



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Wokingham Borough Council

St Sebastian's Cemetery Regulations

December 2018

1. Introduction

- 1.1. These regulations apply to St Sebastian's Cemetery owned and managed by Wokingham Borough Council.
- 1.2. Site address: St Sebastian's, Heathlands Road, Wokingham, RG40 3AR

2. Contact Details

- 2.1. All funeral bookings, general enquiries and comments regarding the Cemeteries/Burial Grounds should be directed to:

Registration Services (Cemeteries) 0118 9746000

The offices are open from 08.30 to 16.30 Monday to Friday.

- 2.2. These Regulations are in addition to the provisions of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 and any other appropriate regulations currently in force.

3. Admission to the Burial Grounds

- 3.1. The Cemeteries/Burial Grounds are open for visitors every day of the year during the following times:

09.00 to half an hour before sunset.

All visitors and their vehicles are asked to leave the cemetery in good time. No person is permitted to be in the Cemetery outside of the published opening hours without the express permission of the Manager/Clerk.

- 3.2. Our Cemeteries are places of peace and quiet reflection. They are also workplaces. Visitors to the sites are welcome, but are asked to respect the special nature of the sites, the needs of other users, and safety factors. No games, sports, riding of bicycles, skateboards, roller blades or similar are allowed in the burial grounds. No consumption of alcohol or drugs may take place within the burial grounds, and anybody under the effects of such substances will be asked to leave the cemetery immediately.
- 3.3. Any person creating a nuisance or a disturbance, such as interfering with a funeral, grave, headstone, flowers, trees etc, will be required to leave the cemetery immediately and may be the subject of subsequent legal action.
- 3.4. Children under the age of 14 are welcome in the cemetery but must be supervised by a responsible adult. It is particularly important that children are not allowed to climb on any monuments within the cemetery.
- 3.5. No dogs are permitted in the cemetery with the exception of Guide Dogs, Hearing Dogs or other recognized Assistance Dogs, or with the express permission of the Manager/Clerk.
- 3.6. Vehicles are permitted in the cemetery but must not exceed the speed limit of 10mph and must obey any instructions given to them by an officer of the Council. Vehicles must stick to the main driveways and avoid parking so as to cause a nuisance or damage to any graves or grassed areas. The Council or any of its

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employees cannot accept responsibility for the loss or damage to any vehicle or its contents whilst in the Cemetery.

4. General Regulations

- 4.1. No employee of the Council is allowed to take any gratuity, or to undertake paid private work of any kind in connection with the cemetery either in their own time or during their employed hours.
- 4.2. No person shall canvass or solicit business in the burial grounds.
- 4.3. All fees for interments or memorial works must be paid in full to the Council in advance.
- 4.4. The Council will publish a scale of fees and charges annually. Residents of the area will qualify for reduced fees compared to non-residents. A resident is defined as somebody who, immediately prior to their death, was a resident of the area.
- 4.5. The Council reserves the right to amend these regulations and to deal with any circumstances or contingency not provided for in the regulations as necessary.

5. Graves

- 5.1. Graves are available in the cemetery, which consists of consecrated sections. The selection of grave spaces shall be at the final discretion of the Council, but the wishes of applicants will be met wherever possible.
- 5.2. Every interment shall take place either in a private or public grave. Private graves are graves to which an Exclusive Right of Burial has been issued. Public graves are graves which remain in the ownership of the Council and to which no specific rights have been granted.
- 5.3. The Exclusive Right of Burial for a grave can be purchased for a period of 100 years. The Exclusive Right of Burial also allows a memorial to be placed on the grave.
- 5.4. (The Exclusive Right of Burial cannot be purchased in advance of need, i.e. graves cannot be pre-purchased or reserved). The Exclusive Right of Burial can only be transferred to another person or persons who are entitled and via the legal process adopted by the council.
- 5.5. The Council may also allow the Exclusive Right of Burial to be purchased by a family member before the expiration of the original 100 year period.
- 5.6. Memorials will only be permitted on purchased graves. Memorials must conform to the regulations given at 9 below.
- 5.7. The types of graves available are Traditional Graves, Brick Vaults (1½ plots), Cremated Remains Graves and Children's Graves. Traditional Graves and Brick Vaults can accommodate full memorials including kerbsets and can be planted over the length of the grave; Cremated Remains Graves are for the burial of cremated remains only; Children's Graves are reserved for the burial of children under 12.

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5.8. All graves will be excavated and prepared for interment by the Council approved contractors only. No other person or company will be allowed to undertake any excavation within the cemetery/burial ground except with the express permission of the Manager/Clerk. The depth of each grave will be determined by the Council in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977.

6. Coffins

6.1. Coffins and urns for burial must be made from suitable bio-degradable materials such as wood, wicker, cane, bamboo, wool, cardboard etc. The council usually permits shroud burial.

7. Booking of Interments

7.1. A provisional booking for a funeral may be made by telephone to the Council Offices.

7.2. The provisional booking should be followed up by the submission of a completed Notice of Interment/Burial to the Council Offices at least 48 working hours in advance of the intended date and time of the funeral. Receipt of the fully and correctly completed Notice of Interment/Burial will act as confirmation of the provisional booking.

7.3. In respect of private graves, the deed of grant for the exclusive right of burial will be registered in the name of the applicant for the burial indicated on the notice of interment/burial and signed by that person.

7.4. The **exact size** of the coffin, casket or container must be given in writing to the Council as soon as possible after the provisional booking, together with any other pertinent information relating to its size and shape (eg locking bar handles, casket shape, wicker coffin etc). The Council will subsequently add a suitable amount to the given size in order to determine the dimensions of grave to be excavated.

7.5. As much information relating to the funeral as possible must be given to the Council in advance, especially if it is unusual, eg large number of mourners expected, motorbike cavalcade, jazz band, piper etc.

7.6. If the grave is purchased and is to be reopened for a further interment, the written permission of the registered grave owner must be given, except where the burial is that of the registered grave owner.

7.7. It is the responsibility of the person making the funeral arrangements to ensure that any memorial on the grave is removed from it at least 48 working hours prior to the date and time of the funeral.

7.8. The Certificate given by the Registrar of Births and Deaths or an order of the Coroner must be delivered to the Council Offices prior to the funeral.

7.9. The Council will determine the appropriate fees to be paid for the funeral, which must be paid fully in advance.

8. Interments

- 8.1. Funerals will normally only be permitted Monday to Friday 09.30 – 16.00 (excluding Bank or other Public Holidays). It may be possible to arrange funerals outside of these times subject to additional cost.
- 8.2. All funerals will be subject to the control of the Council's designated officer.
- 8.3. The time appointed for an interment must be punctually observed. The Council reserves the right to delay a late arriving funeral in the event that it impacts on another service.
- 8.4. Services in the cemetery must not exceed 60 minutes, unless special arrangements for a longer time have been made with the Manager/Clerk.
- 8.5. It is the responsibility of the person making the funeral arrangements to organize a Minister or Officiant for the funeral if one is required.
- 8.6. Any floral tributes from the funeral will be placed on top of the grave following backfilling, and will remain in situ for a minimum of 10 days before being cleared by Council staff (unless family have already removed them).

9. Memorials

- 9.1. The Council has adopted a Management of Memorials Policy dealing with current and future memorial installations, safety inspections and making safe unstable memorials. Masons carrying out work in the burial grounds must comply with the Council's Management of Memorials Policy.
- 9.2. All memorials fixed in the cemetery/burial ground must comply with British Standard 8415 (Latest version) and the BRAMM (British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons) Blue Book.
- 9.3. Ground anchors and fixing systems used in the construction of memorials must have a certificate of compliance with BS8415 (Latest version).
- 9.4. Only those memorial masons businesses that are NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) or BRAMM accredited, and those memorial masons that hold a current BRAMM Fixer Licence, will be able to work in the cemetery. Fixers who do not hold a BRAMM Fixer Licence will only be permitted to work under the direct supervision of a mason who holds a BRAMM Fixer Licence.
- 9.5. Memorials will only be permitted on purchased graves. No memorial will be permitted on a public grave.
- 9.6. Memorials other than those fixed by a BRAMM accredited memorial mason are not allowed. Fences cannot be erected around a grave nor the space defined other than through planting of suitable plants or the installation of proper kerbsets by a BRAMM accredited memorial mason.
- 9.7. Before any memorial may be erected or works undertaken to an existing memorial, an application must be submitted to the Manager/Clerk on the appropriate form supplied by the Council. The grave owner must sign

the form to give their permission for the proposed memorial/works. On approval by the Council a permit will be issued to the responsible Memorial Mason.

- 9.8. Memorials must be constructed of materials suitable to the environment and period of grave lease. The Council reserves the right to reject an application for any memorial that it deems unsuitable.
- 9.9. The maximum height of memorials is 3', the maximum width is 3' and the depth is 12". The memorial must be a minimum of 3" thick. On traditional graves and Brick Vaults the Council will consider applications for larger memorials subject to them being satisfied that the installation is compliant with current recognized industry standards. The Council will also consider the installation of kerbsets if they are constructed to current recognized industry standards. On cremated remains and children's graves the maximum height of a memorial is 2' and the maximum width 18".
- 9.10. The memorial mason must inscribe the company name only on the reverse of the stone towards the base in lettering not more than 1" high. No trademark, phone number or other advertising will be allowed. The memorial mason must also inscribe the grave number towards the bottom right hand side of the reverse of the memorial in letters not exceeding 1" high. On kerbstones the grave number must be inscribed on the right hand side of the foot kerb.
- 9.11. Memorial masons must remove all arisings from the cemetery at the conclusion of their work, and must leave the area in a tidy condition. It is not possible for memorials to be stored in the cemetery prior to re-fixing following a burial – all such memorials must be removed from the site by the memorial mason appointed to remove the memorials prior to the grave being excavated.

10. Care of Graves and Memorials

- 10.1. All memorials are erected at the sole responsibility of the owner and the Council shall not be held responsible for any damage to or caused by the memorial, howsoever incurred. The memorial remains the responsibility of the grave owner during the lease period of the grave. The Council reserves the right to repair or make safe any memorial which becomes unsafe or falls in to disrepair, and to recover any expenses from the registered owner. The Council will undertake routine safety checks on all memorials, and will notify the grave owner at the last registered address of any necessary works to make the memorial safe. The grave owner will be given a period of 6 months from the date of the letter to effect the necessary repairs. The Council reserves the right to temporarily make safe any memorials that pose a threat until such works are completed. If the grave owner does not arrange for the repairs to be made, the Council may repair or remove the memorial at the owner's expense.
- 10.2. Grave spaces must be kept in a neat and tidy condition, and all litter must be removed from the site.
- 10.3. All flower holders or other items left on graves must be made of non-breakable material. Any items left on graves are at the owners' risk and the Council cannot be held responsible for any damage to them howsoever caused. The Council may remove any articles from any grave that are likely to cause risk, damage or offence to other visitors to the cemetery or which interfere with the Council's maintenance of the site.
Grave owners will **not** be permitted to place personal items on either side of the memorial and/or on a one foot strip to the front of the memorial. Grave owners are requested to adhere to this rule so as to enable maintenance of the grass areas without risk of damaging any personal items.

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10.4. No trees may be planted on graves. Only suitable planting such as annual bedding or small shrubs only will be permitted on traditional graves. The Council may remove any plants that it considers unsuitable or that infringe on other grave spaces or interfere with the Council's maintenance work.