

Dartford Borough Council Cemeteries

Information And Regulations



Watling Street Cemetery
Watling Street
Dartford
DA2 6AA
01322 290059
Cemeteries@dartford.gov.uk
www.dartford.gov.uk

Dartford Borough Council Cemeteries

Watling Street Stone Cemetery Swanscombe Cemetery	Watling Street, Dartford St James Lane, Stone Swanscombe Street, Swanscombe
---------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Cemetery Opening Times:

Summer

8.00am – 7.00pm

Winter

8.00am – 4.00pm

(Watling Street Vehicular access closes at 4pm every day)

Watling Street Cemetery Office open Monday to Friday 9am – 3.30pm

1 Interpretation of Terms

<i>'The Cemeteries Office'</i>	The office responsible for the administration of the cemeteries, located at Watling Street Cemetery
<i>'The Civic Centre'</i>	the headquarters of Dartford Borough Council situated at Home Gardens, Dartford DA1 1DR
<i>'The Director'</i>	The Director appointed by the Council or his nominated "Authorised Officer"
<i>'Authorised Officer'</i>	Officers designated by the Council
<i>'Bramm/Namm'</i>	British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons/National Association of Memorial Masons
<i>'Funeral Director'</i>	Person appointed by the Funeral Company to conduct funeral
<i>'In Reserve'</i>	A grave pre purchased prior to change of regulation in 2002
<i>'Interment'</i>	The burial of human remains including those which have been cremated
<i>'Memorial'</i>	Any memorial that is <u>authorised</u> to be permitted within the cemetery
<i>'Private Grave'</i>	A grave in respect of which the Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased and a Deed of Grant issued
<i>'Resident'</i>	A person who permanently resides within the Borough of Dartford or who at the time of death had moved within a period of five years from the Borough of Dartford for nursing care.

2 Fees

Details of all fees and charges can be obtained from the Cemeteries Office. All fees are payable at the time when the relevant application is made in writing. An invoice will be raised to the applicant to make payment or a cheque will also be accepted. All fees for interments and the purchase of graves are based on the deceased being a Dartford Borough resident (see page 2). As agreed by the Cabinet of the Council on 7 March 2019 there are no fees for children of Borough residents under the age of 17 years. Triple fees are applicable for non residents. An application to the Children's Funeral Fund can be made for a non resident child providing they have a good reason to be buried in Dartford cemeteries.

The Council reserves the right to make and amend its fees and charges at any time.

3 Interments and Notices of Interment

No interment or scattering of cremated remains shall take place without prior permission of the authorised officer and payment of the current fee.

For every interment including the scattering of cremated remains, a prior telephone booking must be made to the Cemeteries Office. It is a requirement that the booking is confirmed in writing on the Council's Notice of Interment Form which must be delivered to the Cemeteries Office at least three clear working days before the day of the burial.

All information on the Interment Form must be accurately and legibly completed in full by the funeral arranger and duly signed by the applicant. Any subsequent alteration or addition to these details must be confirmed in writing to the Cemeteries Office prior to the day of the burial taking place.

In the case of the burial of a non-viable foetus, a Certificate for Burial form or other authorised form is required, to be completed by a Medical Practitioner/Midwife. The next-of-kin must also sign the interment form. Babies must be at least 24 weeks gestation in order to qualify for no fee funeral.

The Funeral Director is required to inform the authorised officer if the deceased is that of a person who has died from a notifiable disease. It is essential that any necessary health and safety precautions are adhered to and complied with.

One of the following must be delivered with the Notice of Interment Form:

- A certificate of disposal issued by the Registrar of Births and Deaths
- A Coroner's Order for Burial
- The Registrar of Births and Deaths Certificate of non-liability to register, where the deceased has come from abroad
- A Certificate of the Cremation Authority for the interment or scattering of cremated remains
- The Medical Practitioner's Certificate of Delivery for the interment of a non viable foetus.

Coffin/casket measurements must be included on the Notice of Interment form or provided in writing at least 3 working days before the burial.

No interment may take place without the complete documentation.

Interments will be permitted between the hours of 9.30am – 2.00pm. No interments will be permitted on Saturdays, Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays or certain days as advised by the Council. Late arrival, in excess of 30 minutes, may incur a charge.

All funeral corteges entering the cemetery are under the control and direction of the authorised officer and should arrive at the cemetery at the time stated on the interment form.

The Funeral Director has responsibility under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and other current Health and Safety Legislation for the Funeral Director's staff and cortege. Funeral Directors must provide sufficient number of staff to act as bearers.

Filming a funeral is permitted during the service and at graveside but no recordings or photos will be allowed whilst staff are backfilling the grave. The discharge of firearms at any funeral must have prior approval from the authorised officer.

Following a burial it is permitted to place a temporary wooden marker on the grave space until such time as a permanent memorial is erected.

4 Environmentally Friendly Funerals

The Council encourages the use of environmentally friendly practices and will advise on application.

5 Excavation

The allocation of grave spaces will be made by the authorised officer based on the information provided on the Notice of Interment Form. The choice includes: consecrated ground, (ground given consecration rites by a Bishop of the Church of England), un-consecrated ground (generally used by religions other than Church of England) non-conformist or Muslim.

The choice given on the Notice of Interment will be met as far as is practicable.

All graves shall be excavated and back-filled by only persons appointed by the Council. Visitors must stand at the chapel and away from the grave whilst back filling is in progress. Where there is no other space available the Council may erect timbers and staging over existing graves and place soil from the excavation of a grave upon any adjoining grave without notice to grave owners and will reinstate as soon as possible.

No vaults or brick graves, other than those now in existence in the Cemeteries shall be permitted. All work in connection with the re-opening and re-instatement of existing vaults and walled graves must be undertaken by, and at the expense of, the registered owner of the private grave.

Headstones removed from graves for interments must be taken away for storage. A full kerb set memorial may only remain in Cemetery providing they are placed as directed by the authorised officer. No other memorials may be disturbed in order to carry out this work. Memorials which remain in the Cemetery must be replaced at the end of a twelve month period from the date of the interment. It is the responsibility of the applicant to appoint a licensed stone mason to replace the memorial at the end of the twelve month period.

With effect from 24 April 2003 the maximum depth of new graves shall not exceed 1.98 metres (6'6") and shall accommodate no more than 2 coffin interments and the burial of cremated remains.

6 Coffins/Caskets/Urns

No interment will be permitted unless the container of the deceased person, or cremated remains (other than those being scattered), is made from perishable materials. The full name, age and date of death of the deceased must be permanently engraved on a plate fixed to the lid of the coffin or casket the details of which must correspond to those stipulated

in the documents mentioned in Section 3 above. A coffin or other container may only contain one body.

7 Exclusive Right of Burial

The Council will provide a document titled "Deed of Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial" upon purchase of a new grave space for a period of fifty years from the date of the grant. The lease period for a cremated grave is fifty years. The deed entitles the right to bury and erect a memorial; it does not imply any rights of land ownership.

A grant of exclusive right will not be issued in the name of a funeral director, monumental mason, partner or shareholder in such a firm unless satisfactory evidence is submitted that the grave is required for use by this applicant as a private individual and not for the purpose of the firm or any other person. Graves cannot be purchased in reserve.

The registered deed holder/s must authorise the re-opening of a private grave using the Notice of Interment Form. The registered deed holder is the only person who has automatic right of burial within the grave space.

Upon the death of the deed holder of the exclusive right of burial, application should be made in writing to the Council, together with the appropriate fee, and documentation requesting the transfer of ownership to the person legally entitled. The person making the application will be required to sign a Statutory Declaration to this effect in the presence of a Solicitor or Commissioner for Oaths, unless a grant of probate has been awarded.

The Council will not recognise any transfer or assignment of an exclusive right of burial unless it has previously been submitted for registration.

8 Burial Records

Burial Registers are kept at the Cemeteries Office and can be viewed by appointment or downloaded via the Dartford Borough Council web site www.dartford.gov.uk

9 Maintenance of Graves

Grave spaces must be kept in a neat and tidy condition and any litter should be removed from the site. In the interest of public safety it is not advised to place breakable items such as, glass, plastic, stone chippings and ceramic within the grave space. Any items left on the grave are at the owners risk and Dartford Borough Council cannot be responsible for any damaged or stolen items. In addition, it is not permitted to place unauthorised edging of any material around the grave.

The authorised officer may remove without prior notice any non permitted items from the grave space which are considered dangerous, unsightly, or which could cause risk of damage or injury to cemetery users.

The Council reserves the right, without prior notification to the relevant deed holder, to prune, cut down or remove any flower, shrub or plant on a grave in order to excavate a grave, or facilitate access to a grave/path. Trees, large shrubs/rose bushes are not permitted.

Wreaths and floral tributes will remain on graves for a minimum of fourteen days from the date of burial. It is the responsibility of the applicant to remove floral tributes from the cemetery that exceed an area of 9ft x 4ft. Wreaths that become unsightly will be removed.

10 Memorials

Memorials may not be placed, erected or repaired on any grave or any additional inscription made without an official permit being issued. A completed memorial permit application form, signed by the deed holder, must be submitted with the appropriate fee to the cemeteries

office giving full details of the proposed work, fixing method, measurements and a clear diagram. Memorial work may only be undertaken by BRAMM (British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons) licensed fixers or those holding an NVQ equivalent. Any person or company working in the cemetery is required to have public liability insurance to the minimum of five million pounds indemnifying against all claims and actions for accident.

Where a memorial permit application has been refused by the authorised officer for non-compliance with the regulations, the applicant may refer the case to the senior manager responsible for Bereavement Services and if required a right of appeal can be made to the Director and portfolio cabinet member.

It is a requirement that Stone Masons make an appointment to work in the cemetery and where possible report to the cemeteries office before commencement of work. **(Memorial work will only be permitted Monday to Friday between 9am and 4pm, excluding Bank Holidays, and access will be refused during and prior to a funeral ceremony.)** The official permit should be signed by the fixer and returned to the cemetery office on completion of the work.

All work carried out in the cemeteries must conform to the provisions of the current Health and Safety at Work Act.

Memorial work will not be permitted when the on site ambient temperature is near to or below freezing, or if it is predicted that the temperature will fall below freezing within 12 hours of the memorial being fixed.

Maintenance of memorials is the responsibility of the grave owner but the Council reserves the right to make safe any memorial which fails the stability testing policy. The Memorial Stability Testing Policy is available on request from the cemeteries office.

All subsequent rubbish/excess materials must be removed by the person responsible for carrying out the work. Any damage caused by Stone Masons, or their vehicles, must be reinstated immediately at their own expense.

11 Memorial Specifications - Dimensions shall not exceed:

Memorial Type	Height	Width	Length	Minimum Thickness
Kerb Set (Traditional)	230mm (9")	0.76m (2'6")	1.98m (6'6")	
Headstone (Traditional)	1.83m (6')	0.76m (2'6")		76mm (3")
Cremated remains graves or Lawn	0.914m (3')	0.61m (2')		76mm (3")
Vase	305mm (12")	254mm (10")	254mm (10")	
Tablet/Plaque		457mm (18")	381mm (15")	76mm (3")
Children's purchased	0.61m (2')	0.61m (2')	1.219m (4')	76mm (3")
Children's memorial tablet		381mm (15")	254mm (10")	76mm (3")

- a) Memorial work must comply to the current British Standard (BS) 8415
- b) The Grave number (no less than 25mm(1") in height) is to be inscribed on every memorial
- c) No advertisement or trademark is to be placed on any memorial
- d) Memorials must be fixed on a pre-cast concrete landing or base in line with (a) above
- e) Natural stone only to be used (no iron or wire work)

- f) Vases/Tablets/Plaques must be fixed to a suitable concrete foundation
- g) Designs on memorials must be approved by the authorised officer
- h) Coloured designs should not exceed one third of the surface area of that part of the memorial on which the design is to be placed. Designs are not permitted on the back of headstones.
- i) Headstones must be set in a straight line and all facing the same way.
- j) New or Removed Memorials may not be placed for one year after the interment

Memorials at Stone Cemetery that cover two graves owned by the same person cannot exceed 7ft wide x 7ft long x 6ft high (including any landing base). Engraved/Etched Designs in this cemetery only may cover more than one third of the memorial's surface area.

12 Un-purchased Graves (Common/Public Graves)

Graves that have not been purchased are often referred to as Common or Public Graves in which multiple burials will be interred, other than on the Children's Section at Watling Street Cemetery, where each grave has a single interment. It is permitted to place a vase memorial (as described in 10 and 11 above) on an un-purchased grave. No other memorial/memento will be authorised.

13 Children's Section (Watling Street Cemetery only)

Babies will be buried in the Children's Section at Watling Street Cemetery unless otherwise requested. Two sets of ashes can be interred in these graves but only for a sibling of the deceased baby or their parents. From April 2019 it is possible to have a grave (2' x 4') on which a full sized child memorial (as described in 10 and 11 above) may be placed.

A children's memorial tablet or vase may be placed on an un-purchased grave. Burials in the Children's Section prior to April 2019 cannot apply for full sized child memorials retrospectively.

In the interest of public safety it is not permitted to place breakable items such as, glass, plastic, stone chippings and ceramic within the grave space. In addition, it is not permitted to place unauthorised edging of any material around the grave.

The authorised officer may remove without prior notice any non permitted items from the grave space which are considered dangerous, unsightly, or which could cause risk of damage or injury to cemetery users.

14 Cemetery Access

The Council reserves the right to close the cemeteries or to limit the entry of persons as indicated on notices displayed at the cemeteries entrance. Children under the age of twelve years should be accompanied by an adult.

Dogs, other than guide dogs, are not permitted in any of Dartford cemeteries

Vehicular access to members of the public is only available at Watling Street Cemetery. Any damage in the cemeteries caused by vehicles will be charged to the owner or person using the vehicle. Vehicles will not be admitted prior to or during a funeral. A maximum of sixteen cars will be allowed to be admitted in the cemetery during a funeral and must be parked in the marked bays only.

Persons in the cemeteries shall conduct themselves in a quiet orderly and respectful manner at all times. Any person who wilfully damages, defaces or destroys any property or causes any nuisance within the cemeteries will be removed and liable to prosecution.

The Council reserves the right to exclude from the cemetery any person or company soliciting for work connected with graves or memorials.

The Council reserves the right to refuse admittance to the Cemeteries. Any abuse or violence to staff will not be tolerated. Visitors will be asked to leave if found doing so and reported to the police

15 General

No photograph/filming intended for publication may be taken of, or within the Cemeteries without the prior approval of the authorised officer. Photographs of individual memorials/graves must have approval of the respective deed holder.

Wheelchair facilities can be offered for use by members of the public by contacting the Cemeteries Office.

Non denominational Chapels with a seating capacity of 55 at Watling Street and 40 at Stone cemetery are available for funeral or memorial services.

The Council cannot be held responsible for the loss or damage to any personal items left in the cemetery.

In addition to the above regulations periodic inspections are carried out within the Watling Street Garden of Remembrance. Non permitted items as indicated in the terms of the agreement will be removed.

Owners who do not wish their grave to be mowed or strimmed will be required to apply in writing and sign the necessary documentation.

16 Change of Address

During your period as owner of an Exclusive Right of Burial it may be necessary for the Council to contact you. Should you move, it would be most helpful if you would return this form to the Cemeteries office.

The Council reserves the right to alter or add to these Regulations at any time.

.....

Cemetery:..... Grave No:

Full Name (in capitals).... ..

Old Address

New Address.....