

PRESS RELEASE - 21st July 2023.

Update – Swan Hill Cemetery, Ellesmere.

Like a lot of cemeteries in Shropshire and elsewhere, the Swan Hill Cemetery, Ellesmere is close to maximum capacity.

The Council's Cemetery Working Group continues to explore possible solutions both inside the existing cemetery **and** in relation to new sites close to the town.

A recent survey of the cemetery has identified additional spaces which have been agreed by Council and which should ensure that the cemetery is able to offer burial spaces for new coffins up to the next three years.

The Council **continues** to be able to offer new internments of cremated remains and interment of cremated remains into existing graves. This service is not affected by the issue of limited space.

Separate work is ongoing to explore the possibility of extending the cemetery in the bottom section. This is the large, grassed space which may have been used for burial in the distant past and requires survey work to understand its viability.

In relation to the piece of land at the top of Swan Hill Cemetery, which would seem to be the most obvious choice for a cemetery extension, this is privately owned.

The possibility of the council taking possession of that land was explored fully in 2005. The Council attempted at that time to take possession of the land by way of Compulsory Purchase, but this was refused, at Government level. This was at significant financial cost to the Town and Parish Councils.

There is **no expectation** that this piece of land will come into the Council's possession at any time in the future.

At that time the Council also explored 5 other potential cemetery sites close to the town. In all cases these areas were deemed unsuitable for the creation of a cemetery because of issues relating to high levels of water, soil-type, and other geographic problems.

In the meantime, the Cemetery Working Group continues to appeal to local landowners to appreciate the impact of the cemetery being nearly at capacity and would ask that anyone who owns land that might be suitable for a new cemetery to approach the council.

Please contact The Cemetery Co-Ordinator or the Council. Details are to be found on the Council's website.

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