



# WINCANTON TOWN COUNCIL

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## Grave Digging - General Requirements

Steel Toe Capped boots must be worn at all times.

A hard hat must be worn when working in an excavation.

Any grave that is left unattended for whatever reason must be completely boarded over in such a manner as to prevent any person falling into the grave. Some manufacturers of mechanical shoring equipment provide a lockable cover to ensure complete security.

Entry and egress from a grave must be by ladder. On **NO-account** must a gravedigger climb out of a grave by treading on any part of the shoring.

A ladder must remain in place whenever an operative is working in a grave in order to maintain an emergency exit. (**Confined Spaces Regulations 1997**)

All finished graves should be prepared using imitation grass matting. The matting will be laid out neatly on staging leaving no folds or gaps which may cause Funeral Director, members of the Clergy, mourners or member of staff to trip. Walkboards / staging must be laid along the length of the grave and supported at each end and must be capable of carrying the weight of the Pall Bearers and Coffin.

All graves must be dug centrally within the respective grave space to the exact dimensions indicated. Graves that are not dug centrally within the grave space will increase the risk of collapse, as the intervening wall of undug soil on one side will be of reduced thickness.

Any nearby / adjacent memorials which pose a hazard to the grave digger must be temporarily moved to a safe distance from the grave to be excavated and replaced immediately following the interment. It would be courteous to contact owners of such memorials informing them that your actions are intended to reduce risk to the grave digger and also protect their particular

memorial from damage should the grave being prepared collapse and their memorial fall.

Protective goggles must be worn when using a pick.

Care must be taken when using a pick when shoring is in position so as to prevent striking and dislodging timber struts, screw jacks or acro struts. A damaged hydraulic ram may fail posing a hazard to the operative.

Any foul odours encountered should be reported immediately to a supervisor / manager.

**The ICCM recommends that a second person is in attendance whenever work is being carried out in an excavation of a depth greater than 3' (0.91m) in order to comply with the requirements of the [Confined Spaces Regulations 1997](#) and the [Manual Handling Regulations 1992](#).**

All tools and equipment required to complete each grave must be available nearby before digging commences.

When hand digging, shoring must be incorporated as digging proceeds. It is advised that shoring should be incorporated as soon as a depth equal to the depth of shoring equipment panel / timber is reached.

**Hydraulic equipment should be inspected and serviced by a qualified person in order to comply with the [Provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998](#)**

#### **DEFECTIVE UNITS MUST NOT BE USED.**

Shoring timbers and struts should be inspected prior to use for any sign of deterioration. Defective timbers and struts should not be used and should be cut down to prevent use by any other person.

Acro struts should be regularly lubricated. The proper pin only must be used.

Lowering webbings and putlogs must be inspected prior to each burial to ensure that no deterioration has occurred and that they are capable of taking the weight of the coffin. Frayed webbings should not be used.