

Rules and Regulations

In respect of East Sheen and
Richmond, Twickenham, Teddington
and Hampton Cemeteries, and the
Old Mortlake Burial Ground



CEMETERIES

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Regulations made the 10th December 1985 and operative from that date for the management of Cemeteries and Burial Grounds within the London Borough, as amended March 1988, September 1990, March 2013 and February 2023

The Council reserves the right to make alterations or additions to the Rules and Regulations at any time, and its ruling on these shall be final.

1 Introduction

These Rules and Regulations are required for the effective management of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames cemeteries. Every effort has been made to avoid restricting the rights and choices of the individual. Therefore, these Rules and Regulations have been prepared with a balance between individual rights and the need to regulate for safe and tidy grounds. For example, glass and breakable items not being permitted based on the fact that these items become a hazard when mowers are used. It is not based upon aesthetic considerations.

Please be aware that the cemeteries are working sites and at times, for operational reasons, some items on graves may have to be temporarily moved and subsequently replaced for a burial to take place.

2 General Regulations

2.1 Explanation of terms used

The following terms shall have the meanings given to them as below:

“The Council” means the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

“The Cemeteries” means the cemeteries provided by the Council.

“The Cemetery Manager” means the person appointed by the Council to be responsible for the management of the cemetery grounds and staff.

“Memorials” mean any headstone, foot stone, ledger, kerb, tablet, vase or similar.

“Burial” and “grave” are as described in the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977.

“Interment” means the burial of a coffin or cremated remains within a grave.

“The Cemeteries Office” means the following:

The Cemeteries Office, East Sheen Cemetery, Sheen Road, Richmond, Surrey, TW10 5BJ

Telephone 020 8876 4511. Fax 020 8878 8118

www.richmond.gov.uk/cemeteries cemeteries@richmond.gov.uk

2.2 Opening Times

The cemetery grounds will be open every day of the year at the following times:

Summer

1 April to 31 October

10.00 am until 6.30pm

Winter

1 November to 31 March

10.00am until 4.30pm

Please note that the locking up procedure will commence 15 minutes prior to the stated closing time.

The Council reserve the right to close the Cemetery without notice if it is considered necessary.

The Cemeteries Office will be open from Monday to Friday, excluding Public and Bank Holidays from 9.00am until 5.00pm.

An answerphone service is provided when the office is not staffed.

2.3 Conduct

All visitors must conduct themselves in a quiet and orderly manner at all times. Council representatives have the right to exclude or remove any member of the public at their discretion.

Under the provision of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 it is an offence for a person to wilfully:

- Create a disturbance in a cemetery
- Commit a nuisance in a cemetery

- Interfere with any burial taking place in a cemetery
- Interfere with any grave or vault, any memorial or any flowers or plants
- Play any game or sport in a cemetery
- Enter or remain in a cemetery when it is closed to the public, unless authorised by the Council to do so

No skateboards, skates or scooters (with the exception of Motability Scooters) may be ridden in the cemetery, please dismount.

No religious services or ceremonies are allowed, other than the service at the time of interment and with the prior consent of the Cemetery Manager.

No musical instrument or other sound-producing device will be allowed in the cemetery, except when used as an integral part of a funeral service.

No decorations, tributes, wind chimes, or any such ornaments may be placed onto Council property, including trees, fence lines and buildings.

No animals (with the exception of Guide or Assistance dogs) will be admitted into the cemetery grounds except with the consent of the Manager. Horses may be admitted only if they form part of the funeral procession and with prior consent.

All dogs must be on leads

2.4 Vehicles

Visitors to the cemetery must observe and adhere to all traffic control signs, road markings and instructions. Please be courteous when parking in the cemetery grounds and ensure other vehicles have access to all areas.

The Council advises visitors to ensure their vehicles are locked and any valuables hidden from view.

The Council accepts no responsibility for any theft of or from vehicles parked in the cemetery grounds.

2.5 Photography

To ensure the privacy rights of individuals, no person shall take any photo or audio visual recording of any grave, memorial or funeral gathering within the cemetery without prior written permission. Any such image must not be used for publicity or marketing purposes.

2.6 Advertising

No advertisements shall be displayed in any part of the Cemetery and no person shall distribute business cards, advertisements or literature.

3 Burials

3.1 Guiding Principles

The Council has adopted the guiding principles for burial services that are issued by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM). The Council is a corporate member of the ICCM.

3.2 Fees and charges

All fees and charges must be paid prior to any interment taking place, or any works concerned with the placing of any memorial within the cemeteries.

The cemeteries fees and charges are reviewed annually and normally increased with effect from 1 April and agreed by Members of the Council.

A table of the current fees and charges is available in the Cemeteries Office during normal office hours or on the cemeteries website.

Proof of residence within the borough, such as a current Council Tax Bill, should be provided to enable the reduced resident purchase and burial fees to be applied.

3.3 Notice of Interment

Notice of any intended interment must be entered on the application form current at that time, which is available from the Cemeteries Office and Council website.

The completed application form must be delivered to the Cemeteries Office at least three clear working days prior to the interment together with the appropriate fee and, where applicable, the Owner's consent.

The immediate next of kin to the deceased person should be the applicant for burial in a new grave. The Cemeteries Office can advise you further if the deceased had no living relatives, or if there are no contactable relatives, or no appointed person or Executor to act on their behalf.

The Registered Grave Owners have the automatic Right of Burial in an existing grave if space permits. In this instance, the application form does not need to be signed by a family member or Executor.

Where more than one person is to be buried in the same coffin, separate notices of interment must be provided for each person to be buried.

Funeral directors must be aware that the coffin size submitted to the Council must be the exact dimensions and no additional measurement is to be added.

3.4 Burial Service Times

The time of the interment will need to be booked with the Cemeteries Office.

Three working days' notice is usually required for each interment. The time agreed with the applicant is deemed to be when the service and/or burial commences at the cemetery.

In the event of the late arrival of the funeral to the cemetery grounds, the staff may request that the funeral ceremony is re-arranged or curtailed to

enable other funerals arranged for the same day to take place without disruption.

No service in a Cemetery Chapel may occupy more than 45 minutes without the consent of the Cemeteries Office and upon payment of additional fees.

All interments are to take place after 9.30am and be completed before 3.30pm.

Anyone arranging a funeral is required to comply with the regulations of the cemeteries. The Cemeteries Office must also be advised at the time of the booking if special arrangements or facilities are required, such as the family wishing to some of the soil themselves after the burial.

3.5 Certificates of Disposal

The certificate of the Registrar of Deaths, or Coroners Order for the disposal of the body to be buried, must be scanned electronically or delivered to the Cemeteries Office before the interment.

For the interment or scattering of cremated remains, a Certificate of Cremation must be produced from the Cremation Authority.

3.6 Allocation of graves

The family or representatives of the deceased may choose a section of the cemetery where they would like the burial to take place. In discussion with the family or representatives, a Cemeteries Officer will allocate a grave space. Factors such as ground conditions and effective land management will be taken into consideration. Should an allocated grave space be found to be unsuitable on preparation, an alternative grave space will be made available.

3.7 Moving memorials

When graves are prepared in certain areas of the Cemetery, it may be necessary to move a memorial on the surrounding areas for health and

safety reasons. The cemetery staff will remove the memorial and replace it in the correct position as soon as possible. All works will be carried out to the current NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) standards.

3.8 Grave excavation

All graves must be prepared and closed by Council trained staff.

The Council has the right to put soil on graves next to those that need to be opened for a burial without notice. Cemetery staff will remove the soil as quickly as possible and leave the grave tidy.

3.9 Damage from execution of works

Any damage caused to memorials by the preparation of, or closing of, a grave will be repaired by the Council at no cost to the family concerned.

The Council can take no responsibility for any loss or damage to any personal items placed on graves and they are advised that these items are placed at their own risk.

3.10 Depths of graves

No burial can take place in any grave where the minimum legal depth cannot be obtained.

No burial can take place in any grave previously prepared unless there is a minimum of six inches of undisturbed earth above the last burial.

3.11 Restrictions of interments

Interments within fifteen feet of the walls of the Chapels; within four feet of the boundary fences or within fifteen feet from Lodge premises will not be permitted.

3.12 Officials

Relatives or their representatives (e.g. funeral director) must make arrangements for a faith leader to officiate at a funeral service. The Council can take no responsibility for his/her attendance.

3.13 Coffins

Only one body will be allowed in any coffin, except in the case of a parent and child. More than one child of the same parents may also be en-coffined together. The name/s of the deceased/s must be indelibly engraved on a noncorrodible plate, affixed to the coffin.

No metallic coffins or caskets are permitted to be buried.

Wooden caskets can only be accepted with the prior consent of the cemeteries office, on payment of an additional fee and only where ground conditions permit.

3.14 Funeral service

We welcome any individual requests for a funeral service, i.e. horse drawn hearses, pipers, military, family to video the service, but please inform the Cemeteries Office at the time of booking so that these requirements can be considered and allowed for.

The funeral director or family are responsible for providing sufficient bearers to carry the coffin from the hearse to the grave and lower the coffin into the grave.

We will try to accommodate requests relating to cultural or personal preferences wherever possible.

4 The Exclusive Right of Burial

The Exclusive Right of Burial in a grave space can only be purchased at the time of the first interment.

The Exclusive Right shall only be for a period of 50 years and from the date of purchase.

An extension to the Exclusive Right can be purchased, up to a maximum of 100 years, for an additional fee. An additional owner can be added to the deed however exclusive right of burial is dependent on availability within the grave space.

4.1 Pre-purchasing of grave spaces

Burial space within the London Borough of Richmond is limited, therefore the pre-purchase of any type of grave space is not permitted.

4.2 Re-purchase of grave spaces

Where the Exclusive Right of Burial in a grave has expired, the family can apply to re-purchase the Rights for a minimum of 5 years and maximum of 100 years at the fee applicable at that time.

4.3 The transfer of the Exclusive Right of Burial

Where the Registered Owner of a grave is deceased, a new owner must be registered before any interment can take place in that grave. The transfer is handled using the Will or Probate of the Registered Owner and a legal process must be followed.

Transfer of ownership of Exclusive Rights of Burial can be dealt with in a number of other ways dependent upon individual circumstances. Please contact the Cemeteries Office for further details.

The Cemeteries Office will assist you in this and a fee in connection with this service is payable to the Council.

Where the Registered Owner is still alive and wishes to transfer ownership to another family member, an Assignment Form can be completed which is available from the Cemeteries Office.

5 Information regarding memorials

The person applying for the Right to Erect a Memorial must be the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

The appropriate Memorial Application Form (available from the website or Cemeteries Office) must be completed, and permission granted, before any memorial is erected within the cemetery grounds.

A drawing showing the full dimensions of the intended memorial, proposed inscription, and method of installation must be submitted to the Cemeteries Office for approval.

Payment of the appropriate fee must be received before permission is granted.

Only memorials of natural material are permitted.

The section and number of the grave space must be cut clearly in one-inch letters at the foot of each headstone or memorial erected on the grave.

No trade name is permitted to be engraved or fixed to any memorial, unless with the express permission of the Registered Owner of the grave.

The cemetery office must be notified in writing if any memorial is to be removed from a grave for the purpose of an interment or otherwise. It must not be replaced unless the regulations have been complied with. Any additional inscription or other works must be approved by the Cemeteries Office before the work is carried out.

5.1 General points for Memorial Masons

Memorial Masons, and others employed to work for them, must not continue working whilst a funeral is taking place. The surrounding ground must not be damaged by their work, but if any such damage does occur, the Memorial Mason will be responsible for any repairs necessary.

Fixing of memorials is not allowed on Saturdays, Sundays or Public Holidays.

All materials for graves and memorials shall be conveyed into the cemetery in such a manner as to avoid damage to the grounds.

All such materials, refuse or soil, shall be removed from the cemetery immediately upon completion of the works.

All work is to be carried out in accordance with the regulations and to meet with the NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) Code of Working Practice applicable at the time of the erection.

The Council has the right to demand for the Memorial Mason to dismantle a memorial to demonstrate that the correct fixing methods have been used at the Memorial Masons cost.

5.2 Erection of Memorials

Before any work is commenced, the Cemeteries Office must be satisfied that any memorial to be fixed in any of the cemeteries will be provided with proper and adequate foundations of suitable dimensions and construction; and that the memorial will not be likely to sink or move from the position in which it is placed at the time of erection.

The sizes of memorials permitted on any grave are shown in the Memorial Guideline and information leaflet, available from the Cemeteries Office, or on the Council website.

The whole of the work in connection with the fixing of memorials must be completed to the satisfaction of the Cemeteries Office. Such work must be completed within one visit to the cemetery and should adhere to the regulations of the National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) currently in force.

All materials brought into the cemeteries by the person erecting the memorial, but which may not be required, are to be removed from the cemeteries by the person carrying out the work.

All memorials placed in the cemeteries are done so at the risk of the Registered Owner or their representative, and the Council is not responsible for any loss or damage.

It is recommended that appropriate insurance cover is obtained for the memorial to insure against all risks. Further information can be obtained from your appointed Memorial Mason.

5.3 Repair and removal of memorials

If a memorial is not kept in proper order, or is deemed by the Council to be unsafe, the Council may remove or alter it at the owner's cost.

Memorials removed by the Council for a further interment will be replaced on the grave when settlement has finalised, approximately nine months from the date of the burial.

Any temporary memorial marking the grave will be removed after one year or when it becomes dangerous or unsightly.

5.4 Memorial Benches

Only benches ordered through the Cemeteries Office will be permitted to be placed in the cemetery grounds. The Council reserves the right to remove and dispose of any other benches placed within the cemeteries without permission. Note space is limited in several of our cemeteries and a waiting list is currently in operation.

6 Types of Graves

6.1 General information

Except in respect of interments within the Garden of Rest or on Lawn sections, the owner of any traditional grave can place small shrubs, plants or flowers on the grave space, but must keep the same in proper and tidy condition and remain within the grave surround. No encroaching of neighbouring graves will be permitted, occupied or otherwise. The Council

reserves the right to cut down or remove any shrubs, plants or flowers which they consider to be unsightly or overgrown without notice.

The Council also reserves the right to remove, without notice, any items from any grave or memorial which may be considered dangerous or unsuitable. The following are some examples of these items: |

- Concrete slabs
- Artificial grass
- Any fencing
- Glass vases, ceramic or plastic items
- Breakable items
- Windmills
- Flags
- Windchimes
- Solar powered Lights
- Glass bottles or cans of alcohol

6.2 Lawn sections

No kerb or garden area is permitted over or around any grave on the lawn sections.

If no memorial is erected, plants ordinarily growing to no greater height than 18" (460 mm) may be planted in the space which may be provided at the head of the grave.

Where concrete beams are provided to aid the stability of the memorials, planted containers may be placed to the side of each memorial.

A headstone will be permitted subject to the sizes and conditions detailed in the Memorial Guidelines and Information leaflet, which is available from the Cemeteries Office or on the Council website.

The foundation of any headstone on the lawn section must be a suitably sized concrete slab to which the memorial base is dowelled using the appropriate NAMM approved ground anchor system.

Where concrete plinths are provided, the memorial base must be affixed to the plinth with the appropriate NAMM approved ground anchor system.

The grave number should be shown on the base of the headstone at the right side, as viewed from the front.

6.3 Gardens of Rest

The space allocated for each grave for the interment of cremated remains is 18" by 18" (457mm x 457mm).

No more than two interments of cremated remains are permitted in each grave space.

The only permitted memorial is in the form of a tablet of Westmorland Green Slate, 7" by 10" (178mm x 254mm), which must be placed centrally on each grave space.

The purchaser is responsible for the maintenance of the memorial, and if it is damaged or falls into disrepair, for the replacement of the tablet.

The tablet must be placed in position within 28 days of the interment taking place in the grave space.

The space between the memorial tablets will be maintained by the Council. Plants, flowers or any other memorabilia are not permitted on or around any memorial placed on any grave.

6.4 Columbarium Options

Cremated remains must be delivered, by appointment, to the Cemeteries Office a minimum of three working days prior to the interment.

No more than two cremated remains are allowed in any columbarium chamber or niche.

In the case of the columbarium chambers at Hampton Cemetery, a polished Balmoral Red Granite hexagonal plaque suitably engraved with the details of the deceased person must be fixed to the lid of the chamber at the time of the interment. The memorial lid must be provided by a Memorial Mason to the agreed specification. Cemetery staff will attend on the day of the burial to ensure this is fixed correctly onto the chamber.

The purchaser shall be responsible for the maintenance of the memorial, and if it is damaged or becomes unsuitable, they will be responsible for the replacement of the plaque.

In the case of the free-standing columbarium units placed within all cemeteries, the memorial plaque is provided by the Cemeteries Office and placed on the niche as soon as possible after the interment.

No chamber or niche may be individually coloured, ornamented, decorated or inscribed in any way other than as set out in these regulations. No plants, pots, flowers, vases, or other floral tributes may be placed on individual chambers or niches, or on the unit itself. Any items left will be removed.

The Council is not liable for any damage or defacement of the plaque placed on the chamber.

6.5 The Family Cremated Remains Area

Graves within the Family Cremated Remains section permit a garden space of no more than 2' wide and 2' long (610mm x 610mm) or for a memorial of that size which is no more than 18" (460mm) in height. No other planting or placing of memorabilia is permitted.

Where a memorial is placed on a grave, the purchaser is responsible for the maintenance of that memorial, and if it is damaged or falls into disrepair, for its replacement.

7 Faith Burials

7.1 Interments

Interments in traditional Muslim graves will need a coffin or casket, no shroud burials are permitted

7.2 Burial Spaces

Prescribed Islamic burial spaces are only available at Twickenham Cemetery

8 Duty of Care

Responsibility for safe conditions in the cemetery rests upon the following:

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Council

The Council has a responsibility to ensure the cemetery is safe for all users and Council employees. This may include the inspection of memorials to ensure they are safe. A notice will be placed at the cemetery four weeks prior to any inspection being undertaken.

Memorial Masons

Stonemasons have a duty to ensure all work on memorials is carried out in a safe manner and that memorials are safe.

Owners of Memorials

In the case of memorials, the primary responsibility for ensuring they are safe rests upon the owner of the grave or memorial. It is their responsibility to ensure the memorial is maintained to a safe standard.

Cemeteries Office

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

2nd Floor, Civic Centre, 44 Richmond Road

Twickenham TW1 3BZ

Telephone: **020 8876 4511**

Email: cemeteries@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

www.richmond.gov.uk/cemeteries