



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Luke Stephens
Head of Ministerial Correspondence
**Ministry of Housing, Communities and
Local Government**
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Holly Mumby-Croft MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

www.gov.uk/mhclg

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Dear Holly,

Thank you for your email of 22 April to Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP about COVID-19 opening of cemeteries. I am writing on behalf of the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government to respond to your query.

It is only right that families have an opportunity to pay their respects to loved ones who have lost their lives. The closures guidance is being updated to make clear that burial grounds and cemeteries may remain open, and that grounds surrounding crematoria may also remain open, including gardens of remembrance. You can access Government guidance on closures here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close>

Technical amendments to the Regulations have already been made to dispel all confusion surrounding the status of burial grounds, and people's ability to visit them and similar places. Please see here for the amendments to the Regulations: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2020/447/contents/made>

We recognise that the Regulations do not compel local authorities to keep anything open, and there are many reasonable justifications for why a burial ground or similar place may need to close temporarily – for example when conducting a funeral, or for maintenance. However, we are encouraging councils to take all practical steps towards enabling these places to be visited by grieving members of the public, in a safe manner consistent with social distancing guidelines.

LUKE STEPHENS
Head of Ministerial Correspondence