

Statement from the family

Our child was only 6 years old when she was diagnosed with a terminal brain tumour and our lives came crashing down. Our little girl went through the most horrendous, intense treatment that left her fighting for her life on many occasions yet still she tried to keep a smile on her face. She was a very special girl that touched the hearts of everyone she met.

After a year of fighting, she passed away leaving us in complete devastation with broken hearts and a life that will never be the same again - a piece of me has died inside, She was our world. The only thing we have left to care for is her special place of rest where we visit every day and every evening. The decorations she has are very special, meaningful gifts of love from all that adored and loved her that mean so much to us. We go to visit to give us a little comfort and to feel a little closer to her, to talk, to sit in peace or to cry until we have no tears left. Losing a child is a pain no one could understand unless they have been through it, that everyday heartache is exhausting and painful - its against the natural order. As time goes by it gets harder as we miss her even more and wonder what would she be like now. Our little girl has so many loved ones in her life that visit regularly with little gifts showing how much they miss her - it's not just us that would be affected by taking away the opportunity of expressing their love for her. We have been through the most traumatic journey and taking away her special things would cause so much more upset and stress affecting many, including young children, that are grieving for her.

I think a compromise of having a child size plot to decorate is fair and should be considered in this new world we are living as she is a child and should be allowed to be treated as one.

Over the last couple of years there have been many more children sadly arrive in the cemetery and I'm sure there will be many more in this cruel world. The child's area is small with not a lot of room left - it shouldn't matter where in the cemetery they are laid to rest. The loss of a child is a completely different situation than any other and that needs to be understood.

A lot of the town and over 4000 signatures on the petition to support us, I believe the rules needs updating. We chose the plot because I desperately wanted to join our little girl and now I'm left to feel that I've made the wrong decision, one that was made in the worst time of our lives.

Please allow my child the grave she should be entitled to like all the other children taken too soon.

Email from resident 13 March

I am writing to you in regards of the Halse Road cemetery meeting on 13th March.

Unfortunately, I am unable to attend, but I'm certain there will be many who are able to attend.

I have known the family for many years. The tragic passing of their daughter has left them absolutely devastated. They will be broken for the rest of their lives and will never see their beautiful little girl again. They will not see her grow up and go through milestones with her and they would do anything they possibly could, to turn back time. Yesterday should have been the little girl's 9th birthday, another horrendous day that they face without her and I'm sure the family has been sitting for most of the day, at the beautiful grave.

I do understand that their daughter is buried in the adult section so that her mummy and daddy can be buried with her, when their time comes.

The letter they received regarding the removal of items, in my opinion, was totally insensitive and unacceptable. It destroyed the family once again.

Losing a member of the family is destroying for anyone, but to lose a child is the worst thing that can possibly happen.

I asked that you to let the family grieve at their daughter's grave, the way they wish, with the flowers, lights and gifts that make them feel that she is loved and missed so very much.

I look forward to hearing the outcome of the meeting.

Email from resident 12 March

I wanted to email to show my support for the little girl's parents. Her grave in my opinion should be left as and how they would like it it's cruel to expect otherwise. as a council I am appalled that this letter was sent in the first place. It was hurtful to her parents and cruel beyond belief.

I'm sending this as I cannot be at the meeting regarding this but wanted to show my support as I am fully behind them

Email from Resident 12 March 2025

I wanted to write an email ahead of the public meeting for the cemetery ruling review. I will be attending but am writing as I probably won't be able to voice my opinion at the time as I can imagine it will be highly emotional.

My daughter was born sleeping and laid to rest within the cemetery and my son found it extremely difficult to return following the funeral as all he felt was sadness. Taking gifts and adding colour to our baby's resting place has been hugely important to us as a family and has helped us through this tough time, it is now a happy place for us to visit.

I am very lucky that my daughter gets a lot of visitors with some being children, I love that they can play with her toys and enjoy looking at her lights and windmills. Cemeteries should not be scary dull places; it should be somewhere where love can be shown and expressed.

I absolutely understand not everyone has the same taste or opinion, but we should be allowed to grieve and care for loved ones in any way that gets us through.

As parents that have lost children, we can't cuddle them or kiss them goodnight, but we can give them beautiful gardens where they can look pretty and know how loved they are.

A child is a child regardless of where they are located within the cemetery. This isn't a postcode lottery this is real life emotional battles of heartache and pain that is experienced every minute of every day, and we as parents should be allowed to continue being parents and look after our children as we wish to do so.

With regards to general ruling, again I believe that people should be able to love and care for that resting place as they wish. I would guess about a third of the cemetery are in breach of the general ruling anyway as a lot have things planted, surrounds or stones in place all of which are not allowed.

I would like to highlight my concerns over the compliant procedure and how complaints are resolved. I certainly feel this procedure has lacked compassion and when someone feels something is a breach of the peace this is very subjective.

If an individual doesn't like something on someone else's resting place then surely, they just don't look at it.

I appreciate this is a very difficult situation for you all to be in but am grateful to be given the opportunity to speak out and give my opinion.

Email from resident 13 March

I write regarding my thoughts on the proposed removal of keepsakes from the little girl's graveside.

It is heartbreaking to read that the family and friends are now no longer able to grieve in the way they need to. Being able to bring items/keepsakes to her is all part of their grieving process - helping them to deal with their loss.

I have also been in a similar situation - I lost a son and one of the only ways of managing the heartache is having somewhere to visit, somewhere to feel close to your lost child, having a purpose, looking after their grave is the closest thing to caring for them. I had to deal with my son's keepsakes actually being removed from his resting place, being taken to a building somewhere where I had to go and collect them - I couldn't even go into the building to look at the items, I had to stand at the door and describe them to the member of staff, who then had to go in and look for them, - sadly I lost lots of special keepsakes, only adding more pain to an already hopeless feeling of uselessness.

I plead that these thoughts are taken into account for the family - they have already been through enough and should be left alone to grieve and begin to navigate a new different life without their daughter, using her graveside as a special focal point in their lives.

Please have a heart and do the right thing.

Email from resident 12 March 2024

I am emailing in regards to tomorrow's meeting about the cemetery.

I wanted to share my strong personal feelings about this. I am a children's oncology nurse who support families through the worst times of their life. I have been in this role for 14 years.

The families I care for endure months and sometimes years of intensive aggressive treatment throwing their whole worlds upside down. These families watch their child go through the unimaginable pain which I will describe as torturous.

I care for families whose children become incurable, and I have got to express how horrific this is, and I wish that no family ever had to experience the pain of watching your child die.

I support families in those final moments and after their child has passed away. I feel extremely passionate about the plans to remove decorations from graves. Nothing can ever stop the indescribable and unimaginable pain these families have to live with for the rest of their lives. Trying to get up every day and try to live without their child. But being able to mark special occasions like birthdays, Christmas, with gifts that mean something to them and their child brings them comfort in the darkest of hours and a cemetery should be a place for allowing to visit their child and express their feelings.

I'm sat here with tears down my face that this is even being discussed, as I feel very strongly that this cannot happen and these poor families cannot be asked to remove special things that mean so much to them and their child.

These families have been through enough, don't cause them anymore heartache, please please stop this from happening.

Email from resident 12 March 2025

I'd like to express my concern at the treatment of the family regarding their daughter's grave!

The family have suffered so much grief and distress by the illness and consequently the passing of the little girl.

I feel this is now being added too by the council who are questioning the items the family are placing on the grave.

I honestly do not understand why anyone would want to question this!

The items do not spill onto neighbouring graves and the plot is kept tidy.

If by placing items on the grave in some small way give a tiny bit of comfort to the family, I do think this should be allowed.

I hope this email will be taken into consideration as I am unable to attend the meeting on Thursday evening.

Email from Resident 11 March 2025

I am writing to you to put my views forward for the Public Town Council meeting that is being held on Thursday, regarding the current rules at Brackley Cemetery.

As Godmother and close friend to the family, I have seen firsthand the immense heartache and pain the town council's correspondence have caused to the family.

The blunt, unempathetic tone of the letter that was sent to them, which I have personally seen, has caused endless tears and sadness in an entire family who are already broken from the unspeakably sad loss of their 7-year-old daughter less than two years ago.

Tomorrow, the 12th March, marks what should be the child's 9th Birthday. Instead, all the family have left is a small plot in Brackley Cemetery with which to remember their beautiful little girl who will forever be 7 years old.

If you have never lost a young child, a son or daughter, a granddaughter or grandson, a niece or nephew, then please take a moment to consider what absolute heartbreak the family and others like them have been through. Even as a close friend, I cannot feel the absolute heart wrenching pain of their loss and I cannot even begin to imagine what it must be like to wake every day and remember that she has gone.

The little girl's resting place at Brackley Cemetery is a beautiful place where her family and friends can go to remember her. It is a celebration of all the things that she loved, full of trinkets, toys, tributes and flowers that is ever changing. Many of the items there have been left by young children, her friends and cousins, who are themselves only young and too young to understand that they cannot bring their friend a toy for her birthday, a note, a Valentine's card, a present from their holiday.

I, like many others, will be taking a Birthday present up on 12 March and I should be able to leave it, within her plot, for the family to see when they go up to see their daughter/sister, as they do every day.

I shouldn't have to worry about it being removed or that the family will get in trouble for us leaving such gifts.

I ask you to reconsider your current rules at Brackley Cemetery and allow all graves, especially children's, to be allowed whatever the families would like on the plots they have paid for.

This child is not the only child buried in that area, the parents of other children buried, for whatever personal reasons, in the adult area of the Cemetery must also dread receiving the letter that the family has received.

These rules need to be reconsidered and changed with immediate effect. Let these families grieve in peace and celebrate their child's short life in whatever way they see fit. No one should have the right to take that decision away from the family and any other children.

Email from Resident 11 March 2025

I feel the need to express my disappointment to Brackley council sending a blunt letter to the family telling them they have to remove all items off their precious daughter's grave. The fact that the family are still grieving the awful loss of the little girl is tragic enough, and now they're not allowed to place any gifts, balloons, lights, decorations etc on her grave. How this has any effect on anyone else I can't quite understand. If the grave wasn't being visited every day and looked after I would understand your point, however what difference does it make to you or anyone else letting this poor family cherish the grave.

I will be attending the meeting on Thursday and will be asking when this rule was made, and also the date it was last reviewed.

Email from resident 11 March 2025

We are emailing with our thoughts for the upcoming public meeting regarding the cemetery regulations.

As a family, we are devastated by the council's request to remove decorations from our niece's grave, and we want to explain how profoundly it affects us, particularly our daughter.

The little girl was not just our niece, she was our daughter's best friend and they shared a bond that was more like siblings. Losing her at such a young age has been incredibly traumatic for her. No child should have to deal with this kind of loss, yet this is her reality. Visiting her grave is an essential part of ours and our daughter's grieving process. It is a place where we find comfort, connection, and a way to keep the little girl's memory alive. Bringing small gifts, decorating for special occasions, and simply having a place to go and remember her helps our daughter cope with her loss. It provides her with a sense of closeness and a way to express her love, even though the little girl is no longer physically with us.

As a family, we have also witnessed the devastation and heartbreak this has caused the family. No parent should have to bury their child, yet they have faced this unimaginable pain with strength and love. Tending to her grave is part of their daily routine, they visit her every day, ensuring her resting place is always cared for with love, respect, and dignity. Her grave is never left untidy or neglected, it is a place filled with warmth, remembrance, and the deep bond they still share with their daughter. Taking away the decorations that bring them comfort only adds to their suffering.

To take that away from them, from our daughter and from all of us, feels incredibly unfair and unnecessarily harsh. We understand that cemetery regulations must be upheld, but surely there is a way to balance that with compassion for grieving families. The decorations are placed with love and care, and they do not cause harm or disruption. Instead, they offer a small but meaningful source of comfort in what has been a heartbreaking loss.

We are not asking for the rules to be completely changed but rather amended so that all children's graves, no matter where they are located within the cemetery, can be decorated. This seems like a reasonable and fair compromise that would allow families to grieve in a way that brings them comfort while still respecting the council's guidelines.

We kindly ask the council to reconsider this request and allow us to continue honouring the little girl in a way that helps us heal.

Email from resident 11 March

When a loved one passes away, it is so important that anyone can grieve and remember their loved one in the way they want. I feel when a child dies, taking small items/gifts and placing with

them to remember and also show how much they are loved, not only for adults but when a child passes away they leave behind their childhood friends, that do not understand grief and being able to take small gifts/flowers to place up with their friend helps them to process this, also remembering them.

For us, the little girl was a special girl and someone who grew up with us as a family friend, watching our children grown up together, so a very special friendship. My children need and want to be able to take her small gifts/items to show they still love her and remember her and this is so important for them and not being able to do this, feels really wrong and taking away their rights on how they are allowed to show they remember her. Please let the family and friends continue to place items with their daughter as this is very special.

Although the grave is in the adult area, it really shouldn't be segregated into defined areas and really shouldn't matter where they are. Not letting family and friends have this space for her is unfair, she's a child and should be allowed the same rules as all the other children are. Just because she's in a different area, should not matter, her family have chosen this area so one day they would be together again as a family and should be given the same rights as every other child has.

Thank you for reading this and I hope you can see how strongly people feel about this and how all our views should be taken into account so the rules can be changed and allow for families to be able to grieve how they want to be able to and the family can go onto places small gifts with her as this gives them somewhere to be with her now, the only way they can.

Email from Resident 11 March

Thank you so much for allowing the hearing for the little girl and her family. I can appreciate that this is outside the norm and add unprecedented pressure on you and your office.

It does for the family, friends and acquaintances too. A couple of points that I would like to share below.

Grief is very personal and everyone needs to be able to express themselves in their personal journey - how can others feel that they can tell the family what is wrong and what is right? We all have different emotions.

How is this showing inclusive behaviour in a world where equality, diversity and inclusion is so important? The family is Christian and the ones that are not supporting the family is not showing the Christian faith but their own beliefs that are far from Christian.

If you lost a loved one, would you not like to be able to have a special place where you can feel close to your loved one? The family and their friends have only got this special place to feel close to the little girl and that is why they have made it special, please put yourself in their shoes and think how you would feel if you were told how to grieve, if you find it hard to watch that is because you are a human being too and life is not always fair but please do let this wonderful family grieve in their own way and give them the space and opportunity to do so.

Thank you, very much and best wishes,

Email from resident 11 March

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding a recent request made to my close relatives to remove sentimental items from her deceased daughter's grave. The little girl, tragically passed away at the age of 7, and the items placed at her grave are of significant emotional importance to all that loved her.

These items are carefully contained within the boundaries of the grave, and the intention was never to cause any harm or disrupt cemetery policies. Instead, they are a reflection of the love and memories they hold dear for their late daughter. It is incredibly painful for the family to be asked to remove these items, as it feels as though her grief and the memory of her child are being dismissed.

I understand that cemetery policies need to be followed, but I kindly ask for your compassion and understanding in this matter. A child's grave should be a place of comfort, a space where parents, siblings and loved ones can express their grief, and where a sense of peace can be found. The family have already endured unimaginable pain, and this request has only compounded their emotional distress.

I am extremely concerned for my relative's mental well-being, and I fear that the ongoing stress could have serious consequences for her mental health. I am genuinely worried for her safety and well-being, and I am reaching out to ask for your understanding and support during this incredibly difficult time.

I respectfully request that you reconsider this decision and allow the sentimental items to remain in place.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I trust that you will approach this matter with the sensitivity it warrants, and I hope we can find a compassionate resolution for my relative and her daughter's memory.

Email from Resident 11 March 2025

Unfortunately, I am unable to make the meeting due to work commitments. Unfortunately, I have two nieces at Brackley cemetery and although they are both in the children's section as a family we visit on a weekly basis. When visiting we always go and visit friends and show our respect to others who have recently passed. As a family it helps to see colour and especially young children have items on their graves.

We buy a house, and no one tells us what we can or can't plant or place outside our front door, I see this is as the same this unfortunately is their home and should be able to place things on their home to brighten it and make it look lovely.

I fully appreciate the little girl is in the adult's section and completely understand as a mother why this decision was made. It's so hard losing someone so close, but having somewhere to go and grieve means so much. Looking at the items others have placed on her knowing she would love them but also giving comfort to the family that she hasn't been forgotten

Most people whose graves are colourful and decorated have regular visitors and I actually feel for the ones that unfortunately have flowers that have been left to die as we all know they don't last long. However, a small ornamental item will last and as long as it's not outside their grave I don't see what harm is being done.

Please consider allowing the family to decorate their graves to bring some comfort to their friends who visit along with the family. Even if this is allowed until their 18th birthday. These families have been through enough already and will always struggle but this will help them continue to try and cope

Thank you for taking the time to read this email

Email from Resident received 10 March

In my opinion I think it's about time for change. I think a child should have a child's grave no matter where they are in the cemetery. There is nothing worse than losing a child and they have to be remembered by families and all their little friends with gifts.

Who on earth would complain about its breaking the peace, a few gifts. One nasty person who has nothing better to do.

Email from Resident 8 March

I wanted to write to you before the public meeting on Thursday regarding the Halse Road cemetery.

I feel very strongly that the little girl's grave should continue to have decorations and gifts left by her family and friends - people you dearly love and miss her. I regularly visit the cemetery, and her grave always looks beautiful her mummy and daddy look after it, removing any dead flowers, old teddies and keep it looking very special. Nobody can prepare you with the grief you will feel when a loved one dies, and this brings a small piece of comfort to us.

I believe that all graves should be looked after by the families of the deceased no matter what part of the cemetery they are in and if they want to leave special items then this should be allowed.

I cannot believe people have complained about this and I strongly urge you to make a change to the outdated rule book, people must be allowed to show their love to their loved ones rather than cover them over with grass and hide their feelings.

The child's 9th birthday is on Wednesday, and I will be giving a little gift and a balloon that I will secure to her bench. She will never be forgotten, and it breaks my heart that her family have to live each day without her.

Please, please reconsider your rule book and make changes.

Email from resident 8 March 2025

I would like to send my thoughts across in favour of change at the cemetery.

I also want to thank you for now taking time to reflect this after the way it was insensitively dealt with via the letter.

I have sent my comments via an email as I wouldn't be able to or feel comfortable to bring these up at the meeting, however I would like the points made in favour please.

The grave we are all talking about belongs to a very much loved and deeply missed little girl who was taken way too soon in the most traumatic way.

My points / reasons are:

I don't believe any harm has been caused or any offence for the precious decorations at the child's grave. All you can see is love.

The grave is looked after by so many loved ones and is visited every day.

The grave is in the adult section. The family have expressed the reasons why, and what a hard choice it was to make when their whole world had been turned upside down.

I think BRACKLEY could make allowances for situations like this as they are rare and it's a totally different situation to losing an older relative.

The problem is that some people can't see how different it is and I know by saying yes to one you will for all, but I'm saying make allowances for individual cases.

I know there is a designated area for young ones and they can be decorated- can't the same apply for a child's grave in an adult area as it's still a young person taken too soon.

The difference here between the ages in graves and people is that the little girl in question will have a broken family, struggling, heartbroken and in the most unimaginable pain. This is their way to grieve and to be there showing the little girl how much they love and deeply miss her. Other people are also showing love and care which brings some comfort to the family.

Please don't take away this and make them feel further pain and suffering.

I really don't see what harm they are causing anyone. I can't imagine some people would complain and if they did how heartless.

Please make allowances and realise there is a huge difference between a young child and an adult. With this difference is the amount of decorations. Everyone should be able to decorate a loved one's grave and show love, but a child's will always have more as she was only a little girl, so each milestone, birthday, anniversary, Easter Christmas etc she will always be remembered and it will be marked by her grave.

Thank you for hearing me out.

I really hope you can come to some arrangements in support of the family.

Email from resident 13 March

I would like to give you my thoughts and opinions ahead of your meeting regarding the cemetery this evening.

I go to the cemetery often as my Mother is there and I go and visit the little girl's grave. It is always very well cared for.

I cannot see any reason whatsoever for somebody to complain. Surely it is nicer to see these graves loved, cared for and respected than one that is not had any care taken of it.

I think it is absolutely disgraceful for Brackley Town Council to do this to a lovely Brackley family who are still deeply grieving the loss of their little girl.

I think you know how very unpopular this was with the Brackley Community, and I hope you make the right decision tonight.

Email from resident 13 March

I am unfortunately not now able to attend this evening's meeting at Egerton Hall as planned but would like to show my support for the family and their daughter's grave.

The parents are longstanding friends of mine, having grown up with the mother since we were teenagers.

When I received the message from her to say that her beautiful daughter had the most aggressive cancer in her brain it was utterly gut-wrenching. Something that no one should ever have to be faced with.

When their daughter passed away and she was laid to rest at Halse Road Cemetery, this became like a second home to the family. A place where they could feel safe and close following the passing of their beautiful daughter.

They would spend hours at their daughter's graveside making it lovely and full of the things that she adored. The grave is immaculately kept.

It also then started to become a special place where other immediate family and close friends (best friends of the little girl) were able to visit and show their own love by putting things on her grave. Children of 7 years old having to visit their best friend at her graveside and not being able to see her 😞 - truly devastating.

A group of friends of the family also put together a collection for a bench for her so they could, yet again, feel close to her.

The recent letter (very heartless) the family received from Brackley Town Council asking them to remove items from their child's grave has caused a whole new world of pain. They are still trying to come to terms with the loss of their daughter and having her special place at her graveside is a massive comfort.

Having members of family, myself, along with the little girl, and my teenage son's best friend, who are laid to rest at the cemetery, it gives me great comfort seeing the lovely things that are and have been placed on the graves to remember the loved ones we have lost.

I really hope that you carefully reconsider, and if anything, make changes to the policy of the cemetery to enable, not only the little girl's grave in question, but other graves in the Halse Road Cemetery to be left untouched – whether they are adult or children's graves.

Email from resident 13 March

Just wanted to add some thoughts regarding Halse Road cemetery ahead of your meeting tonight.

I have always found Brackley cemetery very peaceful and calming and clean and tidy. After recently attending a funeral at Slough cemetery, where it looks there are no rules on what can be on graves and trees, it looked very messy and chaotic and not calming at all.

Another point I would like to raise is, I know when I have left small items at Christmas time on my parent's grave at Brackley cemetery, they are often totally lost or found nearby where birds or foxes have moved them and been eaten/ pulled apart.

My concern is if all graves have lots on them, the whole area will become a mess. It's hard when it involves children as emotions are involved too, but I do think rules need to be followed still.

Hope it's a positive meeting for everyone

Email from resident 12 March 2025

I totally understand the upset of the family, and this is a particularly sensitive situation. But since things have calmed down recently, there seems to be a pretty clear right and wrong decision here.

Since first hearing this story and getting quite angry at the council, I've since found out that the family were explained the rules of this part of the cemetery on multiple occasions by the council and the funeral home. Apparently, they could have picked a place that allowed more decoration but chose not to.

To be honest, I don't personally feel the letter was worded that badly. My partner lost their mother very young, and we still receive similar letters frequently updating us on the place where she's buried.

The Facebook petition made it all sound much worse. But since then, I have re-read it, and it is quite sympathetic. It was maybe too 'professional' or 'corporate' in tone, but given that they are a council, it makes perfect sense to write in that way. Perhaps it would be better to speak to people in person in future to avoid misunderstanding and hurt feelings in future. Just an idea.

I strongly oppose the changing of the regulations, as it is unfair to all the other residents that are abiding the rules of the lawn cemetery. A lot of people have chosen to bury loved ones here based on these rules. They were told that it will be kept in a specific way. Changing the rules is just not right for those families.

After reading the regulations it seems quite clear that Brackley councils' rules are pretty much exactly the same as any other lawn cemetery in the country. The issue here seems to be that people don't like the rules of a lawn cemeteries in general.

If people don't like the rules there are plenty of other options available, even within this same cemetery it seems! A lawn cemetery is supposed to be neat and well kept. Overturning these regulations for one family, will upset a great deal more that haven't done anything wrong. I feel that it would be truly unfair to change the regulations.

Thank you for the chance to write this.

Email from resident 11 March 2025

I am writing to you regarding my views on the change of rules and regulations regarding our cemetery in Brackley.

Although I'm sympathetic to the reason why we were discussing a rule change that has been in place since the 1960s, It is in my opinion that nothing should change. I would presume that everybody is given the same rules to follow and it is known that this is a cemetery laid to lawn with no lights and added plants trinkets etc and if the rules are not to your liking there are other cemeteries in the area that can be used, why do we need to change our cemetery because a select few who want to break the rules that have worked for 60 years without an issue.

I would like you to consider others who made a choice to bury their loved ones in the cemetery because it looks peaceful and tidy and the majority of us that for years have followed the rules and like it this way.

I would have come to the meeting but feel that with all the negativity that surrounds this issue I would rather remain anonymous.

Email from resident 11 March

Having several family members at the cemetery, I feel obliged to put my thought to council regarding the current policy.

The cemetery is beautiful and has been a lawned cemetery since it opened in the 1960s. I along with 85% of families accept and respect the rules that were given to us when we chose our family plots.

It is both peaceful and calming. Both sets of my grandparents and parents were avid gardeners and I would love nothing more than to plant flowers and leave mementoes for them, but we don't because we respect the rules and we make the best use of the pace we are allocated.

To change the rules and policy in my mind would be disadvantageous to the look and feel of the cemetery. Whilst I understand that children are buried all over the cemetery, a difficult decision was made to bury in the adult section which has rules in place.

I have been and looked around the children's plots in the adult sections over the last few years and nobody else feels the need to decorate to excess. Why? Because they accept the rules. Why should one family, as heartbreaking as it is, be allowed to do as they please.

I feel if the council back down now, they will open themselves up to problems in the future. Council wants to do something that the town doesn't agree with. Then they will cause uproar and demand a policy change. How can you not go with public pressure if you change the current policy?

Email from resident 11 March

I am writing regarding the upcoming public meeting about the rules and regulations surrounding grave decorations at Brackley Cemetery.

One of the key reasons many families have chosen this cemetery as a final resting place for their loved ones is because it is a grass cemetery, offering a peaceful, natural and uniform appearance. The sense of serenity is deeply important to many families and changing the regulations to allow decorations would significantly alter the character of the cemetery.

It is also important to recognise that those who chose this cemetery did so with full knowledge of the existing rules and regulations. It would be grossly unfair to now change these rules simply because individuals have chosen to disregard them. While I understand that some families may wish to personalise graves, the current regulations exist to preserve the beauty and tranquillity of the cemetery. I urge the decision makers to consider the impact on all families to uphold the current rules and maintain the peaceful environment that makes Brackley Cemetery so special.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my views, I do wish to remain anonymous.

Email from resident 12 March

I am writing regarding the forthcoming meeting about Halse Road Cemetery. I wish my comments to remain anonymous. There is such a strong feeling towards the issue, I do not feel confident to stand and speak at the public meeting.

I have huge sympathy with anyone that has lost anyone, but I understand that the family were told the rules and regulations of the cemetery. The family seems to have a huge amount of support for their cause. The council don't appear to have any.

I am not saying that there should not be a compromise that could be reached but I am appalled that this has gone as far as it has.

Email from resident 12 March

I understand there is a public meeting on the cemetery tomorrow. I am unable to attend. I am not sure the meeting will be balanced as there are many residents who have connections to the family who seem to be talking quite loudly.

Whilst I have huge sympathy for the family and I cannot begin to understand what they must be going through; I am a resident that abides by the rules of the cemetery. I know other people that also abide by the rules and have made decisions about positions of graves based on those rules. To overturn the rules now will leave those people questioning their decisions.

Having said that, there must be a compromise that can be reached.