



HINCHINBROOK
SHIRE COUNCIL

HINCHINBROOK SHIRE COUNCIL CEMETERIES
STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

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1 OBJECTIVE

1. To honour the Shire of Hinchinbrook's history and those who have made Hinchinbrook the diverse and liveable town it is today.
2. To set appropriate standards for the services provided at Hinchinbrook Shire Council's (Council) operated cemeteries, which enable the effective delivery of services to meet community needs.
3. To provide a consistent approach to the operation of cemeteries owned, managed and maintained by council.
4. To provide a place for the living to visit their loved ones.

2 DEFINITIONS

1. Council – this refers to the Hinchinbrook Shire Council and specifically to employees within the Section of Environmental Services or Infrastructure Services Delivery as specified, and where appropriate, within this document.
2. Workers – this includes Council employees, contractors, volunteers, and all others who perform work on behalf of council.
3. Inter / Interment – the act or ritual of interring or burying.
4. Right of Burial – the right to inter into a burial plot.
5. Cemetery Reservation Certificate – a legal document that permits the right to be buried in a particular grave and the right to authorise the burial of others in the grave/plot (up to the number permitted in that grave as determined by Council).
6. Monuments / Memorial – Monuments are a practical way of perpetuating memories and providing a focal point on a plot for family, friends and others. The size of the monument allowed on a plot depends on the area of the cemetery it is to be placed.

3 GENERAL

1. The principles within this document apply to all Cemeteries that are under Council's control. These principles apply to all individuals, organisations, businesses and workers who enter a cemetery under Council's control.
2. Council managed cemeteries include; Old Ingham Cemetery, New Ingham Cemetery and Halifax Cemetery.
3. Old Ingham Cemetery is a historic cemetery and no new burial plots are available to reserve. Existing Cemetery Reservation holders may make an application for interment.
4. New Ingham and Halifax Cemeteries are fully operational and available for new burials and reserves.
5. Cemetery fees for services provided are set out within Council's Fees and Charges, which are reviewed annually.
6. Council applies cemetery fees and charges at an appropriate level to enable the provision of cemetery services at a fair price to the community. Cemetery fees and charges are set to cover the immediate costs of operating the cemetery and to contribute to the ongoing maintenance of the cemetery. However Council does not accept the responsibility of maintaining graves, with the only exception being the Council owned Mausoleum Wall at the New Ingham Cemetery.
7. Council's approved cemeteries form/s must be completed for every funeral or memorial service and submitted to Council.

4 STANDARD CONDITIONS

1. All burials shall take place between 9:00am and 3:00pm weekdays. After hours can be negotiated with Council, and would incur fees for services as set out within Council's Fees and Charges.
2. All enquiries should be directed to Hinchinbrook Shire Council's Office on (07) 4776 4600.

3. Two working days' notice must be given to allow sufficient time for administrative and burial preparation to be completed. In the circumstance where a burial is required on shorter notice, Council will make every effort to support this.
4. Council can accommodate a maximum of two coffin interments per day.
5. Council provides the option of a traditional burial at a single burial depth of 1.5 meters to allow the family to backfill the grave in line with their tradition.
6. Graves are excavated at a depth of 1.5meters.
7. Preparation of plots – Workers will prepare grave sites, the preparation includes: Digging, Laying shoring boards and bars as required, setting lowering devices.
8. On request by a Funeral Director, workers will set up chairs and marquees, for graveside services (setup fees apply as per Hinchinbrook Shire Council's fees and charges).
9. Council understands funeral times are difficult to predict, however a maximum of 1 hour early or late arrival is permitted from the scheduled time indicated on the Application for Interment Form, with advanced notice to be given to Council's Environmental Services Office.
10. If Funeral Directors supply lowering devices, Council does not accept any responsibility for any maintenance or repairs to such devices. Council will take every care with the Funeral Director's equipment and will notify if they need maintenance or replacing.
11. Workers will be present to locate the burial site and make Funeral Directors aware of any safety concerns. This must occur at least 15 minutes in advance of the funeral commencing. Once the safety inspection is complete, the site becomes the responsibility of the Funeral Director as their "Place of Work" for the duration of the funeral.
12. The Funeral Director must remain on site and present during the funeral at all times.
13. Funeral Directors must supervise and assist families throughout the duration of a traditional funeral service.
14. The responsibility of the site concludes when the last of the family members and the Funeral Director's employees leave the site and Cemetery staff have been informed.
15. Workers must backfill a plot as soon as possible to ensure the safety of those on site after the departure of the family and the removal of the Funeral Director's equipment.
16. Council will exercise all due care when undertaking excavation for an interment when an existing monument or memorial structure exists on or around a plot.
17. In the event of a reopening, the family / funeral home must engage a Monumental Stone Mason to remove the existing monumental structure at least 48 hours prior to the funeral to allow workers to prepare the plot.
18. Any structures moved must be either placed in a suitable location as agreed with workers, if it is able to be reinstated on the grave following the funeral. If the structure is unable to be reinstated, the Monumental Mason must remove all waste material from the cemetery.
19. Participation by Council staff on duty in the actual burial process is prohibited; this includes Council staff carrying the casket from the funeral vehicle, unless previously authorised by Council
20. All activities undertaken within the Cemetery grounds shall comply with relevant Work Health and Safety requirements and standards, i.e. *Work Health and Safety Act 2011, Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011, AS4201-1994 Headstones and Cemetery Monuments, AS4425-1996 Above Ground Burial Structures.*

5 RESERVING A PLOT

1. The person/s reserving a new plot (Reservation holder) will receive a Cemetery Reservation Certificate and acquires the entitlement to be buried in that plot and the right to authorise the burial of others into the plot.
2. A reserved plot may be surrendered to council. If the surrender occurs within 6 months from the date of application, a full refund will be provided to the original payee. If the cancellation occurs later than 6 months from the date of the application, Council will refund 80% of the fees paid to the original payee.

3. Council will undertake a review of all reserved plots in excess of 10 years duration, annually, in order to ascertain whether the applicant still requires the reservation.

6 RIGHT OF BURIAL TRANSFER

1. A Cemetery Reservation Certificate may be transferred to another applicant where Council eligibility requirements have been met, these include –
2. Original Cemetery Reservation Certificate and written authority from the current reservation holder consenting to the transfer, or;
3. A certified copy of the deceased Reservation Certificate holder's last known Will and Testament, and;
4. Certified written authority provided from all beneficiaries, or;
5. Written authority from the Reservation Certificate holder's personal legal representative providing evidence of authority to transfer.

7 APPLICATIONS FOR INTERMENT

1. Council's burial application form must be completed and sent to council's Environmental Services Office or emailed to EnvironmentalServices@hinchinbrook.qld.gov.au at least 2 working days before the intended funeral date to allow sufficient time for administration work and the grave to be prepared.
2. A burial application form along with a copy of the death certificate or cremation certificate must be supplied to Council at least two days prior to the funeral.
3. Approval of an Application for Burial for a pre-reserved plot/grave will be granted when:
 - The Applicant is the Reservation Holder; or
 - The Reservation Holder is the person being interred;
4. Where the application is for the deceased Reservation holder, the Applicant has the authority to arrange a suitable monument or plaque. Authority for any future interments into the plot shall not be permitted, until such time as the Cemetery Reservation Certificate has been transferred to the rightful beneficiary, as per the Right of Burial Transfer guidelines outlined within Section 6 of this document.
5. Refer to council's Cemetery Fees and Charges for a full list of applicable fees.

8 LAWN & BEAM CEMETERY SECTIONS

1. A plaque may be installed on the concrete plinth in the Lawn Section and a headstone on the concrete beam in the Beam Section, by a Monumental Stone Mason or an approved licensed builder. An Application for a Permit to Erect a Monument must be completed prior to the erection of all new monuments, and upgrade works. Plaques and headstones must comply with the specifications outlined in Section 11 Memorials & Monuments.
2. Fresh and plastic flowers are permitted to be retained within flower urns and metal vases only and must be securely placed at the head of the grave site (or concrete beam for those where such is provided). Such flowers will be removed as they deteriorate, at the discretion of Council.
3. The lawn sections have a concrete plinth for the purpose of erecting a small plaque, and the placement of metal vases on the concrete plinth to hold flowers. Fragile or glass items are not permitted within the lawn sections whatsoever as they may be damaged when maintaining the lawns and brush-cutting.
4. Items are not permitted to be installed within the grassed area, such as archways, crosses, statues or other structures and plots must not be enclosed with railing or kerbing or surrounded by rocks, bricks or other materials.
5. Council is responsible for the maintenance of the lawn area. All shrubs, plants etc. within the cemeteries are planted and cared for by Council. No tree, shrub or other plant is permitted to be planted within the cemetery, including at grave sites, other than by Council.
6. Any unapproved structures or items left at grave sites as outlined herein shall be removed at the discretion of Council after due notice to family or descendants.

7. Any item identified as a hazard that may endanger the wellbeing of the public or workers shall be removed at the discretion of Council. Council reserves the right to remove any headstone, granite, marble, concrete and any flower container (after due notice to family or descendants) in the event that the condition of same renders it dangerous to workers or visitors and the cost of so doing may be recovered, at the discretion of Council, from the valid Right of Burial holder or their family.

9 MONUMENTAL CEMETERY SECTIONS (Catholic, Anglican, Uniting, Lutheran)

1. Monuments are required to be installed by a Monumental Stone Mason or an approved licensed builder. An application for "A Permit to Erect a Monument" must be completed and approval granted, prior to the erection of all new monuments, and upgrade works. Monuments must comply with the specifications outlined in the Memorials & Monuments section of this document.
2. Fresh and plastic flowers are permitted to be retained within flower urns and metal vases only and must be placed at the head of the grave site. Such flowers will be removed as they deteriorate, at the discretion of Council.
3. For safety reasons, no glass, shells, non-approved vases and breakable ornaments are to be left at grave sites. Any unapproved structures or items left at grave sites as outlined herein shall be removed at the discretion of Council after due notice to family or descendants.
4. Council is responsible for the maintenance of aisles between the rows of graves in the monumental grave sections. Maintenance of the grave and immediate surrounds is the responsibility of the Right of Burial Certificate holder and family.
5. No tree, shrub or other plant is permitted to be planted within the cemetery, including at grave sites, other than by Council. All shrubs, plants etc. within the cemeteries are planted and cared for by Council.
6. Any item identified as a hazard that may endanger the wellbeing of the public or workers shall be removed at the discretion of Council. Council reserves the right to remove any headstone, granite, marble, concrete and any flower container (after due notice to family or descendants) in the event that the condition of same renders it dangerous to workers or visitors and the cost of so doing may be recovered, at the discretion of Council, from the valid Right of Burial holder or their family.

10 MEMORIALS & MONUMENTS

1. All monuments must be constructed by a licensed Monumental Stone Mason or Builder (who has provided Council with evidence of a current public liability insurance policy) and must comply with the Australian Standards AS4204-1994 Headstones and Cemetery Monuments. Failure to comply may result in removal.
2. Construction dimensions of monuments/vaults/concrete slabs are to comply as follows:
 - Lawn Sections: 380mm long x 280mm wide (max)
 - Beam Sections: 1300mm long x 900mm wide x 1000mm high (max)
 - Monumental (Religious) Sections in ground burials: A mandatory full concrete slab that is 2700mm long x 1500mm wide must be laid over the grave within 2 years from date of burial.
 - Monumental (Religious) Sections Vault size: 2400mm long x 1300mm wide

***Note** – Council will consider written applications for deviations from the specifications (for example, double vaults, multiple vaults on plots) however must be accompanied by verified information from funeral directors and/or stonemasons including drawings signifying that all possibilities have been considered and the result is achievable. Further Council officers decision will be final.*

3. A Permit to erect a monument form must be completed and handed into Council, prior to erection of all new monuments, headstones and upgrade works. All workers carrying out work at a Council owned cemetery must carry their permit on them at all times. Failure to provide your permit to Council officers when requested may result in being asked to stop works immediately.
4. Council Officers must carry out an inspection of the grave site and mark the grave before any monumental works can take place.

5. The fee for a permit is detailed in the Cemetery Fees and Charges. Once a permit has been paid for and approved, it will be issued to the applicant and/or Monumental Stone Mason.
6. A Construction Permit will only be issued with consent from the Right of Burial holder. Where the Right of Burial holder is deceased, a Permit to Erect a Monument may be issued with the approval of the applicant identified on the Application for Burial Form/s (for the Right of Burial holder).
7. A family can request to erect a monument on a historical plot in honour of the deceased person through a Permit to Erect a Monument application form. Council may consider such a request where it believes the family is acting with the full consent of the deceased person. If approval is given, the Right of Burial certificate will not automatically be transferred, refer to section Right of Burial Transfer of this policy.
8. Any monumental grave, vault, monument, headstone, plaque or marker in the Cemetery shall be maintained by the Legal Personal Representative or family of the person whose remains have been buried within the plot.
9. The opening of vaults, crypts or mausoleums is to be arranged directly with a Monumental Stone Mason. Council must receive formal notification via the "Burial Application Form" or "Exhumation Request Application Form" (from the family or Funeral Director) prior to any action being taken.
10. When an unveiling of a headstone is undertaken, we require that all of the materials that are part of the unveiling process be removed following the celebration.

11 REFERENCES

1. Local Law No.4 (Local Government Controlled Areas, Facilities and Roads) 2012
2. Subordinate Local Law 1.14 Undertaking Regulated Activities regarding Human Remains 2012
3. AS 4425-1996 Above ground burial structures
4. AS 4204-1994 Headstone and cemetery monuments