

Burials and Memorial Regulations

Drove Road & Stratton Way Cemeteries



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INTERMENTS

1. This policy is in compliance with the 1977 Local Authorities Cemeteries Order and the Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management (ICCM) guidance.
2. Notice of interment is to be given between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m., Monday to Thursday, and 9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. on Friday, at the Town Council offices, at least 5 working days in advance of any interment.
3. No interment will be allowed before 9.00 a.m. or after 2.30 p.m. Monday to Friday. No interment will be allowed on a Saturday, Sunday or Public Holiday.
4. All fees and charges are to be paid to the Council at the time of application and before the work in respect of which they are payable is begun. A receipt for such fees and charges will be produced once payment has been made.
5. The Council will arrange for the grave space to be marked.
6. Undertakers will be responsible for:
 - a) Ensuring the Notice of Interment forms are completed fully, a minimum of 5 working days prior to the commencement of the interment.
 - b) The delivery of the Certificate of Burial or Cremated Remains Certificate to the Council Offices 5 working days before the interment takes place.
 - c) Arranging a gravedigger to prepare the burial or cremation plot and to backfill the burial or cremation plot. The Council does not prepare or backfill burial or cremation plots.
 - d) Ensuring that gravediggers are provided with a plan of the appropriate section of the Cemetery.
 - e) Confirming with the gravedigger the exact location and depth of the grave space, prior to digging.
 - f) Ensuring the gravedigger meets on site with a Council representative prior to digging, to ensure the correct plot is identified and that work is carried out to the Council's specification.
 - g) Ensuring that the gravedigger excavates the correct plot size on the day preceding

an interment (except for weekends and Bank Holidays). Correct depths to be excavated are as follows:

| Interment Type | Depth | Width |
|----------------------|---|----------|
| Burial: Triple Depth | Dependent on ground conditions and water table. | 34" only |
| Burial: Double Depth | 6'6" only | 34" only |
| Burial: Single Depth | 4'6" only | 34" only |
| Ashes: Single | 2' only | 34" only |
| Ashes: Double | 2'6" only | 34" only |
| Ashes: Triple | 3'2" only | 34" only |

The Council will inspect the grave depths and check that all requirements have been met.

- h) Ensuring the grave is not left open and uncovered preceding an interment taking place.
 - i) Ensuring the gravedigger is present on site for the duration of the interment, in order to ensure that the grave can be backfilled immediately after the interment ceremony. If the gravedigger is not on site at the time of the interment the ceremony will not be allowed to proceed.
 - j) Ensuring the gravedigger is responsible for infilling the grave with topsoil, level with the adjacent land.
 - k) Ensuring the gravedigger provides a soil box. The gravedigger must not, under any circumstances, place soil directly onto another burial or cremation plot.
 - l) Ensuring that the grave digger removes all leftover soil from the Cemetery grounds after a burial or ashes interment.
 - m) Correct shoring of graves to be carried out where necessary and especially during inclement weather when the risk of siding collapse is greater.
 - n) Ensuring no cars, motorbikes, bicycles, vans, lorries, or trucks are to be taken to the grassed area of the Cemetery.
7. In every case of interment in a purchased grave space or plot, the consent of the purchasers or owners or their lawful successors of the Exclusive Right of Burial must be given on the Notice of Interment Form.
8. A non-resident who purchases an Exclusive Right of Burial must pay non-resident fees when the interment takes place, if they are still living away from Biggleswade. A non-resident is classed as a person who has not lived within Biggleswade in the last three years. A resident is classed as someone who is on the electoral roll or has been on the electoral roll for 5 years of the last 10 years for Biggleswade, and their minor children. Any interment of non-residents will pay the non-resident fee.
9. Purchasers or owners of the Exclusive Right of Burial in Drove Road or Stratton Way Cemeteries cannot transfer their rights therein to any other person or persons without the written consent of the Council and every such transfer shall be surrendered for the purpose of transfer to the person or persons to whom the owners desire, if the Council

shall so think fit.

10. Grave spaces or plots are sold in a strict sequence, to preserve the integrity of the Cemetery. The strict sequence is rigorously applied for purchases of one or more grave or plot.
11. The selection of grave spaces or plots for common interments will be carried out in a strict sequence by the Council. Only residents can pre-purchase plots and no plot can ever be reserved.
12. If more than one body is to be interred in any grave, whether purchased or unpurchased, where bricked graves or vaults are not constructed, a layer of earth at least 12 inches in thickness, must be left between each coffin interred therein and 2 feet of earth between the top of the upper coffin and the ordinary level of the ground.
13. Excavations for vaults and bricked graves, or for interments therein, are to be made under Council supervision, by the purchasers of the right of burial therein, who will be required to fill up and level the ground, to replace and make good any turf or shrubs, (not being on the grave space in which the vault is made) and the paths or roads that may be displaced or disturbed in the progress of the work, to remove all surplus soil, and who will be held responsible for any injury that may be done during such work to any adjacent vault or grave or to any tomb or memorial stone.
14. No trees or shrubs can be planted in any part of the ground except by the Council. Any trees or shrubs planted either in grave sites or within the grounds without the permission of the Council may be removed by the Council.

MEMORIALS, MONUMENTS, MASONRY AND MEMENTOS

15. All gravestones, monuments, memorials and inscriptions are subject to the approval of the Council via the issue of a valid Memorial Permit to erect and install such memorials. The permit will include records relating to inscriptions to be placed, drawings showing the form and dimensions of every memorial proposed and the correct plot number. The Council retains the right to be the ultimate authority relating to gravestones, monuments, memorials and inscriptions.
16. All memorials are to be kept in a good state of maintenance and repair by owners or their lawful successors, except if a special financial arrangement is made with the Council. If maintenance and repairs are not carried out after due notice, the memorial(s) may be removed by order of the Council.
17. Memorials may not be made of Bath, Caen or other soft stone. Cramps and dowels used in their construction must only be of stainless steel or non-ferrous metal. The materials and workmanship must be to the satisfaction of the Council and in compliance with ICCM guidelines.
18. The following memorials are permitted to be placed in the main part of the Cemeteries on purchased graves (a grave in respect of which a grant of exclusive right of burial has been granted).
 - a) A headstone or gravestone or tombstone not exceeding 4 feet in height with or

without kerbstones, and with or without flat stone. Kerbstones or a flat stone must not exceed 7 feet in length and in the case of a single plot 3 feet in width and in the case of a double width plot, 7 feet in width.

- b) A flat plaque not exceeding 24 inches by 18 inches.
 - c) A monument not exceeding 4 feet in height, 6 feet in length, and 3 feet in width for a single plot and 6 feet wide for a double plot.
 - d) A monument (such as a vase) not exceeding an overall height of 1 foot 6 inches.
 - e) In the case of a child-size plot a gravestone or tombstone not exceeding 2 feet in height, 4 feet in length and 2 feet in width.
 - f) The absolute maximum height of the above is 5 feet, including any additions, having ensured agreement from the Council.
19. Stratton Way Cemetery has designated areas for cremations (ashes). The only memorials permitted by the Council to be placed in these sections are small plaques, vases and ashes containers, none of which exceed 18" by 18" by 2". The Council accepts no responsibility for any damage caused to any items or for ensuring that it is replaced in its proper position after maintenance and grass cutting.
20. Applications for the erection, re-erection and removal of memorials must be made to the Council via the application form on the Council's website.
21. The Council reserves the right of passage over and around all graves and, where such a course is necessary, temporarily to cover or remove without notice, the headstone / tablet / vase / ash container upon any grave, to permit the re-opening of another grave in the vicinity, or for any other purpose.
22. The Council reserves the right to remove, refix, move, line-up or alter the position of any headstones / tablets / vases / ash containers as it may require.
23. Memorials and all materials for placing them and materials for removing or performing any work upon them at the cemetery must be assembled and made ready before the admission of the contractors to the cemetery. Any work carried out should not leave holes in an uncovered or unsecured state without adequate protection to prevent injury to others.
24. Contractors must provide their own tools, planks and other equipment required by them. Workmen must not be present at the Cemetery before 9.00 am or after 3.30 p.m. and not at all on Saturdays, Sundays, and Bank Holidays in any year. All work must be performed as expeditiously as possible. Contractors must remove their tools and all other equipment brought to the cemetery forthwith upon completion of the work.
25. All damage to the Council's property or to other monuments caused by the bringing in or taking out of materials by a contractor or other person or by their negligence or that of their workmen must be made good by the contractor or other person.
26. The Council will not be responsible in any way whatsoever for damage to or loss of memorials, vases, articles or mementos.
27. The owner of the Exclusive Rights of Burial or their estate are responsible for ensuring the safe and secure condition of the memorial and indemnifies the Council against all

claims, demands, proceedings of persons injured because of the unsafe condition of the memorial.

28. Memorial Masons must ensure that leftover soil is taken away from the cemetery grounds after completing memorial works.
29. No wreaths/floral tributes/plants or any other item are to be placed on the grassed area in front of or surrounding a memorial, gravestone or plaque, except at the time of interment (which must be removed within 14 days and if not, the Council will remove at a charge).
30. Unauthorised kerbstones which separate the grave from the grassed area are not allowed. Gravel, stones or anything which would separate the grave from the grassed area to the front, side or rear of a memorial are not allowed.
31. Other than by the Council's Public Realm Team or subcontractor, the use of strimmers / mowers, chemicals / poisons, or weed sprays is strictly forbidden.
32. The Council reserves the right to remove from the plot or Cemetery, faded flowers, vases, bottles, tins or any objects which are not authorised and which in its opinion are objectionable or unsightly. The public must deposit all litter or faded flowers in the allocated bins at the Cemetery.
33. Relatives or their estate will be asked to remove items or anything which is in breach of these regulations. Items not removed within 14 days of the request will be removed by the Council and relatives will be invoiced for the costs incurred by the Council on removal of such items.
34. Christmas Wreaths must be removed before the end of the following January.
35. In the interests of Health & Safety, vases, planters, and other ornaments made of glass or plastic are not allowed. Relatives are responsible for the upkeep of the allotted burial plot and must remove weed growth, and any self-set trees, or brambles or any other invasive plants from the burial plot until such time as there are no relatives that can carry out this maintenance. The Council will then instruct the Public Realm Team to carry out this work but only in cases where it has been proved that there are no relatives to carry this maintenance out.
36. The Council has the powers under the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order, 1977 to take action necessary to remove danger which arises by reason of the condition of a memorial or deal with it in any way to ensure the proper management regulation and control of the cemetery.

BURIAL RECORDS & CEMETERY PLANS

37. A Register of Burials will be kept at the Council offices where, at all reasonable times, searches may be made and certified extracts obtained for a fee.
38. A Plan of Drove Road Cemetery and Stratton Way Cemetery, showing the position of each grave is kept at the Council offices and may be seen at all reasonable hours without charge. If copies are requested, these can be provided for a fee.

39. Residents only are able to purchase a plot in advance from the Council. The Council will issue the next sequential plot available in the relevant section to preserve the integrity of the Cemetery.
40. The Council's fees for interments, plot purchase, memorials and other burial-related activities and administration fees is published on its website to give full transparency to its services. The agreed fees will remain in place from April to the following March of every year. Fee changes due by 1st April annually will be advertised in advance.

CEMETERY RULES

41. The Cemetery pedestrian gates are open to the public at all hours.
42. The Cemetery gates and bollards are secured via a chain and padlock. Under no circumstances should the chain be removed other than by the Public Realm Team. Anyone found to be removing chain via unauthorised methods will be reported to police and face potential prosecution.
43. All visitors will be expected to observe perfect decorum in all respects, not to disturb any persons in the cemetery who are attending a burial, tending or visiting a grave and to not smoke within the cemetery.
44. Prams and cycles will be allowed in the cemetery but must be wheeled on the roads or paths only.
45. All games are prohibited.
46. Dogs are not allowed in the Cemetery unless special dispensation has been given by the Council. In this case they must be on a lead, supervised and under the control of a person tending a grave. Service animals are permitted on-site but must be also kept securely on a lead at all times.
47. Dog Fouling is an offence under the Dogs (Fouling of Land Act) and subject to a fixed penalty fine.
48. The taking of photographs and video in the Cemetery, unless prior permission has been given by the Council, is strictly prohibited.
49. The Council reserves the right to refuse permission to any persons to enter the cemetery while a funeral service is in progress unless the person concerned are relatives or friends of the deceased. The Council reserves the right to ask any persons to leave the cemetery.
50. The Council reserves the right to make any additions or amendments to the regulations and charges at any time.

Any further information may be obtained from the Council Offices.

OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

Disturbance, Nuisance and Wilful Interference Article 18 (1) of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 provides that no person shall:

- (a) wilfully create any disturbance in a cemetery;
- (b) commit any nuisance in a cemetery;
- (c) wilfully interfere with any burial taking place in a cemetery;
- (d) wilfully interfere with any grave or vault, any tombstone or other memorial, or any flowers or plants on any such matter; or
- (e) play at any game or sport in a cemetery.

By Article 18 (2), no person not being an officer or servant of the burial authority, or another person so authorised by or on behalf of the burial authority shall enter or remain in a cemetery at any hour when it is closed to the public.

Every person contravening any of the above provisions is liable to prosecution.

Any abuse towards Council employees will result in the forfeiture of the agreement and the exclusion of offending parties from the cemetery.

ADMINISTRATION

- (a) All notices or applications required by these Regulations are to be sent to the Council.
- (b) The fees payable shall be in terms of the attached schedule.
- (c) The Council reserves the right to alter or vary the foregoing regulations or to deviate from them in any particular instances if appropriate.

FEES

Please see Appendix A for the current fees.



BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL

Application to purchase a plot in Stratton Way Cemetery

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Type of plot required (* delete as appropriate)

*Full burial / Cremated remains

*Single / Double depth

*Consecrated / Non-Consecrated Ground

I enclose herewith *cash / cheque in the sum of £

By signing this document, I agree to adhere to the existing Burial and Memorial Regulations document. I understand that I will, in due course, be issued with the Grant for Exclusive Right of Burial in Biggleswade Cemetery together with Biggleswade Town Council Cemetery Regulations. This Grant is subject to the provisions of any Order made under Section 214 of the Local Government Act 1972. A copy of any such Order currently in force may be inspected at all reasonable times at the Office of Biggleswade Town Council.

Signed

Date

Please complete as appropriate and return the form and fees to The Town Clerk, Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, 4 Saffron Road, Biggleswade, Beds. SG18 8DL

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|-------|
| This box is for office use only | | | |
| Plot no. | in section | Stratton Way Cemetery | |
| Receipt No. | Date | Grant No. | |
| Reg. of Purchased Graves | | Date copied to Ground staff..... | |

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Next review: January 2028