



South Staffordshire Council

BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

Rules and Regulations

**In respect of
Sytych Lane Cemetery,
Wombourne
and
Strawberry Lane Cemetery,
Great Wyrley**

Effective from July 2013

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1. Introduction

These Rules and Regulations are required for the effective management of South Staffordshire Council's Cemeteries at Sytch Lane, Wombourne and Strawberry Lane, Great Wyrley. 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 is based on these items becoming a hazard when mowers are used), it is not based upon aesthetic considerations.

Records of burials, graves, Cemetery plans and subsequent memorials are available for inspection at the Council Offices in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

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2. General Regulations

2.1 Terms

In these Rules and Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires the following terms shall have the meanings given to them below:

“The Council” means South Staffordshire Council.

“The Council Office(s)” means the main Council Offices at Wolverhampton Road, Codsall, South Staffordshire, WV8 1PX.

“Cemeteries” or “Site” means the Cemeteries, which belong to and are operated by the Council which are situated at Sytch Lane in Wombourne and Strawberry Lane in Great Wyrley.

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

“Rules and Regulations” means the South Staffordshire Council Bereavement Services’ ‘in-house’ rules set out in this document.

“Table of Fees and Charges” means the list of fees and charges for goods and services provided by South Staffordshire Council’s Bereavement Services.

“Exclusive Right of Burial” means an exclusive right of burial granted in accordance with section 4.

“Statutory Declaration” can be used as a means by which transfer of ownership from a deceased grave owner can be achieved when no official documents have been issued.

“Register of Burials” means a statutory register of all burials in a Cemetery kept and maintained by the Council.

“Private Grave” means a grave space in respect of which an Exclusive Right of Burial has been granted.

“Lawn Grave” means a grave which is laid to lawn and fixed to a pre-cast concrete raft and which complies with paragraph 5.1.

“Unpurchased Grave” means a grave where no Exclusive Right of Burial has been granted and no other right of burial has been conferred, in accordance with paragraph 5.2.

“Natural Grave” means a grave within the allocated natural burials area in the Cemetery and complies with paragraph 5.3. Natural graves provide a living memorial in an area which will be maintained as a natural meadow.

“Woodland Grave Plots” means a grave space in the allocated woodland areas in the Cemeteries and complies with paragraph 5.6. Cremated remains are scattered beneath the surface and no cremated remains in containers are interred in the Four Seasons Woodland (Sytych Lane Cemetery) and Gilpin’s Glade Scattering Area (Strawberry Lane Cemetery).

“Memorial” means an object serving as a remembrance and includes a headstone, cross, vase, flat memorial plaque, wooden grave markers, temporary grave markers and those memorials permitted under sections 5 and 6 of these Rules and Regulations.

2.2 Duty of Care

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

a) South Staffordshire Council – The Council has a responsibility to ensure the cemeteries are 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 cemeteries four weeks prior to any inspection being undertaken.

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

c) 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.

2.3 Opening Times

The Cemeteries are open every day of the year at the following times:

Summer

1st April to 30th September

9.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m.

Winter

1st October to 31st March

9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

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 Cemeteries without notice if it is considered necessary.

2.4 Pre-Purchasing of Grave Space

Burial space within the District is limited, therefore the pre-purchase or reservation of any type of grave space is not permitted.

2.5 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:

- a. Create a disturbance in a cemetery
- b. Commit a nuisance in a cemetery
- c. Interfere with any burial taking place in a cemetery

- d. Interfere with any grave or vault, any tombstone or other memorial or any flowers or plants in any such manner
- e. Play at any game or sport in a cemetery
- f. Enter or remain in a cemetery when it is closed to the public, unless authorised by the Council to do so.

No pedal bicycles, skateboards, skates, scooters may be ridden in the Cemeteries, with the exception of motorbidity scooters.

No religious services or ceremonies are allowed other than the service at the time of interment, without the prior consent of Bereavement Services.

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

Persons who contravene these provisions will be liable upon conviction to a fine; the costs of rectifying any damages caused which incur Council costs.

2.6 Children

Children under 14 are not allowed in the Cemeteries unless accompanied by a responsible adult.

2.7 Vehicles

Visitors to the Cemeteries must observe and adhere to all traffic control signs, road markings and instructions. Including:

Vehicles shall only use the main roads and must not exceed 5 m.p.h.

Parking is allowed in the designated parking area.

No parking on the access roads.

Coaches and buses are not permitted in the grounds of the cemeteries as the driveways are not suitable.

The Council advises visitors to ensure their vehicles are locked and any valuables hidden from view. The Council accepts no responsibility for any theft from vehicles parked in the Cemeteries.

2.8 Animals

Dogs are permitted in the Cemeteries but must be kept on a lead at all times. Dog owners are reminded of their responsibility to clean up after their dogs.

Horses are permitted in the Cemeteries only as part of a funeral procession.

All other animals may be permitted at the discretion of the Environmental Services Manager.

2.9 Photography

To ensure the privacy rights of individuals no person shall take any image of any grave, memorial or funeral gathering within the Cemeteries, without the prior consent of Bereavement Services.

2.10 Advertising & Sale of Goods

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

2.11 Fees & Charges

All funeral directors and memorial masons must agree to the following terms:

- All fees and charges payable to this Council will be recovered on a monthly basis.
- Failure to comply will incur a penalty charge of 10% of the outstanding amount per calendar month.

Families who wish to self-arrange a funeral must pay all fees and charges to the Council a minimum of 5 working days before the funeral.

2.12 Faith Leaders

Where a Faith Leader is required by a family they, or their representatives, must make their own arrangements for this.

2.13 Gratuities

Council staff or contractors are not allowed to accept any gifts or money from the public or from representatives of companies. Council staff or contractors are not allowed to undertake private work of any kind in connection with the Cemeteries either in his/her own time or during the Council's time.

2.14 Responsibility for Orders

The Council will only act on clear, comprehensive and non-ambiguous written instructions to avoid errors being made. Telephone instructions must be confirmed in writing.

2.15 Right of Movement

The Council reserves to itself, its officers, employees and its contractors the right of passage over any grave for any purpose connected with the maintenance and management of the Cemeteries and to remove any memorial from an adjoining grave to facilitate an interment if this should be necessary.

In the event of such action being necessary, the full cost of such works shall be borne by the person arranging the interment.

2.16 Amendments to Rules & Regulations and Table of Fees & Charges

The Council reserves the right to make any alterations to these Rules and Regulations and Table of Fees and Charges as and when required, with at least an annual review.

2.17 Individual Requests for Funeral Services

We welcome any individual requests for a funeral service, i.e. horse drawn carriage, pipers, military, family to video the service, but please inform the booking office at your earliest convenience so these requirements can be considered and allowed for.

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

2.18 Infectious Diseases

Where a funeral is of a person who died of infectious disease the notice of interment must contain a statement to this effect.

3. Burials

3.1 Guiding Principles for Burial Services

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 and individual Bereavement Services staff are associate members. The Council are members of The Association of Natural Burial Grounds (ANBG).

3.2 Booking Burial Service Times

Applications for burial must be made to the Council Offices between the hours of 9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. Monday to Friday. The Council Offices are closed on public holidays.

All initial bookings for a burial (including the burial of cremated remains) in the Cemeteries must first be made to the Council Offices either by telephone (01902 696111) or in person and confirmed in writing as soon as possible thereafter using the Council's specified Notice of Interment form referred to in paragraph 3.3 below.

Interments must take place between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. During the months of November, December and January the last burial time will be 2.30 p.m.

3.3 Notice of Interment

The correctly completed Notice of Interment must be delivered to the Council Offices along with the Registrar's Certificate for Disposal or the Coroner's Order for Burial by 10.00 a.m. at least 2 clear working days before the planned day of burial. No burial will take place unless the completed Notice of Interment form has been received.

The coffin or casket size must be confirmed in writing. The size must be exact and to include mouldings and any opened handles. 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. Any additional dimensions necessary will be added by the Administration and Bereavement Services Officer. If it is found on the day of the funeral that the funeral director has added dimensions to the size of the coffin there will be a penalty of £113.

Any alteration to the coffin sizes given must be notified to the Council Offices in writing at least 1 working day prior to the funeral.

In instances where a burial is booked with less than 24 hours notice for religious reasons, the Notice of Interment must be faxed (01902 846553) or e-mailed (bereavementservices@sstaffs.gov.uk) to the Council Offices by 12.00 noon on the day of burial to confirm the booking.

3.4 Scattering or Interment of Cremated Remains in Existing Lawn Graves

Scattering of cremated remains (under turf) in an existing lawn grave is permitted providing that permission has been gained from the Council and from

the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial. The remains must be scattered towards the head of the grave.

Cremated remains may also be buried in an existing grave, however, this may affect the number of further coffin interments possible. The number of cremated remains interments allowed in this instance will be at the discretion of the Environmental Services Manager.

3.5 Arriving at the Cemetery

The time booked for a funeral is the time that the cortege is due to arrive at the Cemetery. The funeral director must inform the Council Offices of the expected time of arrival at the Cemeteries to make sure that the Cemetery staff are present.

This time must be strictly adhered to and in default the Environmental Services Manager may, at his discretion, allow another funeral to take precedence.

It is essential that funerals arrive on time at the Cemetery to ensure the efficient operation of the service.

A fee of £50.00 per 15 minutes (after the first 15 minutes) will be charged for funeral corteges that are late arriving at the Cemeteries.

3.6 Certificate for Disposal

The Registrar's Certificate for Disposal or the Coroner's Order for Burial must be delivered to the Council Offices at the same time as the Notice of Interment, before the burial can take place.

If the Registrar's Certificate or the Coroner's Order for Burial are not delivered to the Council Offices the burial must not take place except in the situation where the Certificate has been issued but forgotten by the funeral director. If this happens, the funeral director must sign a declaration (Form 18) in accordance with the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1926 before the funeral can take place.

This declaration must explain why the Certificate has not been delivered and promise to deliver it to the Council Offices on the same day as the burial, or in exceptional circumstances, on the next day.

3.7 Structure of Coffin

All bodies brought to the Cemeteries for burial shall be contained in a suitable coffin or shroud to a pattern agreed with the Council.

For burial purposes coffins can be made of wood, metal, wicker or cardboard. All cremated remains must also be held in a suitable container.

The coffin or suitable container must be clearly marked for identification purposes and include the full name of the deceased (full name to be shown on all connecting paperwork).

Coffin structures will however be at the discretion of the Environmental Services Manager.

3.8 Re-Opening Graves

No grave for which a Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial applies can be opened without the signature of the registered owner.

If the deceased is the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial they automatically have the right to be buried in the grave providing there is sufficient burial space available.

Transference of ownership may be necessary to permit the opening of a grave and before a memorial permit will be passed. Contact the Council Offices and/or see paragraph 4.1 below for further details.

To make sure that only the correct person is buried in the grave, any variation in the names must be explained and confirmed by a statutory declaration before a burial can take place.

3.9 Producing the Grave Deed

The Council has the right to demand to see the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial before a grave is opened.

If you lose the Exclusive Right of Burial, the Council has the right to demand a statutory declaration to say that you have lost it.

Replacement copies of the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial can be issued and will be marked 'copy'. There is a fee payable for replacement copies of Grants of Exclusive Rights of Burial.

3.10 Grave Excavations

The Council has the right to put soil on graves next to those that need to be opened for a burial without notice. In this event, an information notice will be placed on the soil mound indicating the period of time that the soil will remain in place. Cemetery staff will remove the soil as quickly as possible and leave the grave tidy.

3.11 Moving Memorials

When graves are dug in certain areas of the Cemeteries, it may be necessary to move a memorial on the surrounding areas for health and safety reasons. An approved memorial mason will remove and re-erect the memorial back in the correct position as soon as possible after the burial to current NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) standards.

3.12 Bearers

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.

Family members who wish to bear a coffin should seek appropriate advice from their appointed funeral director as to the safe procedure for bearing a coffin.

3.13 Backfilling of Graves

On completion of the burial service Cemetery staff will backfill the grave in the appropriate manner.

Representatives of the deceased may, at their own risk, backfill the grave after an interment, but must adhere to instructions from Cemetery staff and/or contractors in attendance.

The shoring will remain in place and will only be removed by Council contractors at the appropriate time during the backfill.

Written notification of this intent must be received at the Council Offices at the same time as the funeral booking.

3.14 Flowers

The family usually prefers to remove the flowers after the funeral as they become unsightly but, if they are not cleared after 14 days, Cemetery staff will dispose of them for you. Cemetery staff will remove seasonal wreaths from graves 6 weeks after the event (i.e. Christmas, Easter etc.).

The Council reserves the right to remove withered or unsightly floral tributes at its own discretion.

4. Exclusive Rights of Burial

An Exclusive Right of Burial allows the purchaser to bury human remains in an agreed grave space. A grave which is subject to an Exclusive Right of Burial

may not be opened and no additional remains may be buried there without the owner's permission and providing there is sufficient burial space available.

Under current legislation, an Exclusive Right of Burial may only be granted for a period of up to 100 years beginning with the date upon which the grant is made and terms and conditions as the Council deems appropriate.

The Council will grant Exclusive Rights of Burial in a grave initially for 50 years. The Council may extend the period of such a grant for up to a maximum of an additional 50 years. An additional fee is payable for the extension up to a maximum of a further 50 years which can be purchased in 25 year increments. The fee for an Exclusive Right of Burial and extension is set out in the Table of Fees and Charges.

An Exclusive Right of Burial does not constitute any ownership of land, this remains in the Council's ownership. The grave is sold on a lease basis and the only rights with that lease are the rights to a burial in the grave.

The Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial does not include permission to erect a memorial. The right to erect a memorial must be applied for separately. Please see section 6 of the Rules and Regulations for further details on how to apply.

The owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial must be the same as the owner of the Right to Erect a Memorial.

4.1 Transfer of Exclusive Rights of Burial

An Exclusive Right of Burial to a grave space may be transferred by deed or bequeathed by will.

In cases where the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial is still alive the transfer may be done by completion of a Form of Assignment (available from the Council Offices). This form should be completed and signed by the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial and the person taking over the ownership and submitted to the Council Offices together with the original Deed of Grant.

The Deed of Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial will then be updated to show the details of the new owner(s).

A fee, as set out in the Table of Fees and Charges, in connection with this service is payable to the Council.

Where the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial is deceased, and provided that the Exclusive Right of Burial has not been specifically left to another person, then upon production of a sealed copy of Grant of Probate

or Letters of Administration the Exclusive Right of Burial may be legally transferred to the person in possession of the Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration or the beneficiary of the residue of the estate under the terms of the deceased owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial's will.

In cases where the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial is deceased and there is no will or Letters of Administration available then the Exclusive Right of Burial may not be transferred to another person, however a further burial in the grave space may be permissible (if there is available depth) subject to the applicant for the burial completing a statutory declaration and ensuring that any other person equally entitled counter signs the statutory declaration. A statutory declaration must be witnessed by a Solicitor or a Commissioner for Oaths.

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

4.2 Premium Fees for Burial of Non-Residents

Families of non-residents of South Staffordshire who wish their relatives to be interred at either of the Council's Cemeteries need to be aware of the premium fees. Currently the fees are trebled for this service.

When the deceased lived in the District for the majority of their life and took up a place in full-time care outside the District within two years of their death premium fees will not be applicable. In this instance the family is to provide the relevant information for claiming this exception to this Council which will be cross-referenced against the Council's electoral register.

5. Types of Grave

We offer a variety of types of grave to suit the needs of the bereaved. These range from lawn graves through to natural burials. A choice of grave types allows the bereaved to choose the most appropriate type of grave for their needs.

To assist relatives in making an informed choice and to give a clear understanding of the type of grave chosen, its location and maintenance regimes, it is recommended that those organising the funeral visit the site. If you would like to arrange to meet with a member of Bereavement Services staff please contact the Council on 01902 696111.

The Council will supply a temporary memorial which will be removed 12 months after the date of burial or when a permanent memorial is erected (whichever is

the sooner). The cost of the temporary memorial is included in the fee for the Exclusive Right of Burial.

Shrubs, plants, trees or flowers are not permitted to be planted over any grave or in any part of the Cemeteries unless agreed by the Environmental Services Manager.

Each individual body whether an adult or child must be brought into the Cemeteries in a separate coffin. The only exceptions to this rule will be:

- (a) When a mother and child die in childbirth, in which case the mother and child can be in the same coffin.
- (b) When twins or multiples die at birth, the babies can be interred in the same coffin.

A letter stating this intention must be submitted to the Council prior to the burial taking place, at the same time as the Notice of Interment.

Soil conditions dictate the full depth of the grave. Where a coffin or casket exceeds 20 inches (500mm) in depth, this will reduce the number of interments possible in a grave.

5.1 Lawn Graves

The typical lawn grave is a grave that is laid to lawn and fixed to a pre-cast concrete raft.

This allows for a memorial to be placed immediately after or, if required, before the burial takes place.

Adjacent to the concrete raft a border approximately 300mm wide is provided in which additional floral tributes may be laid in accordance with the permitted tributes regulation (see paragraph 5.7).

Memorials shall be:

- No more than 4 feet in height (1200mm) including base;
- No more than 3 feet 6 inches in width (1100mm) including base;
- Headstone to be no more than 6 inches (150mm) thick;
- Base to be no more than 1 foot in depth (300mm) including headstone

A base forming an integral part of the design of a headstone may be included, provided it does not project more than 2 inches (50mm) beyond the headstone to the rear and sides and provided that it is fixed onto the pre-cast concrete raft provided by the Council to current NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) standards.

Whenever grave sinkage occurs the grave will be topped up with soil and seeded as required.

Lawn Graves are required to be clear of any materials to allow for regular and easy maintenance and also ensure that the Council are able to keep and maintain a lawn effect throughout the section.

5.2 Unpurchased Graves

Unpurchased graves are provided for people who want to be buried but cannot or do not want to buy the Exclusive Right of Burial. The charge for an interment in a grave where the Exclusive Right of Burial has not been purchased does not include any right or privilege relating to the grave space.

All unpurchased graves are dug for a minimum of three interments, dependant on soil conditions.

New unpurchased graves may be on the same sections as the purchased graves for which the Exclusive Right of Burial has been sold.

The Council will provide a small slab and plaque at the head of all new unpurchased graves stating the grave number only.

Relatives of the deceased have five years in which to purchase the Exclusive Right of Burial. After this time the Council may bury another unrelated person in that same grave.

No memorials are to be erected on an unpurchased grave unless the Exclusive Right of Burial and a deed of grant for the right to install a memorial have been purchased.

5.3 Natural Graves

Natural graves provide a living memorial in an area which will be maintained as a natural meadow which will be attractive to a range of wildlife and have its own distinct intrinsic value.

Each grave is for one interment only and there is no mounding. No memorial or marker will be permitted on a grave in the natural burial area.

All chemicals used in the normal preparation of a body for interment are prohibited in the natural burial area.

Coffins or caskets will be made of readily bio-degradable material or the body will be fully wrapped in a simple shroud and placed on a board.

Floral tributes are allowed to be placed on the grave for 14 days following the interment. After this period all floral tributes and memorabilia will be removed and no further memorabilia or floral tributes will be permitted in the natural burial area.

The location of the grave plot will be identified electronically and recorded and logged on Cemetery site plans at the Council Offices.

Maintenance of the natural burial areas is carried out by the Council to ensure the area is in keeping with a naturalised meadow area. Therefore, mowing will be carried out at a maximum of twice per year and natural plants and flowers will be encouraged.

The maintenance programme has been established to encourage natural species to flourish in the area, those wanting a much more 'formal' appearance should consider an alternative grave type.

5.4 Babies and Children's Graves

A variety of memorials are permitted in the babies and children's (under 16 years of age) section, e.g. headstone, flat stone, vase or book-set.

Memorabilia on these graves must be reasonable and in keeping with the character of the Cemeteries and their surroundings (see paragraph 5.7 below). All memorabilia will be subject to the approval of the Environmental Services Manager or their delegated staff.

Memorials within this section shall be:

- No more than 3 feet in height (900mm) including base;
- No more than 2 feet wide (600mm) including base;
- Headstone to be no more than 6 inches thick (150mm)
- Base to be no more than 1 foot in depth (300mm) including headstone

Book-sets must be a maximum of 15 inches (380mm) in height (overall).

5.5 Cremated Remains

There are three options for the interment of cremated remains:

(a) standard lawn memorial (installed on pre-cast concrete raft)

There is space for up to a maximum four interments of cremated remains, dependant on the size of the container.

A base forming an integral part of the design of a headstone may be included, provided it does not project more than 2 inches (50mm) beyond the headstone to the rear and sides and provided that it is fixed onto the pre-cast concrete raft provided by the Council to current NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) standards.

Cremated remains lawn memorials shall be:

- No more than 3 feet high (900mm);
- No more than 2 feet 6 inches wide (770mm);
- Headstone to be no more than 6 inches thick (150mm)
- Base to be no more than 1 foot in depth (300mm) including headstone

Adjacent to the concrete raft a border approximately 1 foot (300mm) wide is provided in which additional floral tributes may be laid. (In accordance with permitted tributes rules and Regulations, see paragraph 5.7).

(b) flat plaque memorial

There is space for up to a maximum four interments of cremated remains, dependant on the size of the container.

The flat plaque memorial will be installed on top of the interred container(s). The plaque will be flush with the surrounding turf area.

The flat plaque memorial shall be:

- 18 inches in width (460mm)
- 24 inches in length (610mm)
- 2 inches thick (50mm)

(c) interment of cremated remains in an existing grave

Cremated remains may also be interred in any other full size grave where an Exclusive Right of Burial has been granted provided that the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial has given the necessary permission to inter in that grave, or if desired cremated remains may be interred in an unpurchased grave space. A maximum of eight containers dependant upon container size and remaining available burial space may be interred in a full size grave.

Cremated remains must be held in a container suitable for burial. The container must have the full name of the deceased clearly visible.

No burial of cremated remains will be permitted unless a copy of the Certificate of Cremation from the crematorium where the cremation took place, is delivered to the Council Offices, together with the necessary completed Notice of Interment.

5.6 Woodland Areas (Cremated remains under-turf scattering areas)

Cremated remains are scattered beneath the surface and no cremated remains in containers are interred in the Woodland Areas (Four Seasons Woodland at Sytch Lane Cemetery and Gilpin's Glade at Strawberry Lane Cemetery).

In order to preserve the aesthetic appearance of the woodland as a natural memorial the Council requests that visitors note the following:

- (a) there is to be no memorabilia and
- (b) any memorabilia left in the woodland will be disposed of.

An approximate location of cremated remains in the woodland areas will be recorded.

5.7 General Points for All Graves

The following are examples of items that will not be permitted, however the list is not exhaustive:

Breakable items
Windmills
Flags
Wind chimes
Solar powered lights
Garden trellis/fencing/ornaments

It may be necessary from time to time to remove items in the above list or any items in the Cemeteries that cause disturbance or offence to visitors. Such item(s) will be removed to the on-site compound by Cemetery staff where they will be stored for a period of one month for owners to collect.

Artificial flowers will be permitted in the Cemeteries but will be removed by Cemetery staff once they have become unsightly or spent.

Concrete rafts are provided for memorials and all floral tributes and ornaments must remain within the gravel channel provided and not encroach onto the grassed area or neighbouring grave space in order to ensure that grounds maintenance tasks can be undertaken without the risk of causing damage. Any breach of this will result in the owner being notified and given seven days to remove the item(s). After seven days the item(s) will be removed to the on-site compound by Cemetery staff where they will be stored for a period of one month for owners to collect.

The Council will not accept responsibility for damage or loss of any memorabilia. The Council has a responsibility to ensure the Cemeteries are free

of obvious dangers and hazards. Examples of hazards are glass and pottery items which could break, sharp objects, items placed in paths reducing the width of the path and items which pose a tripping hazard.

As part of routine grounds maintenance, the weeds/grass along the front of the gravel channel and to the sides of memorials may be controlled using herbicide and/or a strimmer.

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.

6. Managing Cemetery Memorials

6.1 General

The installation of any memorial, renovation of an existing memorial and adding of inscriptions to memorials will be carefully monitored by the Council to ensure that:

- (a) work is only carried out with the authority of the registered owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial and owner(s) of the right to erect a memorial.
- (b) all memorials will comply with the Council's Rules and Regulations applicable for the erection and maintenance of memorials and work is carried out in a manner that will ensure that all health and safety regulations are adhered to.

Once any memorial has been erected, the owner of the Right to Erect a Memorial or their executor or personal representative will be held responsible for the future maintenance and safety of that memorial. Any memorial deemed to be unsafe by the Manager or delegated Cemetery staff must, without delay, either be removed from the Cemetery or repaired by an approved memorial mason to current NAMM standards.

The costs associated with any emergency stabilisation works carried out by the Council shall be recoverable from the owner of the Right to Erect a Memorial.

It is recommended that appropriate insurance cover is obtained for the memorial by the owner of the Right to Erect a Memorial against all risks. Further information can be obtained from your appointed memorial mason.

The Council may remove any memorials from private graves when the period of Exclusive Right of Burial or the period of the deed of grant for the Right to Erect a Memorial has expired and no application to extend the period has been made within 12 months of expiry (*Local Authorities Cemetery Order 1977*).

The Council as part of its memorial management scheme will routinely test the stability of memorials on a 5 yearly basis and work may be required on memorials which are deemed to be in a dangerous or dilapidated state.

The Council reserves the right, after reasonable notice to the person concerned and failure to take the necessary action, to remove or change any memorial, which infringes these Rules and Regulations or, in the opinion of the Environmental Services Manager, is in a state of disrepair.

6.2 The Right to Erect a Memorial

Before any memorial is erected in the Cemeteries the Right to Erect a Memorial must be applied for, for which a fee is payable. The person applying for the Right to Erect a Memorial must be the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

An application form is available from the Council or from your memorial mason who will complete the form on your behalf.

You will need to confirm that you are the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

The Right to Erect a Memorial will last for a period of 10 years after which if no application for a further period of 10 years is made the memorial may be removed by the Council and stored for a period of 12 months for the owner to collect.

The Right to Erect a Memorial period may be extended by increments of 10 years up to a maximum of 100 years providing that the Exclusive Right of Burial is still valid.

6.3 Permit to Erect a Memorial

Before any person carries out any form of work to any memorial, application must be made for permission to do so on a form supplied by the Council (see paragraph 6.1 above). Whilst the initial installation of a memorial and first inscription is included in the original deed of grant for the Right to Erect a Memorial fee, any additional works will incur a further fee (details available upon request from the Council Offices).

Details of any proposed memorial must be submitted to the Council on the appropriate form including design, inscription, colours and dimensions prior to commissioning a memorial mason to carry out the work. The application must be submitted to the Council Offices for approval and must include a drawing of the memorial to the scale of 1mm to 10mm (1 inch to 1 foot) and with a copy of the proposed inscription. Every application shall be signed by the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

No form of memorial will be admitted into the Cemeteries until the permit has been issued by the Council.

Memorial masons must contact the Council to seek an appointment date and time, which must be adhered to in order to carry out the work.

Memorial masons carrying out the work shall keep a copy of the permit available for inspection at all times whilst working in the Cemeteries. Cemetery staff will be entitled to view such permits.

Any person or company commissioned to carry out the work shall observe and conform to these Rules and Regulations in every aspect.

The Council is flexible regarding the shape and design of a memorial as long as they do not exceed the sizes given. Please note that a memorial's overall height must include the height of its base.

The Environmental Services Manager has the right to decline any memorial and/or inscription that they deem inappropriate for the Cemeteries.

The Council will not issue a permit to any memorial mason who has not previously supplied the Council with copies of their public liability insurance valued at a minimum of £5,000,000, method statement and risk assessments for work within the Cemeteries.

6.4 Accreditation

Only memorial masons who appear on the BRAMM (British Registration of Accredited Memorial Masons) and/or NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) register are permitted to carry out work on memorials in the Cemetery. All memorial masons working within the Cemeteries must carry personal BRAMM and/or NAMM accreditation.

6.5 Materials for Memorials

Memorials, headstones and plaques shall be made of natural stone or of such material capable of withstanding continuous exposure to the weather. Other materials may also be considered providing they are practical, appropriate and in keeping with the surroundings.

6.6 Memorial Inscription

All inscriptions shall be either bronze, lead, raised or inset, or incised and painted, or carved in relief, or gilded lettering or other similar approved.

Every memorial must have the grave number and name of the memorial mason inscribed upon it in lettering not more than ½ inch (12mm) in height and 6 inches (150mm) in length (in the case of headstones this must be on the side of the base).

6.7 Damage to Memorials

The Council accept no liability for any damage that may be caused to any form of memorial or inscription in the Cemeteries. Any damage caused by the Council's contractors engaged in Cemetery operations will be the responsibility of the Contractor who will hold a certificate of public liability insurance valued at a minimum of £5,000,000.

6.8 General Points for Memorial Masons

All memorial masons' vehicles must vacate the Cemeteries by 4.00 p.m. Monday to Friday. Fixing of memorials is not allowed on Saturdays, Sundays or Public Holidays.

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

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

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.

Contravention of these Rules and Regulations will be reported to BRAMM and/or NAMM and may result in memorial masons being prohibited from working within the Cemeteries.

7. Additional Memorial Options

7.1 Adopt-a-Tree-Scheme (Available at both Sytch Lane Cemetery, Wombourne and Strawberry Lane Cemetery, Great Wyrley)

A selection of existing trees are available under our Adopt-a-Tree Scheme at both cemeteries. At Sytch Lane Cemetery, there are 147 trees of a variety of species to choose from, including Ash, Birch, Cherry, Crab Apple, Lime, Rowan, Sugar Maple, Sycamore and White Birch. At Strawberry Lane Cemetery, there are 77 trees to choose from, including Alder, Hornbeam, Lime, Liquid Amber, Mountain Ash, Oak, Silver Birch and Sugar Maple.

The adoption of a tree includes an inscribed granite plaque installed at the base of the chosen tree. Lease periods are for either 3, 5 or 10 years and can be renewed if required.

A number of the trees are located in and around the cemeteries, making this an ideal memorial option for those who have their loved ones' cremated remains scattered within the woodland areas. Relatives of those not interred or scattered at the cemeteries are also welcome to adopt a tree as a way of remembering loved ones.

Once your application and plaque inscription has been approved we will arrange for the purchase and installation of the plaque at the base of the tree. If you tell us that there is a specific date or anniversary by which you would like the plaque installed or that you would like to attend of the day of installation, then we will be happy to arrange this for you.

No memorabilia is permitted on or around the adopted tree, nor are items allowed to be attached to individual plaques. Any items left on or around the adopted tree or attached to individual plaques will be removed and stored by the Council for a period of one month.

It is recommended that you arrange to meet on site with Cemetery staff in order to choose the species of tree and location. Further information is available from Bereavement Services at the Council Offices by telephoning (01902) 696111.

7.2 Memorial Plaque Lease - Granite Bird Bath *(Only available at Sytch Lane Cemetery, Wombourne at present)*

A granite bird bath on which relatives can lease a memorial plaque is situated within our Natural Burial Area, which is maintained as a natural meadow, is attractive to a range of wildlife and is also close to the Four Seasons Woodland Scattering Area. The position of the bird bath offers stunning views across South Staffordshire and Worcestershire and is a peaceful place for quiet contemplation and reflection.

We have a range of motifs that can be applied to the plaque along with your inscription, including; a plain cross, a rose, a prayer sign, a teddy bear, a butterfly, a cross with rose, a dove and a daffodil.

Leases are available for three, five or ten year periods and can be renewed at the end of the initial lease period if required.

Once your application and plaque inscription has been approved we will arrange for the purchase and installation of the plaque. If you tell us that there is a specific date or anniversary by which you would like the plaque installed or that

you would like to attend of the day of installation, then we will be happy to arrange this for you.

No memorabilia is permitted on or around the granite memorial tower nor are items allowed to be attached to individual plaques. Any items left on or around the granite memorial tower or attached to individual plaques will be removed and stored by the Council for a period of one month.

7.3 Memorial Plaque Lease – Bench *(Only available at Sytch Lane Cemetery, Wombourne at present)*

A granite memorial plaque can be leased on an existing bench at Sytch Lane Cemetery. Leases are available for three, five or ten year periods and can be renewed at the end of the initial lease period if required. The position of the bench offers views of Himley Hall, Sedgley Beacon and across the South Staffordshire countryside.

Once your application and plaque inscription has been approved we will arrange for the purchase and installation of the plaque. If you tell us that there is a specific date or anniversary by which you would like the plaque installed or that you would like to attend of the day of installation, then we will be happy to arrange this for you.

No memorabilia is permitted on or around the bench nor are items allowed to be attached to individual plaques. Any items left on or around the bench or attached to individual plaques will be removed and stored by the Council for a period of one month.

8. Legislation

- 8.1 All relevant legislation must be complied with, particularly the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order (LACO) 1977, a copy of which can be provided by the Council upon request.