

Rules and Regulations

Oak Hill

LAWN CEMETERY & CREMATORIUM





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Introduction

These regulations are in place to support the respectful, safe, and effective management of cemeteries owned and maintained by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. We understand that decisions relating to burial and memorialisation are deeply personal, and we aim to balance individual wishes with our responsibility to maintain dignified, accessible, and well-kept grounds for all visitors.

The council is committed to providing high standards of care and service across all of its cemeteries. These rules are designed to ensure consistency, fairness, and safety for everyone who uses or visits these spaces. They offer clear guidance on what is permitted within its cemeteries and outline the responsibilities of the council, funeral directors, stonemasons, and cemetery users.

The regulations are informed by a range of legal and statutory requirements, including:

- **The Local Government Act 1972**
- **The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO)**
- **The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**
- **The Environmental Protection Act 1990**
- **The Burial Act 1857 (as amended)**
- **And any other relevant legislation or updated government guidance**

We encourage all families, funeral professionals, and visitors to familiarise themselves with these rules prior to arranging a burial or installing a memorial. This helps to ensure that informed choices can be made and that our cemeteries continue to be places of peace and remembrance for all.

If you have concerns about how a regulation has been applied, you have the right to request a written explanation. If you remain dissatisfied, you may use the council's formal complaints process. Information on how to do this is available on request or can be found on the council's website.

Interpretation of Terms

Throughout these regulations, the following terms shall have the meanings assigned to them.

The council:

Refers to Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.

Bereavement Officers:

Members of the council's Bereavement Services team based at Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium, responsible for supporting administrative, operational, and customer service functions related to cemetery and crematorium services.

Bereavement Services Team Leaders:

Senior officers responsible for leading the Bereavement Services team and managing the day-to-day operations and strategic planning of all council-managed cemeteries and crematorium services.

The Cemetery:

Any cemetery owned and operated by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council under the Burial Act 1853 and The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977. This includes, but is not limited to:

- **Hatfield Hyde Cemetery**, Hollybush Lane, Welwyn Garden City
- **Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium**, Southway, Hatfield (formerly known as The Lawn Cemetery)

The Crematorium:

Refers to the cremation facilities and associated grounds located at Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium.

Grave:

A burial space formed in the ground by excavation, with no internal brickwork, stonework, or artificial lining. This includes graves intended for both full-body interments and the burial of cremated remains.

Private Grave:

A grave for which the Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased by an individual or family, giving them legal control over future burials in that grave for a specified period.

Public Grave:

A grave in which no Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased. Burials in public graves are arranged at the discretion of the council, and no exclusive entitlement exists.

Lawn Grave:

A grave located in a designated lawn section that allows only an upright memorial fixed to a pre-installed concrete plinth at the head of the grave. No other items, planting, or decorations are permitted within or around the grave space.

Traditional Grave:

A grave that permits a memorial across the full length of the grave space, subject to approval under the council's memorial regulations.

Cremated Remains Plot:

A smaller grave space designated specifically for the burial of cremated remains only.

Exclusive Right of Burial:

A legal right, purchased from the council, which grants the holder the exclusive authority to decide who may be buried in a specific grave for a fixed period (usually 50 or 75 years, depending on local policy).

Memorial Permit:

Official written permission issued by the council that must be obtained before any memorial can be installed, replaced, or altered on a grave.





Management

The council reserves the right to close any cemetery, or to restrict access, at any time for safety, maintenance, or other necessary reasons.

Subject to these regulations and any amendments made by the council, the overall management and day-to-day operation of the cemeteries and crematorium services are the responsibility of the Bereavement Services team leaders.

All visitors and users of the cemeteries are required to observe these regulations. The Bereavement Services team leaders and their authorised officers have the authority to refuse entry to, or remove from, the cemeteries any person whose behaviour is deemed inappropriate or who fails to comply with the regulations. This may be done without providing a detailed explanation, in order to maintain a safe and respectful environment.

While the council strives to ensure smooth and efficient services, it cannot accept responsibility for any disruptions or delays caused by circumstances beyond its control.

The council will make every effort to inform the public of any cemetery closures, access restrictions, or significant changes to services via updates on its official website.

These regulations may be reviewed and amended by the council as necessary. Users of the cemeteries are expected to comply with any such changes.

Bereavement Services Office Location

Bereavement Services
Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium
South Way, Hatfield, AL10 8HS

Telephone: **01707 357000**
Email: **contact-whc@welhat.gov.uk**
Website: **oakhill.welhat.gov.uk**

Cemetery Opening Times

Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium and Hatfield Hyde are open to the public at the following times:

- January to February: **9am – 4:30pm**
- March: **9am – 6pm**
- April: **9am – 8pm**
- May to July: **9am – 9pm**
- August: **9am – 8pm**
- September: **9am – 7pm**
- October to December: **9am – 4:30pm**

Burial Records

The council maintains comprehensive records of all burials. Requests to view original burial registers can be made by contacting Bereavement Services. Electronic records are available for burials between 2004 and 2017. Since January 2018, burial records have been kept electronically.

Children

Children under the age of 14 are not permitted to enter the cemeteries unless accompanied by a responsible adult or with prior permission from a Bereavement Services team leader.

Animals

Domestic animals are welcome within the cemeteries but must be kept on a leash at all times. Owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets. Horses are permitted only as part of funeral processions.

Sale of Goods and Soliciting Orders

No goods, plants, or articles may be sold within the cemeteries. Additionally, no orders for monument or memorial erection, repairs, or any other work related to graves may be solicited within cemetery grounds without prior written permission from the council.

Liability of the Council

While every care is taken to maintain safe and respectful environments, the council accepts no liability for injury to persons or damage to property arising from any cause within the cemeteries. This includes actions by the council, its employees, agents, contractors, or independent contractors operating on council grounds.

Gratuities

Council employees are not permitted to solicit or accept any gratuities or gifts.

Behaviour of Visitors

Visitors are expected to conduct themselves respectfully and quietly within the cemeteries. This includes showing consideration for other visitors and cemetery staff. Please respect the peace of the surroundings and treat all graves and memorials with care and dignity. Climbing on memorials, boundary fences, or gates is strictly prohibited.

Vehicles

All vehicles within the cemeteries, including those attending funerals or undertaking work, are subject to the direction and control of Bereavement Services staff. The council reserves the right to refuse entry to any hearse or vehicle.

Vehicles attending for work on graves or memorials must:

- Notify Bereavement Services prior to arrival to avoid conflicts with burial or internment services
- Park only in designated car parks, unless otherwise authorised by a Bereavement Services team leader
- Remain only for the time necessary

Rights of Passage

The council reserves the right of passage over all grave spaces as required for the ongoing maintenance, operation, and management of the cemeteries.

This may include access for the preparation of nearby graves, including digging for new burials or interments. While every effort will be made to minimise disruption and preserve the dignity of surrounding graves, some temporary disturbance may be unavoidable.

As part of grave preparation, excavated soil (known as spoil) must be stored safely until the burial takes place. Where possible, spoil will be placed on nearby unused ground. However, due to space and safety requirements, it may be necessary to temporarily place it on an existing grave. This is standard cemetery practice and is carried out with care and respect.

To minimise impact, all spoil is placed on protective boards and covered to maintain a tidy and respectful appearance.

Where practical, Bereavement Services may attempt to contact the grave owner in advance as a courtesy. However, this is not always possible and should not be expected. Notification depends on the availability of up-to-date contact details and confirmation of current ownership through the Exclusive Right of Burial. The council is not required to give notice before placing spoil on a grave and reserves the right to proceed without contact where necessary.

All affected areas will be reinstated to the condition in which they were found. Photographs will be taken by the grounds team before and after any such work to ensure the area is returned to its original state and to support ongoing care and maintenance standards.



Funeral Regulations



General Responsibility

While every effort is made to ensure smooth and dignified funeral arrangements, the council cannot accept responsibility for any disruption due to circumstances beyond its control.

All works within the cemetery should cease or be kept to a minimum while a funeral is taking place, as a mark of respect.

Responsibility of the Funeral Director or Arranger

The person arranging the funeral — whether a funeral director or private individual — is responsible for providing accurate and complete information to Bereavement Services to ensure smooth coordination and compliance with cemetery regulations.

- Funeral parties arriving more than 15 minutes early or late must notify Bereavement Services as soon as possible.
- Last-minute changes to funeral arrangements may result in additional fees.

Use of Chapel – Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium

Our on-site chapel at Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium is available for both burial and cremation services.

- Standard single service times begin on the hour and are scheduled for a maximum duration of 40 minutes.
- Services must be completed by 40 minutes past the hour to allow for preparation of the next service.
- Overrunning this time will incur a late fee, chargeable in 15-minute intervals.

We kindly ask that funeral directors and officiants plan services carefully to avoid additional charges and to respect the timing of other families' services. For full details of chapel hire and funeral service fees, please visit our website.

Coffins, Caskets, and Containers

All coffins, caskets, or containers must clearly display the full legal name of the deceased, exactly as shown on the certificate for burial or cremation (commonly known as "The Green") or the Cremation 6 (Certificate of Coroner) form. The name plate must be fixed securely to the container, and Bereavement Services staff or grounds staff must be permitted to inspect the plate prior to accepting the coffin for burial or cremation. If any discrepancies or uncertainties arise regarding the identity of the deceased, the burial or cremation may be delayed until the matter is resolved.

Non-wooden containers will only be permitted by prior agreement with the Bereavement Services team. It is the responsibility of the funeral director to ensure that the container is suitable for burial or cremation and we highly encourage coffins approved by FFMA/CCSA, but will consider alternatives if they can be supported with sufficient information about the construction.

Open Coffin Requests – Chapel and Graveside

The council recognises that some families may wish for the coffin or casket to be opened during a funeral service — whether in the chapel or at the graveside — often for religious, cultural, or personal reasons. We aim to support the needs of the bereaved wherever possible and will consider such requests with care and sensitivity.

Any request to open a coffin or casket during a funeral must be clearly stated on the Preliminary Application Form or the Burial Application Form.

Requests made on the day of the funeral (at either the chapel or graveside) will still be considered in accordance with the council's Request to Open Coffin Policy.



Important: If the deceased died from a notifiable infectious disease, in line with public health legislation and safety protocols, the coffin or casket will not be permitted to be opened under any circumstances.

It is the responsibility of the funeral arranger to identify and declare any known or suspected infectious disease at the point of submitting all required paperwork. This information must be clearly noted on the documentation provided.

Changes or Cancellations

An additional fee may apply for cancelled or postponed funerals, based on the amount of work already completed.

Funeral Arrangements

Full burial and cremation services must be arranged through a funeral director.

Burial of cremated remains can be arranged either through a funeral director or directly by the family/applicant with the Bereavement Services team.

Cremation Arrangements

A minimum of three full working days' notice is required for all cremation bookings. Requests for shorter notice will only be considered at the discretion of the Bereavement Services team leaders.

Cremation Paperwork and Payment

After booking, the following documentation must be submitted to Bereavement Services at least three working days before the service date:

- The Oak Hill Preliminary Application Form
- All relevant cremation paperwork (as required by law and local policy)

All paperwork must be submitted by the appointed funeral director.

The council invoices the funeral director after the service. Families make payment directly to the funeral director, who is responsible for settling all council fees.

Special Instructions

Any special requests or logistical considerations must be clearly noted on the Preliminary Application Form at the time of booking. This allows the Bereavement Services team to make the necessary arrangements and avoid disruption on the day.

Special instructions may include, but are not limited to:

- Horse and carriage processions
- Mass delivery of floral tributes
- Use of singers or live instruments
- Anticipated large attendance (e.g. more than 20 vehicles)
- Open Casket

If any special instructions arise after the paperwork has been submitted, they must be communicated in writing to the Bereavement Services team by the funeral director as soon as possible. Last-minute changes may limit what can be accommodated and could result in delays.

Burial Arrangements

To book a burial in a council-managed cemetery, Bereavement Services must receive at least three full working days' notice.

Requests for shorter notice will only be considered at the discretion of the Bereavement Services team leaders.

Grave Purchase Fees

Lawn graves are sold with fees based on residency status: Resident and Non-Resident.

Proof of residency must be provided via the funeral director if they are arranging the burial or submitted directly to the council if an ashes interment is arranged by the family. If no proof is provided prior to the service taking place, non-resident (treble) fees will apply.

Any subsequent burials within the same grave will be charged according to the residency status of the first interment, regardless of the residency of later interments.



Burial Application Form

After booking, a Burial Application form must be submitted to the council at least three working days before the funeral. The form must:

- Be fully completed and signed by the person arranging the funeral and the current or future Deed Holder
- Include all required details

Failure to submit this information may result in the cancellation of the booking. Late applications may only be accepted at the discretion of a Bereavement Services team leader.

The application form must be accompanied by the appropriate fee.

- For ashes burials arranged directly by a family, payment is taken by card over the phone via a secure line once the form has been received.
- Card payments can also be made in person at the office.
- Cash and cheques are not accepted.
- For full burials, or ashes burials arranged via a funeral director, families will make payment directly to the funeral director. The council will invoice the funeral director after the service has taken place.

If alternative arrangements are required, these must be agreed with Bereavement Services in advance.

Special Instructions

Special instructions refer to details of specific burial or chapel requests that require additional consideration on the day of the service. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Horse and carriage procession
- Family members wishing to backfill the grave themselves
- Erection of a marquee or canopy
- Delivery of a TV screen or other audio equipment to be used during the service
- Mass delivery of floral tributes
- Expecting a large attendance (e.g. more than 20 vehicles)
- Open Casket

All special instructions must be clearly stated on the burial application form at the time of booking to allow the Bereavement Services team to make the necessary arrangements. Failure to notify the council of such requirements in advance may result in delays to the service on the day.



Exclusive Rights of Burial or Licence

A Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial (or Licence) must be purchased for all private graves or plots. This grants the deed holder the legal right to be buried in a particular grave space and to authorise future burials or memorials.

A grave cannot be opened without written consent from the Deed Holder. If the deceased is the Deed Holder, the grave can be reopened for their interment upon request.

Depending on the selected plot, grants are issued for a period of up to 75 years. In accordance with legislation, graves cannot be sold for a period longer than 100 years at any one time. However, the law allows for the renewal or extension of ownership, which means that families may continue to extend the lease and retain the grave for as long as they wish, provided that the extensions are applied for and approved.

Some individuals may choose to extend the lease before it is due for renewal - for example, when arranging a second interment or planning for the future.

The council offers extensions to the Grant of Exclusive Right in blocks of 10 years.

Ownership must be kept up to date. It is the responsibility of the Deed or Licence holder to inform Bereavement Services of any changes in contact details and to initiate renewal before expiry.

Please note: The council does not remove or disturb remains when an Exclusive Rights of Burial or Licence expires; however, the plot may be made available for future dedications (e.g. memorial plaques).

Transfer of Exclusive Rights of Burial

A Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial (or Licence) must be purchased for all private graves or plots. This grants the deed holder the legal right to be buried in a particular grave space and to authorise future burials or memorials.

A grave cannot be opened without written consent from the Deed Holder. If the deceased is the Deed Holder, the grave can be reopened for their interment upon request.

Exclusive Rights of Burial can be transferred at any time during the Grant period.

Transfers may take place:

- While the current Grant Holder is alive, through a simple legal assignment; or
- After the Grant Holder has died, via a formal transfer to their legal next of kin or personal representative.

Please note that transferring ownership after death is more complex and may require additional documentation (such as a will, probate, or statutory declaration). This process can be lengthy to complete, depending on the circumstances.

An administration fee is payable for the transfer of Exclusive Rights of Burial. Details of the current fees are available from Bereavement Services.

The sale or transfer of a Grant is at the sole discretion of the council and must be legally registered with Bereavement Services before any further burial or memorial activity can take place.

If you're unsure whether a transfer is needed, or if you're preparing to arrange a funeral in a grave where the deed holder is now deceased, please contact the Bereavement Services team for guidance.

Allocation of Grave Spaces

Grave spaces are generally allocated in sequence to ensure the efficient and respectful use of cemetery land. However, specific grave selection may be permitted, subject to availability and an additional fee.

To select a grave, families must book an appointment with the Bereavement Services team. Appointments can only be made once a confirmed burial date has been booked.

Graves cannot be pre-purchased.

Reserved Graves – Historical Pre-Purchase Arrangements

The council no longer allows the pre-purchase of burial graves. However, a number of grave spaces across council-managed cemeteries were reserved under previous policies that permitted this.

These previously reserved plots were typically held for a 10-year period, although in some cases they were reserved for up to 75 years. The council will continue to honour all valid reserved grave arrangements made under the former rules.

Extending a Reserved Grave

If the current Exclusive Right of Burial holder wishes to extend the reservation, they may do so by paying the full grave purchase fee applicable at the time of the extension. Upon payment, an additional 75 years of Exclusive Right of Burial will be added to the existing expiry date of the reserved grave.

- Fees will be based on the residency status of the purchaser (resident or non-resident) as it was recorded at the time of the original reservation.
- By law, no grave may hold more than 100 years of Exclusive Right of Burial at any one time. Therefore, graves with more than 25 years remaining on their current reservation are not eligible for an extension at this time.

Burials in a Reserved Grave

If a burial is required in a reserved grave before an extension has been arranged, the following charges will apply and will be included in the funeral director's invoice:

- The current 75-year Exclusive Right of Burial fee
- The standard Burial Digging fee

If the grave has already been extended (i.e. the additional 75 years has been applied), only the Burial Digging fee will be charged at the time of the funeral.

Important: No memorial may be installed on a reserved grave until the reservation has been converted to a full 75-year Exclusive Right of Burial by payment of the applicable fee. This ensures the grave remains available and suitable for future use and complies with cemetery regulations.

Ending a Reserved Grave Arrangement

If the current Exclusive Right of Burial holder no longer wishes to retain the reservation, they may cancel it at any time by providing written notice to the council.

Please note: No refunds will be given for cancelled or unused reserved grave arrangements.



Availability of New Burial Plots

At present, the council only offers new burial plots at Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium.

Although Hatfield Hyde Cemetery still supports active burials in existing family graves, no new grave spaces are available for purchase at that site. Families who hold the Exclusive Right of Burial for an existing grave at Hatfield Hyde may continue to arrange interments there, subject to available space and approval by the council.

All new graves at Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery are located in lawn sections and are fitted with a pre-installed concrete plinth at the head of the grave. This is provided for the future installation of a memorial stone, in accordance with the council's memorial regulations.

While there may be remaining burial space in other cemeteries within the borough, the council does not manage new burials or allocate grave spaces at those sites. Families seeking interment in other cemeteries must contact the appropriate church authority or managing organisation for further information.

All enquiries relating to new graves, availability, and interment arrangements should be directed to the council's Bereavement Services team at Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium.

Interment Depth and Coffin Sizes

The council offers two types of grave spaces at Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium:

- **Section W Graves:** Suitable for coffins up to **6ft 7in x 2ft 6in**
- **Section G Graves:** Can accommodate larger coffins or caskets up to **7ft 2in x 3ft**

We regret that we cannot accommodate burials of any coffin or casket exceeding these maximum dimensions.

Grave Depth Options

Graves may be prepared at the following depths:

- **8ft:** with a capacity of up to **3 coffins** or **2 caskets**
- **6ft 6in:** with a capacity of up to **1 coffins** or **1 casket**
- **5ft:** with a capacity of **1 coffin** only
- **3ft 5in:** with a capacity of **1 coffin** only

Please note: Shallow graves at 3ft 5in require the use of a Grave Liner/Chamber, and additional fees may apply.



Excavation and Backfilling of Graves

All graves are excavated and prepared by trained grounds staff appointed by the council, following strict safety procedures and industry standards.

Preparation Before the Funeral

Before the arrival of the funeral cortege, grounds cemetery staff will:

- Ensure the grave is dug to the correct depth and coffin or casket dimensions as specified on the Burial Application Form and confirmed through the council's historical records (**Please note:** While families or funeral directors may request a particular depth, this will be verified against our database. If limitations exist, the Bereavement Services team will inform the arranger as early as possible.)
- Install hydraulic shoring to safely support the grave. Use of shoring is mandatory, and no burial will proceed without it
- Lay grass matting around the grave to maintain appearance and minimise ground disturbance
- Place putlogs and clean webbing across and beside the grave to support the safe and dignified lowering of the coffin or casket
- Ensure the approach and surrounding area is left clean and tidy
- Store all cemetery machinery out of sight in the compound

If a lowering device is required, it must be provided by the funeral director and brought with them on the day. This instruction must be clearly stated on the Burial Application Form.

Family Members Wishing to Backfill the Grave

It is recognised that, for some families and communities, personally backfilling the grave is a deeply important part of the funeral rite. The council respects this practice and will support requests for family-led backfilling where possible.

Requests for family members to partially or fully backfill the grave must be clearly stated on the Burial Application Form. This ensures that clear instructions can be passed on to the gravedigger and grounds team who will be present on the day.

We have received such requests in various forms, including:

- Families wishing to completely backfill the grave using the excavated soil.
- Families who wish to begin the backfill themselves but leave the remainder for cemetery staff.
- Families requesting partial or full removal of the excavated spoil because they wish to bring their own soil.
- Families who wish to begin the backfill using their own soil, then complete it using the remaining spoil.

All such arrangements are acceptable but must be clearly communicated in advance so that preparations can be made safely.



Please note:

- Family backfilling must be supervised by the grounds team, who will guide when it is safe to begin.
- Only the council's grounds staff may remove the hydraulic shoring; family members must not attempt to move or tamper with it.
- Under no circumstances may anyone enter the grave.
- The family must stand back and allow staff to remove the shoring at the appropriate time.
- The council's gravedigger and grounds team will remain present to assist unless their safety instructions are not followed.
- If any individual fails to follow directions or puts others at risk, staff will withdraw from graveside support.

Any injury, incident, or loss of life resulting from failure to follow the instructions of the grounds team will not be the responsibility of the council or its staff.

After the Interment

Once backfilling is complete (whether by family or the grounds team), the surface of the grave will be:

- Left with a raised mound of earth to allow for natural settlement over time
- Floral tributes will be placed respectfully on top

This raised mound helps accommodate the gradual sinking of the soil as it settles, particularly after rainfall. The council's grounds team will monitor the grave and reinstate the surface when ground conditions allow.

General Grave Maintenance

Following a burial, grave spaces will be left as a raised mound and are monitored for natural settlement. Over time, additional soil may be added during this period to maintain a safe and level surface.

All new grave spaces will be seeded within six months of the burial, weather and ground conditions permitting – often sooner if conditions allow. This process generally takes place during the growing season, which typically runs from April/May to September/October.

Please note: Any personal work or alterations carried out by the Deed Holder or others is done at their own risk and expense. The council reserves the right to amend or remove any such work if it prevents proper maintenance, creates a hazard, or breaches cemetery regulations.



Maintenance at Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery & Crematorium

At Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery, grave maintenance is the responsibility of the council.

- The grave surface must remain clear to allow for routine grass cutting and upkeep
- No items, including artificial grass, may extend beyond the pre-installed concrete memorial plinth
- A limited number of graves purchased prior to 2010 are permitted a 3ft x 3ft surround, as outlined in their original deed. These are honoured under legacy arrangements but do not apply to new graves.

Maintenance at Hatfield Hyde Cemetery

At Hatfield Hyde Cemetery, the maintenance of the grave space is the responsibility of the Deed Holder.

- The council will cut the grass around graves only where there is no obstruction from memorials or personal items
- Where upright or full-length memorials are present, grave owners must manage grass trimming and general upkeep within the grave boundary
- No items should extend beyond the grave space

Floral Tributes – Following a Burial

At both Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and Hatfield Hyde Cemetery:

- Floral tributes from the funeral may remain on the grave for up to 14 days following the burial.
- After this period, all items must be kept within the permitted area:
  - Oak Hill – All items must be kept within the concrete plinth area (3ft wide by 15" deep).
  - Hatfield Hyde – All items must be kept within the grave boundary.
- Any remaining tributes that extend beyond these limits will be removed without notice.
- Dead flowers will be removed routinely by the council's grounds staff. If placed in containers, the containers may also be disposed of.

Personalised Tributes – New Graves

For a period of six months after a new interment, the bereaved may place personalised tributes within the permitted memorial area only:

- Oak Hill: This is limited to the concrete plinth area at the head of the grave.
- Hatfield Hyde: Items must remain within the grave boundary.

Items Left on Graves / Plinth Area

- All tributes, floral arrangements, and decorative items are left at the owner's risk. The council is not responsible for any lost or damaged items.
- The following items are not permitted and will be removed without notice due to safety or maintenance concerns:
  - Glass items (vases, jars, bottles, candle holders, etc.)
  - Sharp articles or broken containers
  - Solar lights, candles, lighters, matches, pinwheels
  - Any item considered unsafe, neglected, unsightly, or detrimental to the appearance or safety of the cemetery.

Please note: this list is not exhaustive.

Broken glass or sharp items must not be placed in cemetery bins, but placed at the side, as this poses a risk to staff and visitors and will be treated as a health and safety issue.

Planting and Grave Surrounds – Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery & Crematorium

- No planting is permitted in or around the grave space.
- Grave surrounds (wood, metal, plastic, or stone) are not permitted beyond the concrete plinth for graves purchased after 2010.
- Any unauthorised planting or surrounds will be removed by the council without notice to maintain safety, accessibility, and the overall appearance of the cemetery.

Planting and Grave Surrounds – Hatfield Hyde Cemetery

- Grave owners may plant shrubs or flowers only within the grave boundary.
- Any planting that becomes overgrown or encroaches on surrounding graves or pathways may be pruned or removed by the council without notice.

Mausoleums and Mausoleum Burials

Mausoleums offer an alternative to traditional burial or cremation and are especially valued by those within Catholic and Italian communities, and by families who prefer not to be buried in the earth or cremated.

These marble-fronted burial chambers are located within the grounds of Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and provide a dignified, above-ground interment option.

Each individual mausoleum can accommodate:

- One full-size coffin, or
- Up to eight sets of cremated remains

The front marble panel can be inscribed and personalised to commemorate your loved one through a private stonemason, subject to an approved permit application.

Mausoleums can be purchased in advance, offering families the opportunity to plan ahead. The Exclusive Right of Burial for each mausoleum is granted for 75 years from the date of purchase.

Please note: Mausoleum prices are fixed and apply equally to residents and non-residents of the borough.

Tributes and Funeral Flowers

- Floral tributes from the funeral may be placed on the ground in front of the mausoleum for up to 14 days following the service.
- After this period, any remaining tributes will be removed by the council's grounds team as part of routine maintenance.
- No items or tributes should be left on the floor in front of the mausoleums beyond 14 days.

This ensures the area remains accessible, tidy, and respectful for all visitors.

Public Health Funerals

In accordance with its legal duties, the council provides Public Health Funerals for individuals who have died within the borough, where:

- There is no known next of kin, or
- The next of kin are unable or unwilling to arrange the funeral due to financial or other reasons.

The council will take all reasonable steps to identify and contact next of kin or any other individual who may be willing or able to take responsibility for funeral arrangements. Where this is not possible, the Bereavement Services team will arrange a Public Health Funeral in line with the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984.

These funerals are typically carried out by direct cremation. However, if the deceased is known to have held specific religious, cultural, or personal wishes, a burial in a public grave may be arranged instead.

Please note: The council is only responsible for arranging Public Health Funerals for individuals who die within its geographical boundary. If a resident of Welwyn Hatfield dies outside of the borough, the responsibility for funeral arrangements lies with the local authority where the death occurred.

Attendance

Public Health Funerals are arranged by the council without a formal funeral service and are not open to family or friends for attendance.

Ashes and Burial Information

If a cremation takes place, ashes may be collected by the next of kin (where known and contactable), or they can be informed of the location of the burial if a burial is arranged instead.

Where no instructions are received, ashes will be scattered by the council in the Communal Ashes Bed located within the Mulberry Tree Garden at Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium.

Public Graves

The council maintains a designated Public Grave, where the Exclusive Right of Burial is not purchased and remains with the council. Each Public Grave may contain up to three unrelated individuals, and no exclusive entitlement exists for future burials or memorialisation.





Memorial Regulations

Any contravention of these memorial regulations may result in a fine. Such penalties may affect not only the grave owner but also the memorial mason and funeral director involved, potentially preventing further memorial works or future burials within the grave, or council's cemeteries.

Memorial Permit Applications

No memorial work, including erection, inscription, or renovation of memorials, vases, or kerbs, may proceed without prior approval.

To apply, the stonemason must submit a completed permit form signed by the registered grave owner. The application must also include scale drawings of the proposed memorial, clearly showing dimensions and design details.

The permit must be authorised by a Bereavement Officer before any work begins. Once approved, the permit authorisation will be returned to the stonemason together with an invoice for the applicable fee. The permit fee is payable by the grave owner to the stonemason as part of their arrangements with them and is not paid directly to the council.

Materials and Standards

All materials used for any memorial must be approved by the Bereavement Officer. The use of soft stones such as Bath or Caen stone, and wood, is not recommended for memorials due to their lower durability. All cramps and dowels used in the construction of memorials must be made of copper, brass, or other non-ferrous materials to prevent corrosion. All materials and workmanship must meet the satisfaction of the council.

Additionally, all memorials must be erected in accordance with the British Standard BS 8415, which governs the design, manufacture, and installation of cemetery memorials to ensure safety and durability.

Identification

Temporary markers such as wooden crosses or plaques should be removed by the grave owner once a permanent memorial is installed.

It is a requirement that the grave section and number be inscribed on the back of all upright memorials. The inscription should be in letters or numbers at least 1 inch in height and must correspond to the cemetery register. Grave owners are responsible for this inscription. At Hatfield Hyde Cemetery, kerb memorial inscriptions may be placed on the foot of the kerb. For memorials that incorporate vases or posts, it is recommended that these items are clearly identified with the grave's details to avoid misplacement. If a memorial is found not to be properly identified, the grave owner will be notified and required to rectify this, as failure to do so will constitute a breach of regulations.

With the owner's consent and council approval, the name of the stonemasonry may also be engraved on the reverse side of the memorial, using letters no taller than 0.5 inches and positioned no more than 6 inches from ground level.

Use of Quick Response Codes and Matrix Barcodes

The use of QR codes or matrix barcodes on memorials is permitted, providing they can be removed if necessary.

Execution of Work

All memorial stonework must be fully prepared and ready for installation before being brought into the cemetery. All work must be completed to the satisfaction of the Bereavement Officer.

All individuals engaged in memorial work must provide their own tools and materials and take all reasonable steps to protect the surrounding turf,



graves, and any adjacent memorials during the course of their work.

Memorial masons and their employees may only carry out work within cemeteries during the cemetery's normal working hours. Work must not take place during a funeral service. Masons must contact the Bereavement Services Office in advance to confirm if a funeral is scheduled, particularly if vehicle access is required.

A height barrier may be in place at Oak Hill Cemetery but will be opened by cemetery staff upon notification of planned memorial work.

The installation or removal of memorials must be carried out by competent and qualified stonemason, who are NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) or BRAMM (British Registrar of Accredited Memorial Masons) registered and adhere to BS 8415. All materials used must be approved by the council.

Following completion of the work, masons must remove any surplus soil and clean the area thoroughly. Any temporary markers should be left behind the memorial for the grave owner to remove. Masons will be held responsible for any damage caused by themselves or their employees to cemetery grounds or other memorials.

Making Good Any Damage

Any damage caused to council-owned land, property, or infrastructure during work on graves or memorials must be made good at the expense of the responsible individual(s), within a timeframe stipulated by the council.

Memorial Maintenance and Safety

The council has a duty of care to ensure all memorials within its cemeteries are maintained to a high standard and are safe for visitors and staff. As such, all memorials in council-operated cemeteries are subject to periodic Memorial Safety Testing by a contractor appointed by the council.

For full details on how memorial safety testing is conducted, please refer to the council's Memorial Safety Policy and Procedure.

Liability

Memorials remain in the cemetery at the sole risk of the grave owner. The council accepts no responsibility for damage to, or caused by, any memorial.

Grave owners are strongly advised to obtain appropriate insurance for their memorials. It is also considered best practice to commission a memorial mason who offers a guarantee for their work.

Rights of the Council

The council reserves the right to:

- Remove any memorial from a grave space upon the expiry of the Grant or Licence period.
- Remove any memorial that is considered unsafe or is in a state of disrepair.
- Remove any memorials not placed on the designated plinths of lawn graves at Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery.
- Revoke previously granted permission for a memorial and require the owner to remove part or all of the memorial from the cemetery.

Where the council is required to carry out any of the above actions, any associated costs may be charged to the registered grave owner.

Memorial Dimensions

To maintain safety, consistency, and the integrity of the cemetery landscape, all memorials must conform to the maximum dimensions specified below. These dimensions apply to the entire structure, including its base, headstones, and any associated elements.

These measurements exclude the concrete plinth provided by the council, or where applicable, the York Stone landing or a pre-cast reinforced concrete landing supplied by an approved manufacturer as part of the memorial's foundation.

All memorials must also be installed in accordance with British Standard BS 8415 and approved through the Memorial Permit Application process.



Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery & Crematorium

Plot Type	Maximum height	Maximum width	Maximum depth	Minimum thickness	Maximum kerb length
Lawn Grave	3ft	3ft	1ft 3in	3in	N/A
Islamic Grave	3ft	3ft	1ft 3in	3in	N/A
Memorial Garden (MG) Plot	2ft 2in	3ft	1ft 3in	Max. 3in	N/A
Lily Garden Plot	2ft 2in	3ft	1ft 3in	Max. 3in	N/A

Hatfield Hyde Cemetery

Plot Type	Maximum height	Maximum width	Maximum depth	Minimum thickness	Maximum kerb length
Lawn Grave (Headstone only)	3ft	3ft	1ft 3in	3in	N/A
Memorial Garden (MG) Plot	2ft 2in	3ft	1ft 3in	Max. 3in	N/A
Traditional Grave	5ft	3ft	1ft 3in	3in	6ft 6in

Memorial Bench Regulations

Effective from April 2026

The council aims to maintain a peaceful, respectful, and well-maintained environment within its cemeteries. The following policy sets out the current regulations for memorial benches in:

- **Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery & Crematorium**
- **Hatfield Hyde Cemetery**

These regulations replace all previous versions and are divided into two parts:

- **Part A: Regulations for new memorial benches** (Oak Hill only)
- **Part B: Regulations for existing benches** (all cemeteries)

Part A: New Memorial Benches (Oak Hill Only)

As part of the redevelopment of Oak Hill Cemetery (completed in 2023), a new bench policy has been introduced. This allows families the opportunity to install individual memorial benches in designated areas of the cemetery.

1. Eligibility and Location

- Benches may only be placed in pre-approved locations, identified by the council.
- Bench locations will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.
- Benches cannot be installed directly on burial plots or outside designated areas.

2. Bench Specification

- All new benches must be supplied through the council and will be made from recycled plastic designed to resemble wood, offering a durable and environmentally friendly alternative.
- An optional personalised inscription may be added, subject to an additional fee.
- All inscriptions must be arranged and purchased through the council; private or third-party inscriptions are not permitted.

3. Ownership and Responsibilities

- The bench will belong to the licence holder, not the council.
- The licence is granted for a fixed period, with the option to renew at the end of the term.
- The upkeep, maintenance, and condition of the bench during the licence period is the sole responsibility of the licence holder.

4. Licence Expiry or Non-Renewal

- If the licence is not renewed at the end of the fixed period:
  - The licence holder may choose to remove the bench themselves.
  - If not removed within a specified notice period (30 days), the council will remove the bench. Storage or safe return is not guaranteed.
  - The plot will then be made available for a new licence holder.

5. Bench Removal or Disrepair

- If a bench falls into disrepair or becomes unsafe, the council reserves the right to notify the licence holder to carry out repairs.
- If the bench remains in poor condition after 30 days, the council may remove it without further notice, and any associated costs may be passed to the licence holder.

6. General Conditions

- No personal items, decorations, or planting are permitted on or around benches. Any such items will be removed.
- Benches are for public use and may be used respectfully by all cemetery visitors.

Part B: Existing Benches (Hatfield Hyde & Oak Hill pre-2025)

Benches previously installed under earlier versions of the council's policy remain subject to those terms, with some modernised adjustments outlined below:

1. Council-Owned Benches (from April 2012 onwards)

- Benches installed and owned by the council will continue to be maintained by the council.
- These benches may have single or multiple dedications, depending on the bench type.
- At the end of the 10-year licence period:
  - The licence holder may choose to renew (subject to current fees), or
  - The plaque/bench will be removed, and the space made available for a new dedication.
- New/replacements dedications (plaques) may also be purchased to install on some existing benches, as agreed with the council.

2. Benches Installed Prior to 2012 (Privately Owned)

- These remain the responsibility of the original owner or current licence holder.
- At the end of the original licence period, renewal will require:
  - Replacement with a council-approved bench, or
  - Full removal of the bench and reinstatement of the area to grass.

3. Condition and Safety

- The council will assess the condition of all benches and plinths as part of ongoing maintenance.
- Unsafe or damaged benches must be repaired or replaced by the owner within 30 days of notice. If not addressed, the council may remove the bench and recharge any associated costs.

Important Notes for All Bench Holders

- All benches, regardless of ownership, are public seating and may be used by any visitor.
- The council must be kept informed of up-to-date contact details for all licence holders.
- For queries or to apply for a new bench, please contact Bereavement Services on **01707 357000**.



Site-Specific Memorial Regulations for Oak Hill

Lawn Graves

Memorials on lawn graves are restricted to specific shapes and sizes and must be located and securely fixed only to the concrete plinths provided by the council. The installation of kerb sets is not permitted. Only upright headstones placed on the concrete plinth at the head of the grave are allowed. These size and shape restrictions are designed to maintain a tidy and well-managed landscape. Any contravention of these memorial regulations may result in a fine.

From April 2018, only single headstones will be permitted on lawn graves.

Headstones cannot not be placed on reserved plots, until the reservation has been converted to a full 75-year Exclusive Right of Burial by payment of the applicable fee. This ensures the grave remains available and suitable for future use and complies with cemetery regulations.

Since 2010, new graves at Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery will not be allowed kerb settings, surrounds, or extensions beyond the concrete plinth. A limited number of lawn graves purchased prior to 2010 have an original Deed which permits a 3ft x 3ft surround. These legacy arrangements will continue to be honoured but do not apply to any graves purchased after 2010.

Where a stonemason is engaged to install, reinstate, or replace a permitted surround on one of these legacy plots, the surround must be constructed on sufficient and suitable foundations to ensure long-term stability and safety. A minimum period of 12 months is recommended from the date of the last interment before the installation of any surround.

In addition, the surround must be installed on a precast concrete landing supported by cross-bearers. All works must be carried out in accordance with recognised industry standards and good practice. Any surround or memorial installed without appropriate foundations or support may be deemed unsafe and may be required to be removed, altered, or made compliant at the grave owner's expense.

Existing half-kerb settings and small garden extensions installed prior to 2010 may remain, provided they are well-maintained and do not adversely affect the cemetery's appearance.

Grave spaces that have been neglected for an extended period will receive notice requiring the owner to maintain the area. Failure to do so may result in the removal and disposal of items by the council, with the area returned to grass.

Under no circumstances shall the entire grave space be occupied by tributes, planting or stonework.

Erection and Fixing

All memorial headstones must be erected in accordance with British Standard BS 8415 and fixed using a NAMM or BRAMM approved anchorage system. Headstones are to be installed in back-to-back rows at the head of each grave space on the concrete plinths provided by the council. Each approved memorial shall be identified by a small anchor mark inscribed on the reverse side.

The Rose Garden

The Rose Garden offers dedicated plots for the interment of cremated remains alongside a commemorative rose tree or memorial garden kerb. Licences are available for a fixed term, and plots may be purchased in advance.

Only loose interments (strewings) are permitted, with a maximum of two sets of ashes per plot. Interments are carried out at a depth of 1 foot in front of a rose tree. For memorial garden kerb plots, ashes are interred at a depth of 1 foot, behind the kerb. Cremations carried out at Oak Hill include interment at no additional charge. Where the cremation takes place elsewhere, interment fees will apply.

The rose trees within this area are maintained by the council's grounds team. If a rose tree dies during the licence period, it will be replaced at no cost to the licence holder.

Only specific types of memorials are permitted in the Rose Garden and they must be purchased through the Bereavement Services team. Mini kerb inscriptions must also be arranged via the Bereavement Services team.

Personal items, including windmills, wind chimes, flags, lights, and similar decorations, are not permitted in this area.



Mulberry Tree Garden

The Mulberry Tree Garden is a communal remembrance space offering the opportunity to scatter cremated remains within one of three communal beds.

Families may choose to commemorate their loved ones with memorial leaves on the Mulberry Tree, bench plaques, or columbarium wall plaques, all of which must be purchased through the Bereavement Services team.

Columbarium wall plaques are placed on the large brick columns surrounding the garden. These columns were originally designed with niches for the placement of ashes or memorial items; however, the niches are no longer in use, and no items may be placed inside them.

Licences are available for a fixed term and may be purchased in advance. Scattering is included at no charge when the cremation takes place at Oak Hill; charges apply for cremations carried out elsewhere.

No personal items or decorations, including windmills, wind chimes, flags, or lights, may be placed in this area.

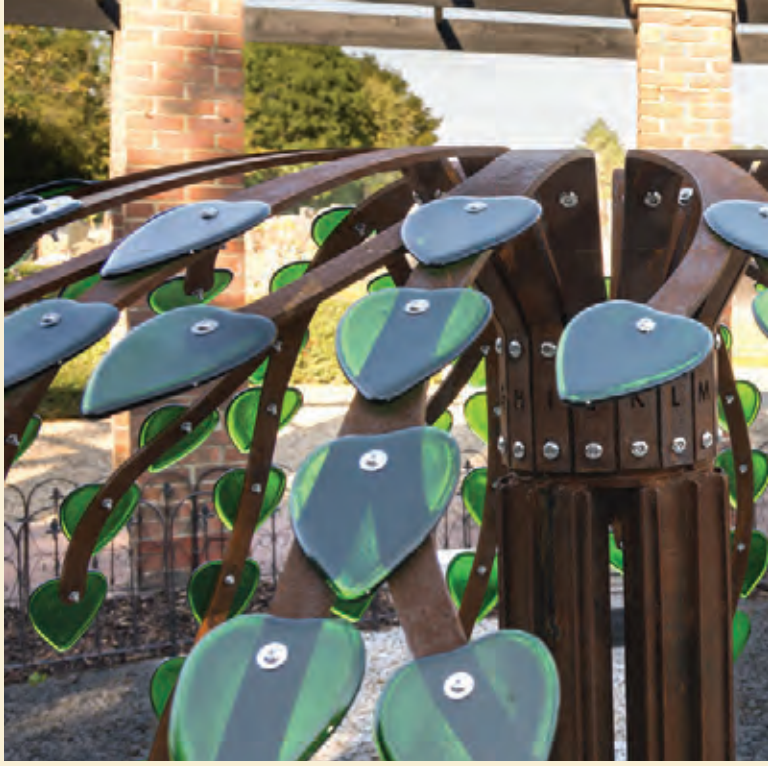
Communal Beds

Communal beds are designated areas for the scattering of cremated remains. They are not available for reservation or exclusive use. Scattering is offered free of charge for cremations carried out at Oak Hill, with a fee applied when cremation takes place elsewhere.

During the scattering process, mulch is temporarily removed or placed to the side, and the earth is gently disturbed before the ashes are scattered with a ceremonial urn. Mulch is then replaced to cover the ashes. No flowers, memorials, or personal items may be placed in these areas.

Commemorative Garden Tablets

Commemorative Garden Tablet plots are available for the burial of cremated remains and are licensed for a fixed term.



Each tablet plot may contain a maximum of two sets of ashes, which may be buried either loosely or within a casket or container. Memorial tablet with incorporated vase for floral tributes can be purchased through an approved stonemason with a valid permit application.

Interment in these plots is chargeable regardless of where the cremation took place. Personal decorations, including windmills, wind chimes, lights, or flags, are not permitted.

Jasmine Garden

The Jasmine Garden offers a peaceful and flexible space for the scattering and memorialisation of cremated remains. Ashes may be scattered on the central lawn using a ceremonial urn and brushed into the grass once the family has left the site. The lawn is aerated regularly to maintain the condition of the ground.

Families have the option to commemorate their loved one with either a memorial garden kerb or a bench plaque. Licence terms for both options are available, and memorialisation may be purchased in advance. Their inscriptions must be arranged through the Bereavement Services team.

Where a licence has been purchased for a memorial garden kerb, families may choose



to have ashes loosely interred (strewn) at a depth of 1 foot behind the kerb. A maximum of two sets of ashes may be interred per memorial garden kerb. Scattering or strewing is included at no charge when the cremation takes place at Oak Hill, with a fee applied when cremation takes place elsewhere.

The Jasmine Garden also includes a memorial postbox, which is open to all visitors. This allows anyone to write and post a letter to a loved one, offering a quiet and personal way to reflect and remember.

Personal items such as windmills, wind chimes, flags, lights, or other decorative objects are not permitted.

Memorial Gardens (MG) Plots

Memorial Garden plots (commonly referred to as MG plots) are individual ash burial plots measuring approximately 1 metre by 1 metre. These plots are not available for reservation and must be used at the time of need. Licences are issued for a minimum term of 50 years.

Each plot can hold up to four sets of cremated remains. Interment may be carried out using caskets or containers, through loose burial (strewing), or in an above-ground vault memorial. All interments in MG plots are chargeable, regardless of where the cremation was carried out. Memorials may be arranged either through the Bereavement Services team, who can provide a limited range of small memorial items (for example, plaques), or through a private stonemason. Memorials arranged through a private stonemason are subject to the submission and approval of a valid permit application.

Licence holders may undertake limited planting within their designated plot, but large shrubs, trees, or inappropriate plants are not permitted. All upkeep within the plot is the responsibility of the licence holder. Some MG plots are accompanied by a commemorative rose tree, which will be maintained by the council's grounds team.

Decorative or personal items such as windmills, flags, lights, and similar objects are not permitted.

Lily Garden

The Lily Garden provides individual burial plots for cremated remains, each measuring 4 feet by 4 feet (1.2 metres). Licences are offered for a minimum term of 50 years and may be purchased in advance.

Each plot can accommodate up to four sets of ashes, which may be interred in a casket or container, loosely interred (strewing), or placed in an above-ground vault memorial. Memorials may be arranged either through the Bereavement Services team, who can provide a limited range of small memorial

items (for example, plaques), or through a private stonemason. Memorials arranged through a private stonemason are subject to the submission and approval of a valid permit application.

Licence holders are permitted to carry out small-scale planting within the plot. However, large trees, bushes, or invasive planting are not allowed. Maintenance within the plot is the responsibility of the licence holder, while general maintenance of the surrounding grounds, such as grass cutting, is carried out by the council's grounds team.

Interment fees apply for all ashes buried in the Lily Garden, regardless of the cremation location.

Personal items such as windmills, wind chimes, flags, and lights are not permitted.



Garden of Remembrance Licence Renewals

Each Garden of Remembrance plot or memorial is held under a time-limited licence agreement. When a licence is due to expire, the council will make every effort to contact the licence holder to offer the opportunity to renew or terminate the licence.

Three written notices will be sent:

- The first two letters will be issued in the months leading up to the expiry date.
- A final letter will be sent after the licence has expired.

These letters will provide details of the current renewal fees and give the licence holder the option to either extend the licence for a further term or formally terminate the agreement. If the licence is terminated, the licence holder may arrange for any memorial plaques or items at the plot to be removed and the plot or memorial position may be made available for a new licence in future.

In cases where no response is received to any of the written notices, the council will place a visible notice directly at the plot or memorial. This notice will remain in place for a period of one year and will advise visitors to contact the Bereavement Services Office. This provides a further opportunity for family or friends to make contact - particularly around significant dates such as anniversaries, Mother's Day, Father's Day, or Christmas.

If the council does not receive a response, the plot or memorial position may be made available for a new licence in future.

It is essential that licence holders inform the council of any changes to their contact details to ensure correspondence is received. We also strongly advise that licences are held in the name of a living individual to avoid the risk of important notices going unanswered.



Site-Specific Memorial Regulations for Hatfield Hyde

Traditional Graves

Hatfield Hyde Cemetery offers traditional grave spaces that permit a wider range of memorialisation than lawn graves. Memorials may cover the entire grave space, subject to size and shape approval, and must be erected in accordance with British Standard BS 8415.

If access to a grave is required for a further interment and a memorial or kerb set is already in place, it is the responsibility of the grave owner or the person arranging the funeral to ensure that the Funeral Director or stonemason they have appointed removes the memorial to allow the burial to take place. The memorial can be temporarily placed within the cemetery in the nearest available space to the grave but must be replaced once the ground has settled.

All kerb sets and memorials must be installed on a York Stone landing or a pre-cast reinforced concrete landing supplied by an approved manufacturer. The landing must be no less than 4 inches thick and must be laid flush with or below ground level.

Where necessary, the council reserves the right to temporarily move adjacent memorials to facilitate access for future burials. No objection to this work will be permitted from neighbouring grave owners.

All vases, ornaments, or decorative additions must remain within the confines of the kerb set. Chippings, paving, or rockwork are only permitted if contained within an approved kerb surround. No memorial may be erected or re-erected on a traditional grave within 12 months of the most recent interment, to allow adequate time for ground settlement.

Memorial Gardens (HM) Plots

Hatfield Hyde Cemetery offers Memorial Garden plots are individual ash burial plots. These plots are not available for reservation and must be used at the time of need. Licences are issued for a minimum term of 50 years.

Each plot can hold up to four sets of cremated remains. Interment may be carried out using caskets or containers, through loose burial (strewing), or in an above-ground vault memorial. All interments in HM plots are chargeable, regardless of where the cremation was carried out. Memorials may be arranged either through the Bereavement Services team, who can provide a limited range of small memorial items (for example, plaques), or through a private stonemason. Memorials arranged through a private stonemason are subject to the submission and approval of a valid permit application.

Licence holders may undertake limited planting within their designated plot, but large shrubs, trees, or inappropriate plants are not permitted. All upkeep within the plot is the responsibility of the licence holder.

Decorative or personal items such as windmills, flags, lights, and similar objects are not permitted.

Rose Trees (formerly Commemorative Rose Bushes)

Rose Trees at Hatfield Hyde Cemetery are dedicated either in memory of a loved one or in conjunction with the interment of cremated remains. Cremated remains may be loosely interred at the base of the tree, in accordance with site guidelines.

Each Rose Tree may be accompanied by a small granite memorial plaque. The tree is maintained by the council's grounds team; however, the plaque remains the responsibility of the licence holder throughout the term of the licence.

No additional items, ornaments, or decorations may be placed in or around the Rose Tree area.

Sanctum Vaults

Sanctum Vaults at Hatfield Hyde Cemetery are above-ground granite chambers designed for the placement of cremated remains. Each vault is sealed with a granite tablet.

Vaults are pre-installed by the council. No additional items, tributes, or decorations may be placed around the Sanctum Vault area.

Interments can be arranged through a Funeral Director, or directly through the Bereavement Services team, based at Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium. Memorials are arranged through a private stonemason, subject to the submission and approval of a valid permit application.

Memorial Garden Kerbs

Granite memorial kerbs form part of a landscaped memorial garden at Hatfield Hyde Cemetery. Each plot can hold up to two sets of cremated remains. Cremated remains can be interred behind the kerb in a casket or container, or loosely burial (strewing).

Memorial Garden Kerbs are installed and maintained by the council and include a vase for floral tributes. No other items, ornaments, or decorations may be placed in or around this area.

Licence Renewals

All memorial plots at Hatfield Hyde Cemetery are held under fixed-term licences. As each licence approaches its expiry date, the council will make every effort to contact the named licence holder to offer the opportunity to renew or formally end the agreement.

The process includes:

- Three written notices:
  - Two issued before the expiry date
  - One final reminder after the licence has expired

These letters will provide details of the current renewal fees and give the licence holder the option to either extend the licence for a further term or formally terminate the agreement. If the licence is terminated, the licence holder may arrange for any memorial plaques or items at the plot to be removed and the plot or memorial position may be made available for a new licence in future.

In cases where no response is received to any of the written notices, the council will place a visible notice directly at the plot or memorial. This notice will remain in place for a period of one year and will advise visitors to contact the Bereavement Services Office. This provides a further opportunity for family or friends to make contact - particularly around significant dates such as anniversaries, Mother's Day, Father's Day, or Christmas.

If the council does not receive a response, the plot or memorial position may be made available for a new licence in future.

It is essential that licence holders inform the council of any changes to their contact details to ensure correspondence is received. We also strongly advise that licences are held in the name of a living individual to avoid the risk of important notices going unanswered.





Fees and Charges

Payment Terms

All fees and charges relating to services provided by the council are published in the current Fees and Charges Schedule, which is available to view on our website. These fees are reviewed annually.

Funeral Director Arranged Services

Where a funeral director is the point of contact, the council will invoice the funeral director directly after the funeral or interment of ashes has taken place. The applicant will settle payment with the funeral director. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Full burials
- Cremation services
- Interments of ashes
- Memorial services

Direct Arrangements with the Council

Where families arrange services directly with the council (i.e. without a funeral director), payment must be made in advance of the service. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Purchase of a cremated remains plot
- Interment of ashes
- Extension of a reserved grave plot
- Purchase of a mausoleum for future use
- Purchase of memorialisation
- Memorial services

Payment must be made by credit or debit card using the PDQ machine in the office or via a secure telephone payment line.

Cash, personal cheques, and bank transfers are not accepted.

Resident and Non-Resident Fees

Fees for burial and interment services are based on the residency status of the first deceased person being interred into the grave.

- If the first deceased was a resident of the borough of Welwyn Hatfield at the time of death, standard resident fees apply.
- If the first deceased was not a resident, non-resident fees apply at three times the resident rate.
- This residency-based fee remains fixed for all future interments in the same plot, regardless of the residency status of subsequent deceased persons.

Proof of residency must be provided before the burial takes place. Where a funeral director is arranging the service, proof of residency must be submitted to the council via the funeral director alongside the Burial Application Form. Where the family arranges directly with the council, proof must be submitted directly by the applicant, with the Burial Application Form.

If no proof of residency is received, non-resident (treble) fees will automatically apply.

Exceptions

Where a resident of the borough has moved outside the area in the last two years for medical care or to live in a nursing home, resident fees may still be granted at the discretion of the council. Satisfactory evidence of prior residency must be submitted in these cases.

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WELWYN HATFIELD