice received from ICCM (which is based on the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977, LACO). LACO states:

2. No body shall be buried in a grave in such a manner that any part of the coffin is less than *three feet below the level of any ground adjoining the grave:*
Provided that the burial authority may, where they consider the soil to be of suitable character, permit a coffin made of perishable materials to be placed not less than two feet below the level of any ground adjoining the grave.

3. No body shall be buried in a grave unless the coffin is effectively separated from any coffin interred in the grave on a previous occasion by means of a *layer of earth not less than six inches thick.*

The depths specified for Kingshill allow for the above and for contingencies against future unknown factors (as recommended by ICCM in their Policy relating to Shallow Graves). They also allow for the possibility of further ashes interments in a plot once the final coffin has been buried.

We have taken advice from ICCM with regards to grave depths.

Appendix 1 - The minimum depth of graves shows an illustration of a 7ft 9inch triple grave with 3 x coffins each measuring 15 inches. (Coffin depths can vary from 14 inches to 18+ inches).

Appendix 2 - ICCM's Policy relating to Shallow Graves dated May 2004. This includes an illustration of a 6ft grave with two x 15 "coffin burials. ICCM have confirmed that '*The Shallow Graves Policy still stands; it was designed to provide a solution when a grave was re-opened and it was found that there wasn't sufficient depth for a further burial. It is based on the requirements of LACO.*

ICCM have also confirmed that using the information from the Policy relating to Shallow Depth Graves and assuming a maximum coffin depth of 16 inches, the **absolute minimum depth** required for a triple grave would be 96" or 8ft (allowing 3ft of soil above the final coffin burial). They advise that *This would be the absolute minimum, with no room for any contingencies.*

In consideration, it should be noted that the Policy relating to Shallow Depth Graves states:

General

A shallow grave will only be encountered at the time of reopening for a further interment and therefore time in which to resolve the problem will be limited. A desire to meet with the needs of the bereaved should not outweigh the need to comply with burial law and under no circumstances should a burial be carried out in an earth grave where full compliance with LACO will not be achieved.

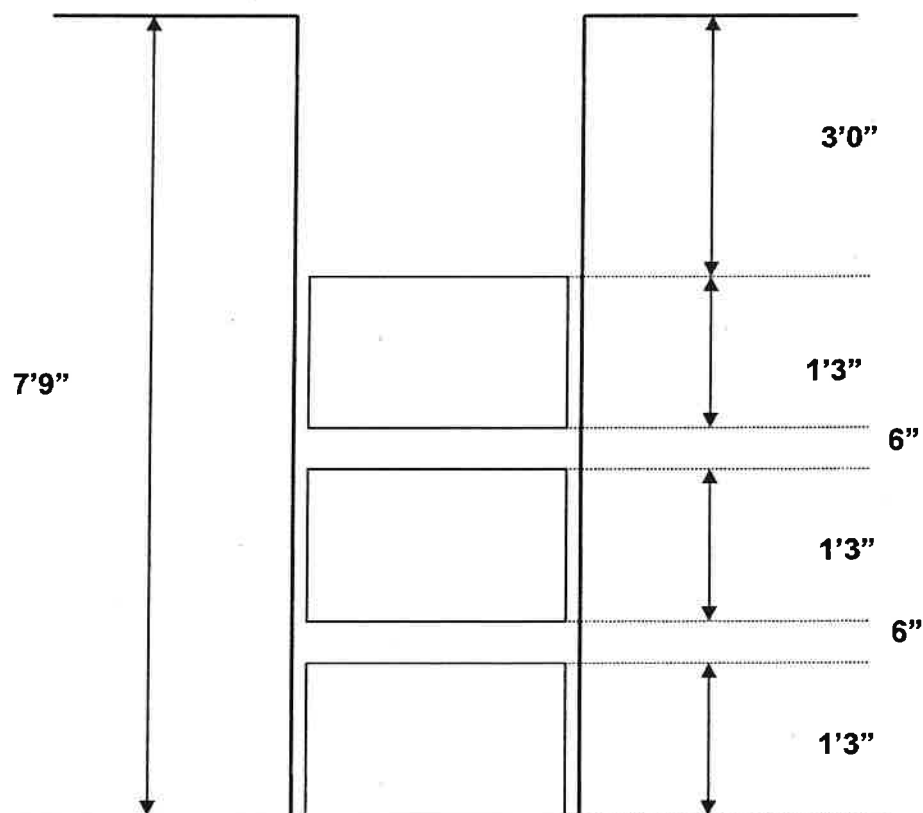
Minimum depth of graves, as defined by the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977

Schedule 2, Part 1

2. No body shall be buried in a grave in such a manner that any part of the coffin is less than 3 feet below the level of any ground adjoining the grave;

Provided that the burial authority may, where they consider the soil to be of suitable character, permit a coffin made of perishable material to be placed not less than 2 feet below the level of any ground adjoining the grave.

3. No body shall be buried in a grave unless the coffin is effectively separated from any coffin interred in the grave on a previous occasion by means of a layer of earth not less than 6 inches thick.
4. When any grave is reopened for the purpose of making another burial therein, no person shall disturb any human remains interred therein or remove any soil which is offensive.



Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management

Policy relating to Shallow Depth Graves



Issued by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management
ICCM National Office, City of London Cemetery, Aldersbrook Road, Manor Park, London, E12 5DQ

May 2004

ICCM Policy

Shallow Graves

INTRODUCTION

The ICCM has identified a growing problem in respect of numbers of shallow graves being encountered when reopening takes place. The possible causes of this problem would include:

- Failure to excavate to required depth at time of last burial
- Error in entering information on grave digging orders
- Collapse of grave immediately prior to last interment with no adequate action being taken
- Lack of or poor checking and recording procedures
- Incomplete or dilapidated records
- Un-trained staff

It has become evident that many cemetery managers have inherited a historic problem that they are required to deal with as each shallow grave is encountered. Having said this it could be construed as negligence should proper procedures not be put in place which are designed to prevent the problem increasing and maintain complete compliance with burial law and the expectations of the bereaved.

In order to empower cemetery managers to deal with the whole issue of shallow graves this policy is divided into two sections namely:

1. Preventing The Occurrence of Shallow Graves
2. Dealing With The Inherited Problem

1. Preventing The Occurrence of Shallow Graves

The Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO) contains the following requirements in respect of depths of burials and protection of previously buried remains. It should also be remembered that Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857 advises that the disturbance of buried human remains without lawful authority is a misdemeanour. This fact is reinforced by a general saving contained in Article 23 of LACO which states "Nothing in this order shall be construed as authorising the disturbance of human remains".

PART 1 of SCHEDULE 2 of LACO states, in relation to the exercise of rights:

1. No burial shall take place, no cremated human remains shall be scattered and no tombstone or other memorial shall be placed in a cemetery, and no additional inscription shall be made on a tombstone or other memorial, without the permission of the officer appointed for that purpose by the burial authority.
2. No body shall be buried in such a manner that any part of the coffin is less than three feet below the level of any ground adjoining the grave:

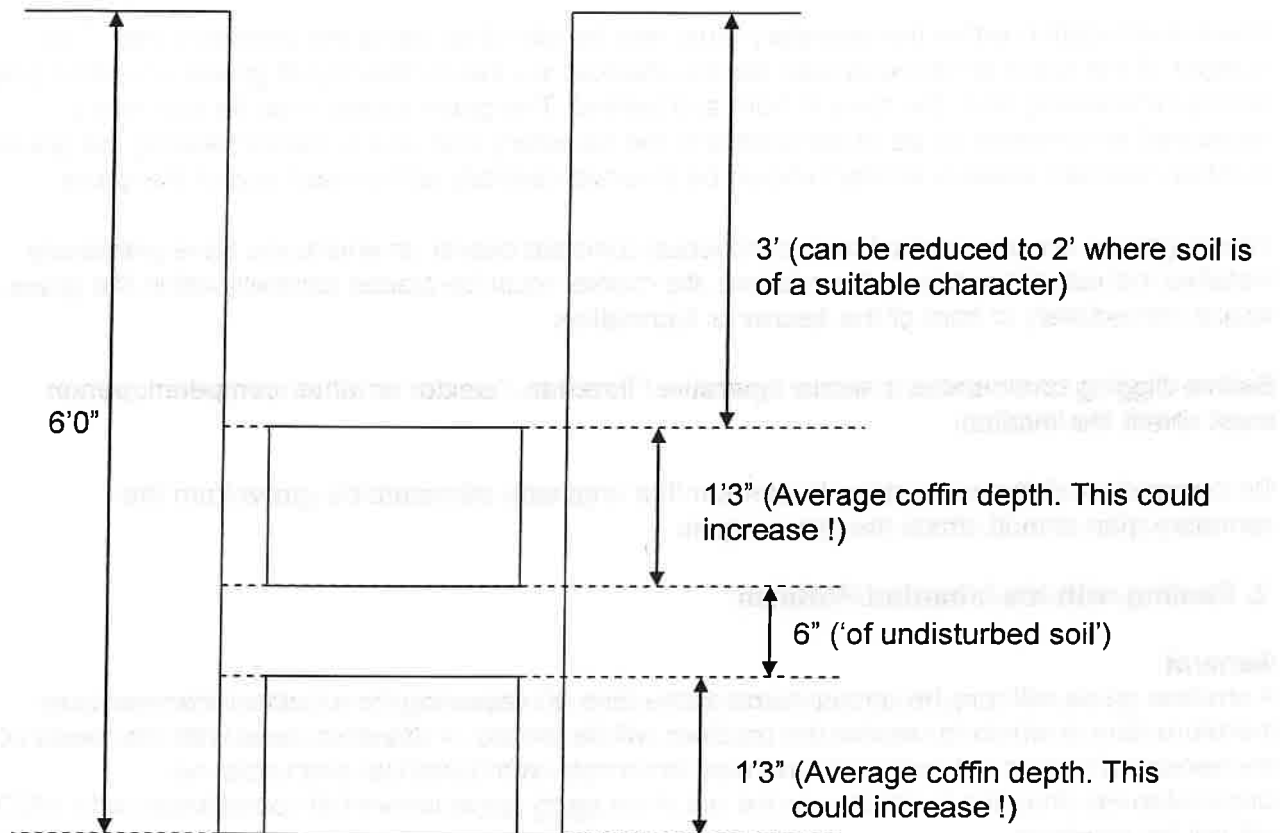
Provided that the burial authority may, where they consider the soil to be of suitable character, permit a coffin made of perishable materials to be placed not less than two feet below the level of any ground adjoining the grave.

(Note: The definition of 'suitable character' was produced some years ago in a Memorandum of the then Ministry of Health. The appropriate text of this Memorandum is contained in Appendix 1)

3. No body shall be buried in a grave unless the coffin is effectively separated from any coffin interred in a grave on a previous occasion by means of a layer of earth not less than six inches thick.

4. When any grave is reopened for the purpose of making another burial therein, no person shall disturb any human remains interred therein or remove therefrom any soil which is offensive.

The limits imposed by Schedule 2 can be explained diagrammatically as follows:



The above example illustrates the MINIMUM depth that must be achieved for two burials and it is recommended that this minimum depth for new graves is increased in order to build in a contingency against future unknown factors. It should be noted that the average coffin depth used in the above example could be greater in some instances especially where casket burial takes place.

It is advisable to request the depth of each coffin to be buried in addition to length and width dimensions.

By using the above model and adding for contingency for unknown factors it is possible to confidently excavate all new graves to a depth that will ensure that sufficient depth remains for the second interment. The same principles can be applied to new graves for more than two burials.

Checking Procedure

A checklist can be added to grave digging orders and interment notices (examples attached as Appendix 2) with each step being initialled by the persons carrying out checks as detailed in the following:

LACO requires that a plan of the cemetery is maintained and shows the locations of individual graves, the grave numbers and the rights attached to each grave.

Before a new grave is excavated its location must be checked against the cemetery plan. In order to prevent further error the record of graves and register of grants must be checked to ensure that the particular grave has not already been allocated. It could be possible that the grave was previously allocated and the cemetery plan was not updated.

The actual location within the cemetery must next be identified using the cemetery plan. The number of the grave to be excavated can be checked via the numbering of graves on either side and by referencing from the rows in front and behind. The grave space must be accurately measured and marked so as to coincide with the cemetery plan and a marker bearing the grave number (wooden stake or similar) should be inserted centrally at the head end of the grave.

Where graves are pre-marked on a continuous concrete bearer or where you have previously installed individual headstone foundations the marker must be placed centrally within the grave space immediately in front of the bearer or foundation.

Before digging commences a senior operative / foreman / sexton or other competent person must check the location.

On completion of the excavation the person that originally allocated the grave from the cemetery plan should check the grave again.

2. Dealing with the Inherited Problem

General

A shallow grave will only be encountered at the time of reopening for a further interment and therefore time in which to resolve the problem will be limited. A desire to meet with the needs of the bereaved should not outweigh the need to comply with burial law and under no circumstances should a burial be carried out in an earth grave where full compliance with LACO will not be achieved.

The registered grave owner or executor or nearest surviving relative should be informed of the situation at the earliest possible time.

In circumstances where compliance with LACO cannot be achieved for earth burial there is provision within Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Order that can assist. **NOTE: The user of this policy must note that 6(a) below should not be interpreted as recommending pouring concrete into a shallow earth grave and over the coffin that has been committed. The remainder of this policy must be read and understood in order to adopt the proper legal method.**

PART 1 of SCHEDULE 2 of LACO further states:

5. Every walled grave or vault shall be properly constructed of suitable materials.

6. Within 24 hours of any burial in a walled grave or vault, the coffin shall be-

(a) embedded in concrete, and covered with a layer of concrete not less than six inches thick; or

(b) enclosed in a separate cell or compartment of brick, slate, stone flagging or precast concrete slabs of a 1:2:4 mix, in any case not less than two inches thick, in such a manner as to **prevent, as far as may be practicable, the escape of any noxious gas** from the interior of the cell or compartment.

When considering 6(a) above it is apparent that embedding in concrete relates only to burials in existing walled graves or vaults however a walled grave or vault may be constructed within a shallow depth grave. Once this is done however, there would be little point in embedding in concrete when taking 6(b) into account.

Recommended Code of Practice

1. Excavate to maximum depth achievable leaving 6" of soil above the last coffin buried.
2. Ensure that the length and width of the excavation are sufficient to allow the construction of the walls of a cell or compartment and allow the coffin free passage at the committal.
3. Construct a solid foundation in the bottom of the grave by either the preparation of footings around the perimeter of the bottom of the grave or by inserting a pre-formed concrete foundation slab. Alternatively a layer of dry mix concrete can be spread over the bottom of the grave.
4. Construct 4.5" brick walls around the inside the grave (alternatively a proprietary pre-formed concrete sleeve can be lowered into the grave).
5. Ensure that there are no gaps in the mortar between bricks.
6. Carry out the interment with the coffin coming to rest within the brick cell or compartment formed.
7. Seal the top of the cell or compartment by bedding concrete slabs of at least 2 " in thickness onto mortar ensuring that no gaps exist.
8. Backfill remaining depth with soil.

In order to remain within the requirements of LACO the cell or compartment must be constructed in such a manner so as to **prevent, as far as may be practicable, the escape of any noxious gas** from the interior of the cell or compartment.

APPENDIX 1 Extract from a Memorandum of the Ministry of Health Memorandum on the Sanitary Requirements of Burial Grounds

The soil of a burial ground should be preferably of an open porous nature, with numerous close interstices, through which air and moisture may pass in a finely divided state freely in every direction. In such a soil decay proceeds rapidly, and the products of decomposition are absorbed or oxidised. The soil should be easily worked, yet not so loose as to render the work of excavation dangerous through the liability to falls of earth. It should be free from water or hard rock to a depth of not less than 4 feet 3 inches if only one interment is to be made in each grave. This would allow 1 foot 3 inches for depth of coffin and 3 feet for cover of earth above the coffin. If more than one interment in a grave is contemplated the soil should be free from water or hard rock to a proportionately greater depth, allowance being made for a layer of earth not less than 6 inches in thickness between any two coffins. If the soil is not naturally free from water, it may be found necessary to drain the site to the required depth, and hence the site should be sufficiently elevated above the drainage level of the locality, either naturally, or, by filling it up to the required level with suitable earth.

A dense clay is laborious to work and difficult to drain; by excluding moisture and air it retards decay, and it retains, in a concentrated state, the products of decomposition, sometimes to be discharged into graves in the vicinity, or sometimes to escape through cracks in the ground to the surface. A loose stony soil, on the other hand, may allow the passage of effluvia, and of imperfectly purified drainage water.

(The above memorandum obviously received attention when the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order (LACO) was being drafted as there are obvious similarities in the above advice and Part 1 of Schedule 2. LACO does indicate 2 feet of soil of a suitable character above the last coffin).

APPENDIX 2

XYZ CEMETERY

Order No.....

Grave Digging Order

Date of Burial			
Time			
*NEW / REPOEN *			
Grave Section & Number			
Depth to be Excavated			
Coffin / Casket Dimensions	Length	Width	Depth

***Delete those inappropriate**

If Reopen, Type of Memorial Present
To be removed by *CEMETERY STAFF / MEMORIAL MASON *
Name on Memorial

Checklist

ITEM	INITIALS
Location checked against cemetery Plan	
Location double checked by Supervisor / Foreman	
Pre interment check – location and depth	
Depth recorded at pre interment check	

Interment Notice Checklist

The following checklist can be added to the interment notice and utilised for both manual and computerised recording systems:

Item	Initials
Plan marked	
Register of Grants / Purchased Graves checked	
Transfer of ownership completed (if required)	
Grave digging order issued	
Register of Burials completed	
Register / Record of Graves Completed (depth entered)	
Register of Grants / Purchased Graves Completed (new graves only)	
Deed prepared (new graves only)	

Alan Price

Gravedigging

Method statement

25/05/16

- 1) Arrive on site, locate grave.
- 2) Carry out risk assessment
- 3) Take all necessary equipment to complete job close to grave
- 4) Cordon off area from public
- 5) Place groundsheets adjacent to grave
- 6) Mark out grave to accommodate grave size
- 7) Dig grave and install shoring (**provided by previous grave-digger**) as depth increases
- 8) Upon completion, cover grave with walk boards and 8'x4' plywood sheet
- 9) Remove all tools and equipment from area
- 10) Close off cordon
- 11) Arrive 30 minutes before committal, remove cordon and ply sheet, open planks, dress grave with grass matting, lay out putlogs and lowering webs.
- 12) Following interment and mourners have left, remove grass matting.
- 13) Cordon off area
- 14) Backfill grave removing shoring as soil height raises
- 15) Remove surplus soil to skip
- 16) Remove all equipment from site
- 17) Arrange floral tributes and install any grave marker

Grave-digging risk assessment

Location: Kingshill cemetery Dursley

Date: 06/06/2016

Carried out by: Alan price

Hazard	Risk Level 1-4	Likelihood 1-4	What needs to be done about the hazard?	What action needs to be taken?	Action taken by whom?	Result
Nearby Sunken graves May cause grave-digger to trip	2	1	Top up grave	Use surplus soil from grave being dug to top up sunken grave	Grave-digger	Risk reduced
Injury to grave-digger due to carrying equipment	2	2	Use cart to transport equipment to grave	With councils permission Store cart in compound for future use	Grave-digger	Risk reduced
Injury to public from collision with working machinery	4	1	Cordon off work area	erect barriers and warning signs	Grave-digger	Risk reduced
Injury to public from falling into unattended grave	4	1	Cover grave when unattended	Use planks & 8x4 plywood sheet to cover grave, also as above	Grave-digger	Risk reduced
Injury to grave-digger from grave collapsing	4	1	Stop grave walls collapsing	Use grave shoring equipment	Grave-digger	Risk reduced
Undertakers/mourners tripping around grave area	4	1	Draw attention to hazard	Ensure grass matting is laid flat and erect warning sign	Grave-digger	Risk reduced
Headstone falling over/into grave being dug onto grave-digger	4	1	Stop headstone falling	Remove headstone from area	Stone mason	Risk eliminated

Injury to gravedigger due to manual labour	2	2	Reduce amount of manual labour	Use excavator when and wherever possible	Grave-digger	Risk reduced
Foul water in grave Potential to consume or drown	1	1	Remove water from grave	Pump water out Wear waterproof clothing/gloves boots, mask etc	Grave-digger	Risk reduced
Injury to grave-digger from excavator	1	1	Reduce chance of coming into contact with excavator and excavator malfunction	Back excavator away from grave, park up and switch off before entering grave. Maintain correctly and check excavator for faults daily. Ensure correct operation of excavator.	Grave-digger	Risk reduced
Injury from falling debris/equipment when in the grave	2	2	Reduce chance of injury from anything falling into grave	When in grave wear hard hat & steel toe capped boots. Store hand tools away from grave edge. No lone working	Grave-digger	Risk reduced
Worsening an Injury	2	2	Take action to reduce chance of injury becoming worse	Carry first aid kit, know who first aid person is. Keep up to date with tetanus inoculation		

Memorial Bench: Kingshill Cemetery

TESCO

15:55

100%

AA

magnusfurniture.co.uk

