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**Purchasing a burial plot/Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB*)***

**The following information will help you make your choice.**

**\*Please note that Chichester District Council does not permit burial plots to be pre purchased.**

Burial plots are generally not actually for sale, but are leased for a set period of time.

***How do I buy a burial plot?***   Normally, your Funeral Director will help make the necessary arrangements for buying a grave.  Some people want to make their own arrangements at the time of the funeral.  You can organize this with us directly. We will be happy to advise you.

***How long can I buy a burial plot for?*** The Exclusive Right of Burial is currently for 50 years. These are known as "purchased graves".

***What is Exclusive Right of Burial?*** Exclusive Right of Burial is the name for the lease of a burial plot or cremation plot in a cemetery or garden of remembrance for a set period of time. Nobody else can be buried in the plot for the duration of the period covered by the lease, but it will eventually expire.

***What happens when an Exclusive Right of Burial expires?*** When an Exclusive Right of Burial expires, the grave owner may have to prove that they have the rights to the plot by providing documentation, such as death certificates, birth certificates and wills or deeds of grants over the grave. If families are unclear on who is the grave-owner for a burial plot containing a relative, they might need to agree who will have responsibility for it.

***When can burials take place?*** Burials can take place on any weekday, except on Bank Holidays or any other day when the council offices are closed. The latest time slots for burials are 12.30 Winter time and 13.00 Summertime. Please talk to your Funeral Director or contact us to discuss any specific needs.

***Can I bury cremated remains in the cemeteries?*** Yes, there are specific areas at both of our cemeteries with plots that can have up to four sets of cremated remains interred in them. Cremated remains can also be placed in a burial plot but you need to check with the Cemetery staff first to ascertain what space is available in the plot

to do this. Once cremated remains have been interred in a full grave plot then no further full burials can take place, cremated remains are permitted to go in.

***Are all the graves on consecrated ground?***  Chichester Cemetery is consecrated ground which means it has been blessed by the Bishop of Chichester. Not all areas of Hampers Green Petworth are consecrated.

***What is the difference between unpurchased and purchased graves?*

*Unpurchased grave*.**An unpurchased grave, sometimes known as a public or common grave, is when the Exclusive Right of Burial has not been purchased, and the council retains total control of the grave.  The council will decide who will be buried in the grave and this might not be members of the same family.  Memorial rights do not exist on the unpurchased graves so no headstone or other memorabilia can be put there.

***Purchased grave.*** A purchased grave is when the Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased.  The current period of ownership is for 50 years.  The owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial is the only person who can decide who will be buried in the grave space.  Similarly, in line with current regulations, only the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial may arrange for the placing of a headstone or memorabilia on the grave space.

**Exclusive Rights of Burial**

All burial rights are sold for a period of 50 years. On purchasing a Right of Burial you become the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial to a grave space within a cemetery administered by Chichester District Council and are sent a Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial detailing the name of the cemetery, the grave number and the period for which the grant exists.

The Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial should be kept in a safe place, as it is evidence of ownership of the Rights. Any further burials in the grave must be of the grave owner or be authorised by the owner. When the owner of the Grant has died arrangements should be made with the Cemetery Officer to legally transfer the rights to the person who is entitled to take this over. The owner can assign ownership whilst they are still living or if there is a will it would normally go to the Executor. If there is no will then all those claiming rights should contact the Cemetery Officer with proof of why or how they should be determined as the rightful person entitled to take this over.

**It is important to note that it is the Right of Burial to a grave space that has been purchased and not the land, which remains in the ownership of Chichester District Council**