



Media Release

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Check grave adornments fit cemetery bylaw

Anyone responsible for maintaining a loved one's grave in a Selwyn District cemetery is asked to check that adornments fit the cemetery bylaw 2011

Selwyn Reserves Supervisor Mike Kwant says the Council is currently identifying plots with gardens and adornments that do not comply with the Cemetery Bylaw.

"The Selwyn District Council understands that our cemeteries are an important focal point in our community as a place for families to come together to remember loved ones and as a place of reflection. We want to maintain our cemeteries so that anybody wishing to visit or use them feels comfortable doing so."

Under the Selwyn District Council Bylaw, which came into effect on the 1 May 2011, planting and adornments in front of concrete beams is not permitted.

"While we appreciate that these plantings and memorabilia personalise the plot, it creates maintenance issues in the management of the cemetery. Adornments and objects are permitted on the concrete beams, but must not spill over on to the grass and must not be able to be blown away," he says.

Family members and people tending plots are asked to remove items growing or positioned on the grass areas. The deadline for removal of items is 19 February 2012, after that Council staff will arrange for their removal and storage. These items can be collected from the Council offices in Rolleston until 30 August 2012.

If you have any queries relating to this matter please contact the Council Helpline 3472800.

Council staff are considering the possibility of setting aside areas in some cemeteries that will be able to be used as a memorial garden for planting of bulbs and flowers.

It is a legal requirement that all Council Bylaws be kept up-to-date, and the Cemetery Bylaw 2011 has been updated to make it clearer and easier to understand.

“The Selwyn District has 19 cemeteries, and these are community assets. The guidelines make sure everyone uses and maintains cemeteries correctly and they are maintained consistently,” Mr Kwant says.

Some of the key points in the bylaw are:

- Headstones or monuments must be installed by a registered monumental mason, who will apply to Council for a headstone permit.
- The Council will determine what monuments and adornments may be placed or erected in a cemetery, and all must be kept in good order.
- Vegetation cannot be planted without Council consent, and any authorised vegetation may be trimmed, removed or cut down at any time at the discretion of the Council.
- Wreaths and other perishables may be removed by the Council after 14 days, and at this time a receptacle must be installed if future placement of flowers and foliage is planned.
- Other than with Council permission, no person may remove any monument, adornment or vegetation from any cemetery, and cutting down or trimming of any vegetation requires Council permission.

For a full copy of the Selwyn District Council Cemetery Bylaw 2011, visit www.selwyn.govt.nz and search for the Cemetery Bylaw.

For advice or information on using a cemetery or what you are allowed to do in terms of adornments please contact the Selwyn District Council on 03 347 2857.

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