
Bereavement Services

Cemetery Regulations

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1. Regulations

These regulations allow for the management, regulation and control of:

- 1.1 Norse Road Cemetery, 100-104 Norse Road, Bedford, MK41 0RL
- 1.2 Foster Hill Road Cemetery, Bedford, MK41 7TB (Closed Cemetery)

2. Terms

In these Regulations the following expressions shall have the meanings hereby assigned to them:

“The Council” means Bedford Borough Council.

“The Cemetery” or **“the Cemeteries”** mean any burial ground or cemetery for the time being owned, provided or maintained by the Council.

“LACO” means The Local Authorities’ Cemeteries Order 1977 and any further amendments to this order. (Source: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1977/204/contents/made>)

“Purchased grave” means a grave whereby the grant of exclusive rights of burial and right to erect a memorial have been purchased from the Council.

“The Applicant” usually refers the deceased’s next of kin or executor and is the person who is making the arrangements for the funeral via their chosen funeral director.

3. Contact Information

All funeral bookings, general enquiries and comments regarding the above mentioned cemeteries should be directed to:

Bereavement Services
100-104 Norse Road
Bedford
MK41 0RL

Telephone: 01234 718150

Email: crem@bedford.gov.uk

Office open hours:
Monday to Friday, 9am to 4:30pm
(except bank or public holidays)



4. Cemetery Access

- 4.1 Cemetery Opening Hours for Vehicular Access
April to September: 8am to 8pm
October & March: 8am to 6pm
November to February: 8am to 4:30pm
Note: Pedestrian Access is possible 24 hours all year round
- 4.2 Gates will be locked for vehicular access at the above stated closing times, all visitors and their vehicles are therefore asked to leave the cemetery in good time.
- 4.3 The cemeteries are places of peace and solemnity. They are also a place of work. Visitors are welcome during open hours but are asked to please respect the grounds and teams who work within the cemetery spaces.
- 4.4 Due to the public access and working environment within, there is a strict 10mph speed limit applied to our cemetery spaces to ensure the safety of all who visit and work there. Vehicles must only use roadways designed for vehicular access and must not drive on the grassed/lawned areas.
- 4.5 No ball games or similar are permitted within the cemeteries and all dogs must be always kept on lead and under control of their owner/walker, at all times. Any dog mess must be picked up immediately by their owner/walker and disposed of appropriately.

5. Interments

- 5.1 No interment/burial shall take place on Saturday, Sunday or Public/Bank Holidays unless it has been prior agreed by the Council in good time – noting that interments outside of the standard working week may be subject to additional fees.
- 5.2 Interments may take place with or without the services of a Clergy or minister of religion.
- 5.3 Notice of Interment must be given at Norse Road Cemetery office between the hours of 9:00am and 4:00pm and at least two clear working days before the funeral. For an Interment on Monday, notice must be given before 10:00am on the preceding Thursday. The office is not open on Saturdays, Sundays or bank holidays or any other time when Borough Hall is closed. Exceptions can be made in specific circumstances such as faith requirements where burial takes place less than 2 days after death by prior agreement of the Norse Road office.
- 5.4 Before a burial can take place, the applicant shall give written notice to the Council accompanied by the certificate for disposal issued by a Registrar of Births and Deaths (also known as the “green”), or an order for burial issued by the coroner’s office where applicable. For a pre-purchased grave, the grant of exclusive right of burial or satisfactory evidence thereof in respect of a purchased grave and any other documentation (which may in special circumstances be required) will need to be supplied to the cemetery office in good time. The interment form and additional interment form should be completed, signed and returned to the cemetery office before any burial can take place.

- 5.5 Each new double earthen grave for adults will be dug nominally 7 feet deep, and a layer of at least six inches (153mm) of earth must be left between each interment. The subsequent interment will take place at circa 5 feet deep. Both single depth and triple depth earthen graves can be made available but are subject to consent and ground conditions and could be subject to additional charges.
- 5.6 A grave may only be reopened for the purpose of burial by written consent of the grave owner or by an order of a court of competent jurisdiction.
- 5.7 Graves may only be excavated and opened by employees of the Council. Where necessary, the Council may lay a covering and place soil from any such excavation upon any adjoining graves. The Council will reinstate the surface of any grave used as soon as practicable.
- 5.8 Memorials, headstones, kerbs and other similar structures shall be removed by and at the expense of the grave owner or applicant (with grave owner's permission). The removal is required to take place in good and sufficient time for the grave to be opened by the Council.
- 5.9 Any damage to any boundary wall, the wall of any bricked grave, any memorial, headstone, kerb, other permitted structure, or any other damage whatsoever, caused during the construction of any grave, or during the erection, removal or replacement of any structure whatsoever, shall be repaired by and at the expense of the person causing the same.

- 5.10 Any person received for interment must be within a secure and suitably made coffin/casket, which must be free from any damage which could compromise the safety of any staff of persons present during the interment. Please note that requirements for coffin or casket construction can vary subject to the chosen grave space.
- 5.11 The bricking of graves is permitted only for existing brick lined graves and is arranged by and at the expense of the person responsible for the interment.



6. Lawned Cemetery Spaces

- 6.1 Lawned cemetery spaces comprise of earthen graves and permit only a headstone or memorial at the head of the grave space with a continuous soil border adjoining each grave space. The body of the grave space will be comprised of earth and soil and either turfed or seeded to establish a lawned space and will be maintained by employees of the Council.
- 6.2 Only a headstone or similar memorial is permitted on the grave space of an earthen grave and must be located at the head of the grave within the provided soil border.
- 6.3 No items are permitted outside of the soil border to allow equal access and effective maintenance to the area. Permitted memorial dimensions for an earthen grave space in a lawned cemetery section:
- a. a headstone or similar (without kerbs) not exceeding 90cm in height, 60cm in width and 10cm in thickness, with a base/plinth not exceeding 90cm in width, 30cm in depth and 15cm in thickness (above ground level).
 - b. a flower vase not exceeding 15cm in height.
- 6.4 Any memorial must be of approved material, i.e. quarried stone, wood, metal or glass, and inscribed with the grave number and section in lettering not exceeding 25mm high on the side or rear of the memorial base. Any materials outside of this regulation must be first approved by the Cemetery Manager prior to installation.
- 6.5 All headstones and memorials installed in the cemeteries must be erected using an approved and recognised method or system of fixing: i.e. NAMM or BRAMM recognised fixing systems, traditional shoe foundation or the burial of one third of the memorial into the earth. This regulation also applies to any memorial being removed from the cemetery for additional inscription.
- 6.6 No headstone or memorial shall be erected or installed in the Cemeteries without first approval by way of a permit application via the chosen Stone Mason to the Cemetery Office. The permit application must contain details of the memorial dimensions, type of stone & finish, system of fixing, and the proposed inscription (in full). The completed permit application is to be supplied to the Cemetery office for review prior to commencement of any fixing or installation in the Cemetery. If approved, the Cemetery Office will provide written approval for the proposed memorial.
- 6.7 Should a memorial of any kind be installed or situated in a Cemetery without first being approved by the Council, this may be deemed as unauthorised and therefore the Council reserve the right to remove the memorial as per Article 14 of LACO.
- 6.8 The Council will provide and fix at its expense a temporary wooden marker in the form of a cross or post detailing the name of the deceased and grave location as soon as practicable after the interment. The marker will be retained on the grave until a memorial is installed or upon expiration of a period of 2 years since the last interment, whichever shall occur first.
- 6.9 The temporary marker shall remain property of the Council.

7. Garden Burial Plots

- 7.1 Garden Burial Plots are lawned cemetery spaces exclusively for the interment of cremated remains.
- 7.2 A suitably sealed container, urn, casket or similar is to be used for the purpose of interment.
- 7.3 Only a headstone or similar memorial is permitted on the grave space and must be located at the head of the grave within the provided soil border. This is to allow equal access and effective maintenance to the area.
- 7.4 No memorials or trinkets are permitted outside of the soil border.
- 7.5 Permitted memorial dimensions for a garden burial plot in a lawned cemetery section:
- a. a headstone or similar (without kerbs) not exceeding 90cm in height, 60cm in width and 10cm in thickness, with a base/plinth not exceeding 90cm in width, 30cm in depth and 15cm in thickness (above ground level).
 - b. a flower vase not exceeding 15cm in height.
- 7.6 Any memorial must be of approved material, i.e. quarried stone, wood, metal or glass, and inscribed with the grave number and section in lettering not exceeding 25mm high on the side or rear of the memorial base. Any materials outside of this regulation must be first approved by the Cemetery Manager prior to installation.
- 7.7 All headstones and memorials installed in the cemeteries must be erected using an approved and recognised method or system of fixing: i.e. NAMM or BRAMM recognised fixing systems, traditional shoe foundation or the burial of one third of the memorial into the earth. This regulation also applies to any memorial being removed from the cemetery for additional inscription.
- 7.8 No headstone or memorial shall be erected or installed in the Cemeteries without first approval by way of a permit application via the chosen Stone Mason to the Cemetery Office. The permit application must contain details of the memorial dimensions, type of stone & finish, system of fixing, and the proposed inscription (in full). The completed permit application is to be supplied to the Cemetery office for review prior to commencement of any fixing or installation in the Cemetery. If approved, the Cemetery Office will provide written approval for the proposed memorial.
- 7.9 Should a memorial of any kind be installed or situated in a Cemetery without first being approved by the Council, this may be deemed as unauthorised and therefore the Council reserve the right to remove the memorial as per Article 14 of LACO.
- 7.10 The Council will provide and fix at its expense a temporary wooden marker in the form of a cross or post detailing the name of the deceased and grave location as soon as practicable after the interment. The marker will be retained on the grave until a memorial is installed or upon expiration of a period of 2 years since the last interment, whichever shall occur first.
- 7.11 The temporary marker shall remain property of the Council.

8. Cremated Remains Vaults

- 8.1 Cremated remains vaults are exclusively for the interment of cremated remains.
- 8.2 A suitably sealed container, urn, casket or similar is to be used for the purpose of interment.
- 8.3 No items are to be placed outside of the footprint of the vault.

9. Mausoleum

- 9.1 Mausoleum cells are offered within Norse Road Cemetery as an above ground interment option.
- 9.2 Mausoleum cells are entirely subject to availability at point of need.
- 9.3 All Coffins or Caskets for interment in Mausoleum cell must be of sound construction and fully zinc lined. All deceased must be embalmed. All joints to the coffin and lid must be welded/soldered to form a hermetic seal. The coffin must NOT have a pressure release valve.
- 9.4 Each Mausoleum cell has space for one full body interment only.
- 9.5 A Mausoleum cell must be purchased and paid for (in full) prior to an interment taking place.
- 9.6 The Funeral Director is responsible for checking the coffin/casket sizes and measurements with council staff prior to the day of the interment.
- 9.7 The interment of a coffin or casket into a Mausoleum cell is solely the responsibility of the funeral director.

10. Burial Chamber

- 10.1 Single Depth and Double Depth Burial Chambers are offered at Norse Road Cemetery.
- 10.2 The Funeral Director is responsible for checking the coffin/casket sizes and measurements with council staff prior to the day of the interment.
- 10.3 Burial chambers allow for a large memorial installation including a headstone and side panelling.
- 10.4 Any memorial must be of approved material, i.e. quarried stone, wood, metal or glass, and inscribed with the grave number and section in lettering not exceeding 25mm high on the side or rear of the memorial base. Any materials outside of this regulation must be first approved by the Cemetery Manager prior to installation.
- 10.5 All headstones and memorials installed in the cemeteries must be erected using an approved and recognised method or system of fixing: i.e. NAMM or BRAMM recognised fixing systems, traditional shoe foundation or the burial of one third of the memorial into the earth. This regulation also applies to any memorial being removed from the cemetery for additional inscription.

- 10.6 No headstone or memorial shall be erected or installed in the Cemeteries without first approval by way of a permit application via the chosen Stone Mason to the Cemetery Office. The permit application must contain details of the memorial dimensions, type of stone & finish, system of fixing, and the proposed inscription (in full). The completed permit application is to be supplied to the Cemetery office for review prior to commencement of any fixing or installation in the Cemetery. If approved, the Cemetery Office will provide written approval for the proposed memorial.
- 10.7 Should a memorial of any kind be installed or situated in a Cemetery without first being approved by the Council, this may be deemed as unauthorised and therefore the Council reserve the right to remove the memorial as per Article 14 of LACO.
- 10.8 Burial Chambers are entirely subject to availability at time of need.
- 10.9 A Coffin/Casket second interment in a double burial chamber must be zinc lined. All deceased must be embalmed. All joints to the coffin and lid must be welded/soldered to form a hermetic seal. The coffin must NOT have a pressure release valve.

11. Cremated Remains Dispersals & Scatterings

- 11.1 Cremated remains can be laid to rest loosely within the gardens of Norse Road by prior arrangement with the Cemetery Office.
- 11.2 A dispersal or scattering can only take place within specific areas of the gardens.
- 11.3 Once a dispersal or scattering has taken place, the remains cannot be retrieved at a later date.

12. Memorials (General)

- 12.1 For any unauthorised memorial or trinket on a grave space, in the gardens or otherwise within the Cemeteries, the Council reserve the right to remove and hold in the cemetery office for a period of 14 days prior to disposal. Where possible and if applicable, the Council will attempt to contact any affected grave owner to inform them prior to any removal.
- 12.2 Should a memorial of any kind be installed or situated in a Cemetery without first being approved by the Council, this may be deemed as unauthorised and therefore the Council reserve the right to remove the memorial as per Article 14 of LACO.
- 12.3 Any authorised memorial un-associated with a grave within the Cemeteries is bound by a lease period. Upon expiration, the leaseholder will be offered to extend or otherwise vacate the lease. If contact has not been possible with the leaseholder upon expiration, this may be deemed as vacating the lease by default.

13. General Conditions

- 13.1 Works of every description on graves, vaults or otherwise shall be completed with all reasonable expedition to the satisfaction of an authorised officer of the Council.
- 13.2 Any injury or damage to the grounds, walkways, trees, buildings, landscaping or similar shall be repaired by and at the expense of the person responsible.
- 13.3 The Council will not be responsible for any damage to monuments, memorials or similar structures other than the damage occasioned by its officers, agents, servants or operative.
- 13.4 Soliciting for orders within the Cemeteries for any work connected with graves is strictly prohibited. The Council reserve the right to exclude any person or company from their Cemeteries should they have been found soliciting.
- 13.5 Officers of the Council are not permitted to take any gratuity or to carry out private work of any kind in connection with the Cemeteries.

14. Exclusive Right of Burial

- 14.1 For the permission to erect a memorial of any kind within the Cemetery spaces, the rights to do so must first be purchased from the Cemetery Office prior to any arrangements made through a memorial mason or similar.
- 14.2 The exclusive right of burial and right to erect a memorial give the holder(s) ownership of a grave space for the lease period of 75 years – commencing from the point of first interment. The grave owner must give permission for any interment to take place within their owned grave and automatically hold the right to use the grave for themselves when required.
- 14.3 The Council may, with the agreement of the person arranging the interment, permit the re-use of a grave which is not a purchased grave or which is a grave where the exclusive right of burial has expired irrespective of a connection between the person to be interred and any previously interred people.
- 14.4 All memorials, gravestones, places of burial or similar must be kept in repair by the named person(s) within the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial, otherwise deemed to be the owner of the grave space.

- 14.5 The Council may require the owner of any memorial, gravestone or other structures which has become unsafe to remove it. Should the owner fail to comply with the request of the Council within 14 days or, if in the opinion of the Cemetery Officer to be that removal should take place immediately, then the Council may carry out the removal without incurring liability for damage arising and the costs thereof shall be recoverable from the owner as a simple contract debt in any court of competent jurisdiction.
- 14.6 Written notice of any transfer or assignment of an exclusive right of burial must be submitted to the Council together with the prescribed registration fee. The Council will not recognise any transfer or assignment which has not been registered in this way.



Notes

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Finding out more

If you would like further copies, a large-print copy or information about us and our services, please telephone or write to us at our address below.

Për Informacion

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Za Informacije

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Per Informazione

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