

# CEMETERY INFORMATION & REGULATIONS

North Watford Cemetery  
North Western Avenue  
Watford  
Hertfordshire  
WD25 0AW

Vicarage Road Cemetery  
Vicarage Road  
Watford  
Hertfordshire  
WD18 0EJ



**WATFORD**  
BOROUGH  
COUNCIL

“The Council” means Watford Borough Council acting as the Burial Authority for the said Council in exercise of the powers and duties conferred upon them by the Local Government Act 1972, Article 3 of the Local Authorities’ Cemeteries Order 1977, and of all other powers and duties regarding the general management, regulation and control of the cemeteries provided by them.

The Cemeteries are operated and managed under current legislation covering Burial and Cremation in England and Wales. These Guidelines are a necessary requirement for the management of Watford Borough Council’s cemeteries. Every effort has been made to avoid restricting the rights and choices of the individual. Therefore, these Guidelines have been prepared with a balance between individual rights and the need to regulate for safe and tidy grounds.

Updated April 2016

A full set of the regulations is available on the Watford Borough Council website

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## General Regulations

1. The opening and closing times of the cemeteries are displayed at the entrances to each site and are as follows:

January, February November & December		March & October		April, May & September		June, July & August	
Monday to Friday	Weekends and Bank Holidays	Monday to Friday	Weekends and Bank Holidays	Monday to Friday	Weekends and Bank Holidays	Monday to Friday	Weekends and Bank Holidays
9am - 4pm	9am - 4pm	9am - 6pm	9am - 6pm	9am - 7pm	9am - 7pm	9am - 8pm	9am - 8pm

2. No person shall trade any goods or services within any of the cemeteries except with the permission of the Cemetery Manager.
3. Dogs are permitted in any cemetery but must be on a lead at all times. Assistance dogs are permitted. It is the owner's responsibility to clear up dog fouling. Families may request that pets can attend funeral services this decision will be made by the Cemetery Manager after a request is received.
4. The speed limit of the sites is a maximum of 5 miles per hour. Vehicles must not leave any roadway within the cemeteries except with the permission of the Cemetery Manager.
5. If any damage is caused to cemetery land, walls or premises by any cause whatsoever, the person or persons committing such damage will be held responsible by the Council.
6. No photography or filming shall be allowed within the cemetery except with the consent of the Cemetery Manager. Families or a representative of a family however may photograph an individual memorial. The Authority reserves the right to charge for any commercial filming that may take place within the site.
7. Employees of the Council shall not be allowed to execute any private work whatsoever within Council managed cemeteries.

8. No music, live or recorded, shall be played within the cemeteries by any person except with the permission of the Cemetery Manager.
9. Dead flowers, spent wreaths or other articles of waste or litter must be placed in the appropriate receptacles provided throughout the cemeteries. Any floral items found 'past their best' within any areas of the cemeteries may be removed without notice by bereavement services staff.
10. All persons admitted to the cemetery will be subject to the directions of the Cemetery Manager and any person infringing the Bylaws and Regulations may be removed from the cemetery.
11. All persons entering the cemetery enter at their own risk, and the Council will not accept any liability for injuries or damage sustained by reason of loose or defective memorial stones or otherwise howsoever. The Council accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to any person or vehicle entering any site or building within the cemetery.
12. Visitors must conduct themselves in a quiet and orderly manner and must keep to the roads and pathways, except when visiting graves.
13. The Council reserve the right from time to time to make any alterations to the Regulations. All graves and vaults will be sold subject to these Regulations and any others which may be made by the Council, and also subject to the present or future Regulations issued or to be issued with regard to the cemetery, by Secretaries of State or other competent authority.

## **Burials**

### **Bookings**

14. All initial bookings for a burial in any of the Council owned or operated Cemeteries must first be made to the Cemetery Office, North Watford Cemetery, North Western Avenue, Watford, Hertfordshire WD25 OAW by telephone or in person, this includes the burial of cremated remains.

All bookings must be received by 4:00 pm three working days prior to the burial date (except for burials relating to the 'out of hours/short notice' burial procedure).

16. For all burials a notice of an interment must be delivered to the office of the Cemetery Manager at the Cemetery Office, North Watford Cemetery, North Western Avenue, Watford, Hertfordshire WD25 0AW on any day other than a Saturday or Sunday (except for burials relating to the 'out of hours' burial procedure) between the hours of 9am and 4pm; as follows:

In the case of an interment in any grave (except a first interment in a walled grave) by 9.30am two working days prior to the interment:

In the case of the construction of a walled grave, chamber or vault, by 9.30am three working days prior to the interment.

17. These periods are exclusive of a Saturday, Sunday, Good Friday, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Years Day, Bank Holidays, Council Statutory Holidays or any other days appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.

18. All fees and charges in respect of an interment will be invoiced at the time of registration of the notice of the interment. The invoice will be raised against the person submitting the application, in usual circumstances the Funeral Director acting on behalf of the bereaved. Payment of fees may also be made direct to the Cemetery Office at North Watford Cemetery by the applicant for the interment.

19. An interment at shorter notice than that provided for by regulation 16 may be arranged at the discretion of the Cemetery Manager and where:

- a. the additional fee or charge specified in the Table of Fees or
- b. in a case of emergency certified by a medical practitioner or
- c. for those requiring burial through cultural need subject to the agreed procedure.

20. A Notice of interment shall be given only on the form provided by the Council and such form shall be duly completed in all respects and be signed, by the person applying for the interment.

21. The person responsible for the interment shall make all the necessary arrangements with the Minister or other person intended to officiate at the interment, including the payment of the Minister's fee.

22. The burial chapel at both North Watford Cemetery and Vicarage Road Cemetery may be booked, for which a fee is payable, to hold a burial service prior to an interment at any of the Authorities cemeteries.
23. Any request made or instruction given by telephone will be received at the sole risk of the person making such request or giving such instructions, and the Council shall not be responsible for any loss, damage, delay or expense which may result from such requests or instructions made or sent by telephone unless such requests or instructions are immediately confirmed in writing to the Cemetery Manager.
24. When a notice of interment has been given, no alteration shall be permitted without the consent of the Cemetery Manager and only if changes are confirmed in writing to the Cemetery office at North Watford Cemetery.

### **Grave Selection & Purchase**

25. A purchaser of an exclusive right of burial may select the grave space in an agreed area of any of the cemeteries (except those cemeteries closed for new burials) owned and operated by the Council prior to the final purchase being made. This must be arranged through the Cemetery Office at North Watford Cemetery, North Western Avenue, Watford, WD25 OAW. Please note that whilst this regulation permits a personal selection of a grave space it does not permit pre purchase of a grave space for future usage.
- 25a. No grave may be pre-purchased by any person or group for future use in any of the Borough Cemeteries.
26. The Exclusive Right of Burial is granted for a period of no longer than 50 years after which the rights may then be renewed. The fee for the Right of Burial is set out in the Annual Fees and Charges as approved by the Council.
27. The Right of Burial does not constitute any ownership of land; it is purely the right to have a burial in a selected grave. The rights are granted on the understanding that the owner of those rights complies with the regulations laid out and amended from time to time by the Authority.

28. The purchase of the exclusive right of burial in any grave includes the right to erect and maintain a memorial on that grave space subject to the regulations concerning memorials.
29. On the purchase of the exclusive Right of Burial in a grave space a Deed of Grant shall be issued to the person by whom or on whose behalf the said exclusive Right of Burial is purchased and any such person shall be registered by the Council as the owner of the Right of Burial in that numbered grave space.
30. Plans showing grave spaces shall be kept at the cemeteries and shall be available for inspection, free of charge during normal hours of operation.
31. A Register of Burials shall be kept in the Cemetery Office, where searches may be made during office hours on payment of the prescribed fee or charge. An extract or certificate will be furnished on request by the Cemetery Manager and, relating to any grave space or interment upon payment of the prescribed fee or charge.
32. The charge for an interment in a grave where the exclusive right of burial has not been purchased does not include any right or privilege relating to the grave space.
33. In the case of historical pre-purchased graves the holder of the exclusive right of burial may surrender the rights at any time for any grave space where the rights have not been exercised (i.e. where no burial has taken place and/or no memorial has been placed on the grave). In all cases the fee repayable will be that of the original fee paid to purchase the exclusive right of burial.

## **Burial Procedure**

34. Prior to burial a written consent by way of an interment form signed by the owner or his or her legal representative must be left with the Council at the cemetery office and the original Deed of Grant must be produced.
35. In cases where the former owner is the person intended to be interred, the Council if requested by the person giving notice of the interment have the power to order such grave space to be re-opened for the interment therein of

- such deceased owner without obtaining the consent of his or her executor or other representative. A Deed of Indemnity must be signed on the interment form.
36. The time arranged for a funeral is that at which the cortege is required to be at the main entrance gates of the cemetery.
37. All bodies brought to the cemeteries for burial shall be contained in a suitable coffin or shroud and if in a shroud must be brought to the graveside in a coffin. All cremated remains must also be held in a suitable container. The coffin or suitable container must be clearly marked for identification purposes and include the full name and age of the deceased. .
38. All funeral corteges while at the cemetery shall be under the control of the Cemetery Manager, and all hearses and accompanying vehicles must be taken to the places directed by them.
39. Interments shall be permitted as follows:  
Monday – Friday 9.30am to 3.30pm
40. When interments are permitted outside of the above days and times they will be subject to the agreed out of hours burial procedure and will be arranged by separate agreement on the required day, additional fees for out of hours burials will also be charged. Subject to the approval of the Cemetery Manager additional service times may be introduced in exceptional circumstances.
41. The Council reserve the right which shall be exercised on their behalf by the Cemetery Manager of excluding from the cemeteries on the occasion of any interment all or any persons not being mourners or directly connected with such interment or any other interment taking place at or about the same time.
42. In any case in which an interment is one at which a large number of persons may be expected to assemble, the fact shall be notified to the Cemetery Manager when notice of interment is given.
43. Hearses and any other vehicles accompanying funerals shall enter and leave all cemeteries by the gateways nominated by the Cemetery Manager or the duly



authorised person acting on his behalf. All funeral traffic is expected to observe the speed limit within the cemeteries of 5 miles per hour.

44. The Certificate for Burial or Coroner's Order for Burial must be handed to the Cemetery Manager or the person appointed by him in advance of the burial being undertaken.

When the funeral enters the cemetery no interment will be allowed except on the production of the Certificate at that point if not already received or upon the signing of a written declaration in accordance with section 1(1) of the Births and Deaths Registration Act, 1926.

45. All funerals will be met by a member of staff from the Cemeteries service. No burial will be allowed to proceed unless accompanied by a member of staff or Gardens of Peace nominated representative for out of hours interments. A check of the name plate will be made prior to any interment being permitted.
46. The person arranging the funeral or his/her representative shall ensure that they have sufficient persons to transfer the coffin from the vehicle to the grave side and lower the coffin into the grave. In all cases this should be a minimum of 4 persons for an adult burial.

### **Grave Preparation and Backfilling**

47. All excavation works and backfilling (see also regulation 53) will only be undertaken by staff or contractors appointed by Watford Borough Council who are trained to a recognised and accredited standard.
48. Grave spaces in the cemetery shall be in accordance with the following measurements:

Full Adult grave space - Maximum of 7ft long by 3ft wide  
Graves for 1 or 2 burials will be excavated at appropriate depth

49. The position of the head and the position of the foot of a grave space in all the Council's Cemeteries shall be as designated by the Council.

50. Graves will be made sufficiently wide and long to admit coffins up to the size specified on the notice of interment.
51. Graves will be suitably matted and dressed prior to any burial taking place unless otherwise requested by the applicant or representative acting on their behalf.
52. Where safe and possible to do so at the discretion of the Cemetery Manager the Authority will allow family backfilling to take place under supervision of Cemetery staff or their representatives. In the event of a family wishing to backfill the grave after the service, details must be included on the original notice of interment.

### **Brick Graves, Chambers & Vaults**

53. In the case of the necessity for a brick grave, chamber or vault the grave will be prepared as normal by staff or contracted representatives.
54. The bricking of any vault, chamber or grave will be arranged by the family or their representative. The cost of providing a vault, chamber or brick grave will be born by the person requesting the works or his or her representative.

### **Transfer of Exclusive Right of Burial**

55. The Right of Burial to any grave space may be transferred if required. In cases where the current grant holder is still alive this may be done by completion of a Deed of Assignment available from the Cemetery Administration Office at North Watford Cemetery. This form is completed by the existing owner of the rights and the person taking ownership and submitted to the cemetery office. An updated grave deed will then be issued to the new holder of the rights provided the original grave deed is submitted. A fee is chargeable for this service.
56. In cases where the grave owner is deceased the rights to the grave have effectively been terminated. Further burials in a grave of this type may be permissible but only by the completion of a Statutory Declaration registering their claim to be successor to the rights of the grave. A statutory declaration must be witnessed by a Solicitor or a Commissioner for Oaths. Only on

production of a will or letters of administration can the grave be legally transferred in these cases.

### **Burial of Stillborn Children and Foetal Remains**

57. No interment of a stillborn child will be permitted unless the Registrar's Certificate or Coroner's Order is deposited with the Cemetery Manager before burial.
58. The body of any stillborn child brought to the cemetery for burial must be enclosed in a suitable receptacle.
59. Burial of stillborn and foetal remains is permitted in any privately owned grave space or in the dedicated Baby and Still Born burial sections or other unpurchased grave space.

### **Infectious Diseases**

60. The body of a person who has died of a dangerous infectious disease shall not be allowed within any chapel within the cemeteries unless a certificate from the Area Health Officer for the District in which the death occurred is presented to the Cemetery Manager or the duly authorised person acting in his stead at the time of the interment, stating that the coffin containing the body has been thoroughly sprayed with disinfectant after having been screwed down and that adequate precautions have been taken to his satisfaction against the spread of the disease. In the event of offensive smells issuing from any body brought for interment it shall be in the power of the Cemetery Manager and or other person appointed by him to order that no such body be taken inside any chapel within the cemeteries.
61. For the purpose of this regulation the term "dangerous infectious disease" includes plague, cholera, smallpox, typhus fever, enteric fever (including typhoid and paratyphoid fevers), scarlet fever and diphtheria, and such other infectious diseases as the Area Health Officer may determine from time to time to require such precautions.

## **Grave Aftercare**

62. The exclusive right of burial issued for any grave does not constitute ownership in any way of the land. The exclusive right of burial entitles the holder to permit burials in that numbered grave only.
63. The Authority will manage the aftercare and maintenance of the cemeteries as they see fit and in accordance with the service standards set out by the Cemetery service, this includes levelling, or seeding the area as required.

## **Grave Types**

64. There are a number of options of grave types available for full burial. These are:
- Lawn Grave
  - Traditional Grave
  - Cremated Remains Graves

## **Lawn Graves**

65. Lawn Graves are currently available at North Watford Cemetery.
66. Under the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 a burial authority may lay out and maintain a cemetery in any way it deems proper and has a legal duty to ensure the cemetery is kept in good order and repair and is safe for both visitors and workers.
67. Other than a headstone placed at the head of the grave no memorialisation including kerbs, fences, edgings, chippings, plantings or borders of any description is permitted on lawn graves.
68. Should any unauthorised items be placed on or around any lawn grave the grave will be photographed, the articles will be removed and placed into storage by staff of Watford Borough Council or its Contractors for a period of up to 3 months after which they will be disposed of. No notice will be given to the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial.
69. Any memorial placed on a lawn grave is subject to the Regulations Concerning Memorials within this document.

70. Under Article 14 of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 the Authority is empowered to remove any unauthorised memorial and destroy it at the cost of the person placing the memorial or after a period of two years the personal representative of the individual. Any costs incurred in the removal of unauthorised memorials will be recovered as a contract debt.

### **Traditional Graves**

71. Traditional Graves are currently available at North Watford Cemetery

72. Traditional Graves are laid out to allow for full kerbs, edgings and landings to be placed including planting within the kerbs if required. Kerbs and edgings will be no bigger than 7' x 3'. The full grave space within the kerbs or edgings may be planted or chippings may be placed within the edgings on top of a landing slab.

73. It is the responsibility of the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial to properly maintain any planted area of a Traditional Grave.

74. Any memorial placed on a traditional grave is subject to the Regulations Concerning Memorials within this document.

75. Should any Traditional Grave become untidy or neglected in the view of the staff of Watford Cemetery Service, the area will be photographed and then removed of any planting and a layer of bark, mulch or similar ground cover placed within the kerbs or edgings, without notice to the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

### **Cremated Remains Graves**

76. Graves for the provision of cremated remains are provided at North Watford Cemetery. There are two gardens. The Garden of Rest allows up to 4 interments of cremated remains, the plot size is 4ft long x 2ft wide. The Garden of Remembrance allows up to 2 interments of cremated remains, the plot size is 2ft wide by 2ft long. The Garden of Rest allows a headstone memorial maximum height of 2' 6" with kerbs if required to the maximum of 4'. The Garden of Remembrance allows a sloping tablet maximum size 17" wide by 23" long.

77. Cremated Remains may also be interred in any other full size grave where the exclusive rights of burial have been granted and the grave owner gives the necessary permission to inter.
78. Cremated remains must be held in a container suitable for burial. The container must have the full name of the deceased clearly visible.
79. No burial of cremated remains will be permitted unless a copy of certificate of disposal is delivered to the Cemetery Office, North Watford Cemetery, North Western Avenue, Watford Hertfordshire together with the necessary completed Notice of Interment and the prescribed fee is paid.
80. It is an offence for any person to scatter or inter cremated remains within any part of the cemeteries without the proper permission of the Cemetery Manager. All requests must be made in writing to the Cemetery office at North Watford Cemetery.
81. The applicant for the cremation may attend the burial of cremated remains at a pre booked time. If required families may arrange for a short service to be held either through a family member, a minister or a member of staff in the Cemetery Service. Details must be submitted in writing to the administration office, North Watford Cemetery, North Western Avenue, Watford by 9.30 am at least two working days prior to the burial time.

### **Regulations Concerning Graves in Situ prior to the revised (these) Regulations**

82. The regulations set out in some cases contradict what has previously been permitted within the Boroughs Cemeteries. In order to provide a caring and consistent service the following regulations apply to any lawn graves.
83. Any grave that is in a designated Lawn section will be regularly inspected by staff of the cemetery service.
84. Should any grave situated within a designated lawn section become untidy or neglected in the view of the staff of the cemetery service or contain any unauthorised memorials such as fences, kerbs or edgings on or around the lawn

grave which fall into a state of disrepair the area, will be photographed and the articles removed and the grave area turfed or seeded. No notice will be given to the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

85. In respect of regulation 84 above, once any items are removed and any works carried out on the grave the future management of the grave space will fall under the revised lawn regulations set out from 1 April 2016 and no further installation of fences, edgings, kerbs or full grave planting will be permitted.
86. The regulations above also extend to cremated remains and traditional graves where any unauthorised memorialisation becomes neglected.

## **Memorial Regulations Administration**

87. No Memorial will be permitted to be installed in any of the Cemeteries owned and operated by Watford Borough Council unless an application is made for a permit to be granted. That application must ensure all of the relevant regulations contained within this document have been adhered to including those relating to overall size, materials and fixing methods.
88. The application for a permit to carry out memorial works may be made by any person; however the application must be signed by the registered owner of the Exclusive Rights of Burial.
89. The application form must be completed fully and include a detailed plan of the proposed memorial containing all relevant dimensions.
90. The application must clearly state the Section and Grave Number and must be signed by the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial to that grave.
91. All permit applications are to be submitted to The Cemetery Office, North Watford Cemetery, North Western Avenue, Watford, Hertfordshire WD25 OAW during normal working hours. Once checked a permit to carry out works will be granted. This permit must be kept in the possession of the person carrying out the works at all times that they are working within the cemetery. Once works are complete the permit must be handed back to the Cemetery office at

North Watford Cemetery to enable a site check to be carried out by staff of the Cemetery service.

## **Fixing**

92. No works are permitted to be carried out on any grave space except by a Monumental Mason who is accredited to the British Registration of Approved Monumental Masons Scheme (BRAMM) or any works completed by staff of Bereavement Services including memorial safety inspections. Basic cleaning/ washing down and non specialist cleaning of a memorial may be undertaken by any person.
93. All memorials are to be fixed in line with the NAMM code of safe working practice. This states the minimum requirements for the fixing of memorials. On occasion it may be appropriate to include additional foundations or bearer slabs these cannot exceed 4' in width x 18" deep.
94. The upkeep and maintenance of any memorial on any grave space remains the responsibility of the grave owner or person who arranged for the memorial works or his or her heir.
95. All memorials MUST be fixed to a NAMM Approved standard including memorials being re-fixed after a burial has taken place and those found to be unsafe after memorial testing has taken place. All costs for this work must be met by the grave owner/person authorising the works.

## **Operational Times for Memorial Works**

96. The erection of, cutting of inscriptions on, or cleaning of, memorials shall be carried out between the hours of 9.00am and 4.00pm Monday to Friday.

## **Stability Guarantee Period**

97. All memorials installed in any of the Authorities cemeteries must be subject to a 'Guarantee of Conformity' granted by the mason who installed the memorial from the date of installation. This guarantee means that the memorial is fixed to the best standard set by BRAMM/NAMM of the day and should last for a



minimum of 30 years. If at any point during this period the memorial becomes loose or unstable the mason shall refix the memorial to the original standard at no cost to the grave owner or the Council.

## **Memorial Safety Testing**

98. All memorials erected within any of the Councils cemeteries will be subject to periodic testing which is currently every 5 years as recommended by the Health and Safety Executive. Any memorials failing a safety test will be made safe by Watford Cemetery staff or an approved contractor. This may include being sunk into the ground vertically, laid flat, or any other method deemed suitable by the Cemetery Manager. The grave owner or his/her representatives are responsible for authorising suitable repairs to be undertaken by an approved BRAMM accredited mason.

## **Memorial Types**

99. The following are types of memorials permitted on grave spaces within Watford's Cemeteries subject to any other regulations concerning the individual grave types

Headstone or Cross - Permissible on any grave space excluding those where restrictions are to memorial tablets or vases only.

Kerbs, landings, edgings & stone chippings - Permissible on traditional graves only where provision for edgings has been made.

Vase - Permissible on any grave space. On lawn type graves vases must be placed at the head of the grave only.

Cremated Remains Headstone - Permissible on any cremated remains grave space except those where flat tablets or vases are only permitted

Baby Memorials - Permissible on any babies grave space

Wooden Grave Marker - Permissible on any grave space

Wooden Cross - Permissible on any grave space

Temporary Grave Marker

## **Materials**

100. Any type of natural material is permissible in Watford's Cemeteries provided that it can be safely fixed to an approved NAMM standard and is fixed by a registered BRAMM fixer.
101. The only exception to this is that of wooden crosses which must be fitted securely into the ground but not necessarily to a national approved method.

## **Headstone or Cross**

102. Any Headstone or Cross must not exceed 5' in height or 3' in width including the base and shall be a minimum of 3" in depth to a maximum of 12" in the majority of its construction.
103. Memorials covering multiple grave spaces may be to a maximum width of 7' in width per double grave. Wider memorials may be considered in consultation with the Cemetery Manager and only once they are satisfied of the safe construction of such a large memorial. The Memorial however must be placed centrally over the total number of graves it covers.
104. All headstones or crosses shall be fixed in accordance with one of the recognised and approved fixing methods listed in these regulations

## **Kerbs, landings, edgings & stone chippings**

105. Kerbstones shall be permitted only on sections identified as 'traditional graves'.
106. Kerbstones must be a minimum of 3" to a maximum of 12" in height and a minimum of 3" to a maximum of 6" in thickness. Kerbstones shall be of a maximum size of 7' x 3' wide.
107. Kerbstones shall be fixed in accordance with one of the recognised and

approved fixing methods listed in these regulations.

108. Corner stones shall be no more than 1' 2" in height.

109. Edging stones are to be a uniform length of a maximum of 7' x 3' wide and made in complete lengths and of a depth of no more than 5" and a thickness of no more than 3". The upper surface of the edging must not be greater than 1" in thickness and must be set level with the adjoining ground.

110. No chippings will be permitted on any grave that is not enclosed with kerbs or edgings as detailed above.

111. Landing or cover stones are to be constructed of no more than 3 pieces measuring a total of 7' in length x 3' in width.

### **Vase**

112. A memorial vase must measure no more than 1'6" in length x 12" wide. Its maximum height should be no more than 12".

113. Memorial vases are to be firmly fixed upon the grave space. On lawn sections the vase must be placed at the head of the grave.

