West Dereham Parish Council

Cemetery Regulations

(Pursuant to Section 3 (1) of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 and to the Local Government Act 1972)

All enquiries please contact the Clerk: E-mail: clerk@westderehamparishcouncil.uk

This cemetery is for people of all faiths and beliefs.

Whilst respecting the rights of the public, it is necessary to prepare these regulations to comply with the law, to enable contractors to carry out their duties safely and efficiently and to maintain a suitable environment for the bereaved to lay to rest their loved ones and to continue to pay their respects in this peaceful setting. West Dereham Parish Council requires all visitors to the Cemetery to follow these regulations.

If you would like to commemorate a loved one with the purchase of a tree or seat, please contact the Clerk for further details.

For Information

Grave/Burial plot	An area not exceeding nine feet (2745mm) x four feet (1220mm) . It should be noted that while it is possible to reserve two or more single plots side by side, double width graves are not permitted for maintenance reasons.
Body	Refers to the body or cremated remains of a deceased person brought to the cemetery for burial.
Coffin	Refers to a container constructed of wood, metal or other bio-degradable material in which the body is enclosed for the purpose of burial.
Council	Refers to West Dereham Parish Council.
Cremation Plot	An area not exceeding eighteen inches (465mm) x eighteen inches (465mm) within the designated Garden of Remembrance.
Double depth Plot	A plot where one coffin is interred with the intention of interment of another coffin at a later date. See EROB[1] below. Funeral directors will ensure that there is sufficient depth of soil between the two coffins.
Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB)[1]	Means the right, granted by the Council for a limited period not exceeding 60 years, to purchase a grave that will be excavated to a depth which will allow the interment of one or two bodies. The term body can refer to either a coffin burial or cremated remains burial. The EROB[1] entitles the purchaser to designate both names to be interred in the case of a 'double' burial. The purchaser is not buying the grave freehold and will not own any land.[1]

Extraordinary Funeral Procession	Refers to any funeral under the control of the military services, civil authority, members' organisation, or where there is the possibility of large numbers of mourners potentially causing disturbance to other graves.
Garden of Remembrance	See separate heading
Grave	A burial space, formed in the ground by excavation, without any internal wall or brickwork, stonework or other lining.
Natural Burial Area	See separate heading
Memorials	A Headstone at the head of a grave or a Tablet to commemorate an interment of ashes in the Garden of Remembrance. These are required to conform to standards as below.
Memorial Vases	Made of hard quarried stone, placed only at the head of a grave and must not exceed the width of a headstone or tablet with approved inscription.
Pet Burials	Pet burials are not permitted in the cemetery.
Reserved graves	A grave in respect of which an Exclusive Right of Burial[1] has been granted by the Council. These grave spaces are reserved and paid for prior to burial.
Registered Grave holder	Refers to the person who is registered with the Council as having the EROB[1].
Stillbirth	That defined by section 41 of the Births & Deaths Registration Act 1953 and the Still-Birth (Definition) Act 1992.
Vaults	There is no provision for the building of vaults in West Dereham cemetery.

[1]Exclusive Right of Burial: The registered grave holder may in his/her lifetime, within the specified 60 year period, bequeath or transfer the Exclusive Right of Burial to some other person. A transfer of Exclusive Rights of Burials will not be recognised by the Council until the Council records have been updated. Once the transfer has been made an Exclusive Right of Burial will be issued in the new registered grave holder's name.

Burials

1. All graves unless previously EROB[1] to be assigned by the Parish Clerk although, where possible, the wishes of an applicant for a particular location will be considered.

2. All burial fees to be paid to the Parish Clerk prior to the grave being dug.

3. All graves to be dug by Council approved funeral directors and to comply with Council regulations.

4. All graves to be dug in line with the row markers.

5. All funeral directors to carry out their own risk assessments and work to their own health and safety guidelines. Funeral Directors will be asked to provide copies of Risk Assessments, Burial Risk Assessments, working practice Method Statements and certificate from the Register of Grave Diggers.

6. Only one body to be buried in a grave at one time, with the exception of mother/child(ren) deaths during pregnancy/labour.

7. Graves to be backfilled immediately following a burial; no coffin to be left exposed overnight.

8. All excess soil from grave excavations must be removed from grave excavations and from site as part of the remit of funeral directors.[2]

9. Ashes may be buried in a grave plot if this is preferred. Headstone regulations will apply.

10. Ashes must be contained in a casket or urn and interred either in a grave plot, the Garden of Remembrance or the Natural Burial area. The scattering of ashes in not permitted.

11. No exhumations or disturbance of cremated remains will be permitted except by lawful authority.

12. Funeral Directors are responsible for arranging sufficient bearers to carry and lower the coffin in a dignified manner. When family members and mourners wish to be part of the bearer party this will be by arrangement with the Funeral Director. However, it is important that as 'independent' bearers assisting and lowering of the coffin is carried out at individual risk.

[2]Ref: The views of the Chief Executive of the Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management was that given (under Article 3 (1) of the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977) burial authorities have wide discretionary powers to manage and regulate civil cemeteries, nothing legally prevents a burial authority, or contractor with the authority's approval, removing 'non-offensive' surplus soil from the cemetery including from consecrated ground. Surplus soil from digging a new grave, or re-opening an existing grave for subsequent burial, should not be considered contaminated or offensive; nor is mound soil later removed following settlement. The only soil which cannot be removed is that excavated in the course of exhuming remains.

Memorials

1. Memorials will only be allowed on graves where the EROB[1] for that grave has been purchased. The right to erect a monument will not extend beyond the EROB[1]. Memorials or additional inscriptions can only be put on a grave once an application form has been completed and a fee paid and the Council has approved the design.

2. All inscriptions and designs on all memorials must conform to Cemetery Regulations and must be approved by the Parish Council at a public meeting.

3. Memorials (including vases) must conform to the Council's regulations and be sourced from hard natural quarried stone.

4. Memorials must be installed in accordance with BS8415 as recommended to the standard in the BRAMM Code of Working Practice 'The Blue Book'; this ensures they are secured to withstand a measured force of 35kg at all times without falling or moving.

5. The Council will implement the guarantee of workmanship on behalf of the purchaser if the memorial proves to be unstable.

6. The stonemason shall issue a 10-year guarantee of workmanship and material, to the purchaser and provide evidence to the Council of a public liability sum of £10,000,000 before the Council will issue any permit.

7. Permission is required from the Council for the removal, renovation and re-installation of a memorial. Permission will also be required from the Council for additional inscriptions.

8. Responsibility for extra soil or levelling graves should be the stonemasons', and they will need to charge their fees accordingly. They will be required to bring additional soil with them or remove any mound soil when installing headstones.

9. For the first 12 months from the date of burial a temporary memorial will be permitted at the head area of the grave, after which time it will be removed. If at any time items become unsafe, broken or unsightly, they will be removed by the Council.

10. If no headstone is to be erected, then after the expiration of six months for resettlement of the soil, the original funeral director is required to flatten the mound to a level with the adjoining ground to facilitate grass cutting of the cemetery. This expense should be included with the interment costs by the funeral director. Where contact cannot be made with responsible parties the Council reserves the right to intervene.

11. A headstone for a grave will not exceed 3'6" (1067mm) in height and to facilitate grass cutting no kerbstones or foot stones are permitted (bases should be below ground). The maximum permitted width is 3'0" (914mm). Double headstones are not permitted. Plot numbers should be chiselled into the back of the headstones – the lettering should be 1.5" (40mm) high in ordinary number format, not Roman numerals, and sited at the bottom corner on the opposite side to the stonemason's details.

12. Tablets for interment of ashes in the Garden of Remembrance – Tablets (flat or standing) to measure 18" (465mm) x18" (465mm). Plot numbers should be chiselled into a visible edge of the tablet at a suitable size in ordinary number format, not Roman numerals.

13. All memorials and inscribed vases shall be maintained in a clean and tidy manner; however, cleaning materials must not be left at the grave. The Council reserves the right to remove any cleaning products or cloths that have been left at graves without notice or payment of compensation.

14. Memorials are erected at the risk of the registered owner and the responsibility of the upkeep, in a good and safe condition, falls to the immediate family and/or friends. The Council recommends that the registered grave holder takes out an 'all risk' insurance policy against loss or damage including public liability. The Council will not be held responsible for the safekeeping of memorials, nor for any damage caused to a memorial by wind, storms, inclement weather, vandalism or other factors outside their control.

15. The Council reserves the right to re-align or move the position of any memorial as may be required.

16. The Council reserves the right to direct the registered grave holder/family to carry out any work to prevent encroachment of any kind on a neighbouring grave; any costs incurred will be the responsibility of the registered grave holder/family.

17. The Council reserves the right at all times to take over the maintenance of the grave without giving prior notice to the registered grave holder/family, where it has been determined that the registered grave holder/family has not suitably maintained the grave.

Grave Tributes

I. No shrubs or plants may be planted within the Cemetery or on any grave therein with the exception of appropriate flowers which may only be planted directly in front of the headstone. The Council reserves the right to remove without notice or payment of compensation any of the above that have been planted.

II. No other adornments, such as wooden fencing, concrete or other kerbing, wire fencing, windmills, raised or sunken footstones, wind chimes, balloons or any inappropriate decorative items as determined by the Council are allowed. The Council reserves the right to remove any of the above at its discretion without notice or payment of compensation.

III. Fresh flowers, artificial flowers, Christmas wreaths are acceptable. Artificial flowers should be either removed or replaced after six months and all Christmas tributes by 31st January. The Council will remove any items that do not comply with the foregoing.

IV. Floral tributes and wreaths must be removed within two weeks of the date of a burial or interment of ashes (earlier if they are decaying) or they will be removed by the Council.

Garden of Remembrance

In 2017 the Parish Council carried out major improvements in this corner of the Cemetery used for the interment of ashes. The landscaped layout provides a quiet contemplative area with seating, birdbath and parterre hedging planted with cherry blossom trees, roses and lavender.

Natural Burial Area

This area is planted with spring bulbs, wildflowers and poppies. The hedge surrounding the cemetery is planted with native species including Rowan, Blackthorn, Elder, Dogrose, Hawthorn and Hazel. To ensure that the principles of green burial are adhered to it is necessary to have some rules so that this part of the cemetery maintains the natural environment that has been requested.

a. Memorial Hedges / Shrubs will be planted to mark each grave. The purchase and maintenance will be the responsibility of family and friends.

b. Hedges /Shrubs for the burial sites can be chosen from the following varieties: - TBC

c. A wooden memorial may be used to mark the grave but must be approved by the Council, either in a full Council meeting or electronically if no meeting is scheduled. This will be noted in the following meeting.

d. The addition of any type of planting or decorative or additional materials is not permitted around the grave area or in the natural burial area. Wildflower seeds may be scattered at the interment ceremony.

e. Nothing may be hung from the Hedges / Shrubs at any time with the exception of the oak plaque which is included in the overall fees.

f. No gardening/pruning/cultivation is allowed.

g. Fresh flowers may be placed in or on the graves after the removal of all cellophane/wrappings, ribbon and floral foam but shall be removed by the person(s) responsible after seven days. Artificial/silk flowers and vases/urns are not allowed.

h. The Parish Council maintains the right to move any dead flowers and any items that have contravened the regulations.

i. All funerals most be arranged with the services of an approved Funeral Director.

j. Bodies may not be embalmed.

k. Coffins/urns and all component parts must be of a natural bio-degradable material, with no chemical treatment, and, where possible, from a renewable source.

l. All graves in the green burial area will be single depth only and only one body burial permitted on each plot. In the case of the burial of ashes please see scale of fees to accommodate various circumstances.

m. If a memorial Hedge / Shrub is chosen, the grave will be sited at the foot of this facing East.

n. Grave mounds will be levelled by the funeral directors no later than 12 months after a burial.

o. The graveside service must be carried out in a dignified way. The Parish Clerk must be advised of the name of the person conducting the service and the format with enough time to consult the Parish Council if necessary.

p. No exhumations will be permitted under any circumstances except by lawful authority (see no. 11).

q. Grass cutting in this area will be restricted to one cut per annum. No horticultural chemicals will be used in the natural burial area.

r. Burial in this area is strictly limited to residents of West Dereham or persons with close family or residential links to the village. Each application will be considered individually by the Parish Council. Adjacent plots are available for reservation by contacting the Parish Clerk.

s. Wooden benches may be dedicated to individuals must be approved by the Council and application for a non-wooden bench must be submitted to the Council for approval. Inscriptions will be limited to names and dates and subject to prior approval by the Parish Council.

[3]Please note that as the Oak grave markers are bespoke, time will need to be allowed for the craftsman to make and carve each plaque.

Public Health Funeral

Please refer to the following website for further information:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-health-funerals-good-practice-guidance/public-health-funerals- good-practice-guidance

Parking

The parking of vehicles is not permitted in the cemetery area.

Please note

Please close the gates when leaving the Cemetery. A water supply is available to provide water for the flower containers on graves and for cleaning memorials. Please ensure you turn off the tap.

The Cemetery is regularly inspected but as this is our village asset, please report any irregularities to the Clerk or, in extreme circumstances, the Police. The maintenance of the Cemetery is paid for by the Parishioners of West Dereham in the annual village Precept.

Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied and supervised by a responsible adult for safety reasons whilst in the Cemetery. No ball games or cycling allowed within the Cemetery.

All dogs must be kept on a lead at all times, and any dog mess must be removed from the Cemetery immediately.

West Dereham Parish Council maintains the right to review the Cemetery Regulations and Fees at any time.