

Almond Lane Cemetery General Information and Regulations

The burial grounds in Stevenage provide attractive, peaceful green spaces for all visitors to enjoy, whether for remembering a loved one or to simply take some time for quiet reflection.

All visitors are welcome to our cemeteries, and we ask that everyone respects the peace, dignity and reverence of these facilities, as well as other users.

The Borough Council takes pride in maintaining Almond Lane Cemetery to a high standard with a combination of traditional graves and lawn graves.

The information below sets out how the council will manage the cemetery and the part families' and visitors can play to ensure that by working together Almond Lane is safe, accessible and sustainable.



Behaviour in Cemeteries

All visitors are welcome, and we ask that everyone behaves in an appropriate manner:

- All visitors shall behave in a quiet, orderly and respectful manner
- Visitors shall not cause a nuisance or interfere with any burial taking place or any grave or memorial
- All visitors shall make full and appropriate use of the recycling facilities provided on site
- No sports or games or discharge of firearms (unless at a military funeral) are permitted
- Any person, who damages, defaces or destroys any property or causes a nuisance in the cemeteries may be prosecuted
- Dogs are permitted in the cemetery grounds provided they are always kept on a suitable lead and under control. Owners, or handlers, must take full responsibility for their animal and must observe appropriate standards of behaviour and cleanliness
- Dogs, except for assistance dogs, or any other animals are not permitted in the cemetery buildings without the prior agreement of the Cemetery Office
- Vehicles must not exceed 10 miles an hour and must use the one-way system
- Vehicles must not park on any grassed area
- Vehicles may be prevented from entering the cemeteries during maintenance work
- Children under 11 years of age must be accompanied by a responsible person
- No demonstrations of any kind are allowed
- Drinking of alcohol and taking of illegal substances is prohibited within the cemetery buildings and grounds

Lawn Areas – Grave Sections BB, H, G and K

No New Graves Available

- The council will maintain the lawn area of all graves.
- The owner (with the Deed of Grant) is responsible for the management and maintenance of any memorial on the grave.
- The council will routinely check each grave and if required place extra soil on the grave to keep the ground level. At the appropriate time of the year grass seed will be sown.
- Fresh floral arrangements will be removed from all graves when they have withered, and the council will dispose of them through recycling.
- Placing anything on the grave space, which prevents the grave being topped up with soil or restricts regular grass cutting is prohibited.
- Grave space owners are permitted to place fresh, seasonal plants and flowers within 150mm (6 inches) of the front edge at the head of the grave. Families should maintain this area themselves in order that the council's cemetery staff does not have to disturb any items in the course of their maintenance activities.
- There can be no kerbstones, fencing, individual gardens, grave mounds or markers to show the boundary of an individual grave.
- All pots, vases and items of memorabilia are to be kept on the memorial base and should not be made of glass.
- The council will remove any item, material or inscription on the grounds of taste, decency or possible offence to any person, faith or community.
- The council will remove any item deemed to be dangerous without prior notice.
- The council reserves the right to remove any faded flowers, vases, bottles, tins or any objects, which, in their opinion, are objectionable or unsightly.
- The council reserves the right to remove any item placed in or on trees within these areas
- Litter or faded flowers should be disposed of in the bins provided for this purpose.
- Any items left on the graves, are left at the owners' risk, Stevenage Borough Council does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to those items.

Lawn Areas Memorials - Sections BB, H, G and K

- Only approved headstones and flower vases of a limited size are permitted as memorials.
- A headstone or cross type memorial can be of white marble, granite (black, grey, blue, green, red, brown etc.) or nebresina.
- The overall size must not exceed 3' in height including the base x 2'6" wide x 4" thick (900mm x 750mm x 100mm)
- Memorials are fixed in double rows in a 'back-to-back' arrangement.
- Permanent memorials may only be erected on graves where the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased.
- The Memorial Application Form will be supplied from a Stonemason of your choice and requires the signature and printed name and address of the grant owner before any work is approved.
- Please be aware that there is a memorial approval fee charged by the council in respect of all new memorials affixed in the cemetery and additional inscriptions on existing memorials.

Traditional Cemetery Graves - Sections A, B, C, D, E, F, FF, G and R

No New Graves Available

Headstones and kerbstones are permitted on these graves as is planting within the boundary of the grave.

- The owner (with the Deed of Grant) is responsible for the management and maintenance of any memorial on the grave.
- Fresh floral arrangements will be removed from all graves when they have withered and the council will dispose of them through recycling.
- All pots, vases and items of memorabilia are to be kept within the boundary of the grave.
- The council will remove any item, material or inscription on the grounds of taste, decency or possible offence to any person, faith or community.
- The council will remove any item deemed to be dangerous without prior notice.
- The council reserves the right to remove any faded flowers, vases, bottles, tins or any objects, which, in their opinion, are objectionable or unsightly.
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Traditional Cemetery Memorials - Sections A, B, C, D, E, F, FF, G and R

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- A headstone or cross type memorial can be of white marble, granite (black, grey, blue, green, red, brown etc.) or nebresina.
- The maximum area on a grave space which a monument will be permitted to occupy is 7' x 3' in the case of a child grave is 4' x 2'.
- Permanent memorials may only be erected on graves where the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased.
- The Memorial Application Form will be supplied from a Stonemason of your choice and requires the signature and printed name and address of the grant owner before any work is approved.
- Please be aware that there is a memorial approval fee charged by the council in respect of all new memorials affixed in the cemetery and additional inscriptions on existing memorials.

If the person named on the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial deed that has moved or is moving house, they should contact the cemetery office with the new address. Telephone Number: 01438 367109 or e-mail us at cemeteries@stevenage.gov.uk

Re-opening of Existing Graves:

All visitors to the cemetery are advised that when an existing grave space needs to be re-opened for a further burial or a family have asked to fill the grave themselves, it may be necessary to place the removed earth on an adjacent plot.

The cemetery staff takes every possible care in this task and if a grave that you visit and tend is affected you are asked to understand that the situation is unavoidable and will pertain for the shortest possible duration.

Temporary Markers:

After the funeral, the grave can be marked at the head with a marker or temporary wooden memorial of a single cross type not exceeding 3' in height and 1' 6" in width. This can be inscribed with the name and plot number of the person recently buried in the grave, until such time as a permanent memorial is erected.

Memorial Safety:

To comply with guidelines from the Health and Safety Executive we are required to survey every memorial to ensure they are in a stable condition and do not pose any immediate danger to visitors and staff working in the cemeteries.

Every five years a Memorial Safety Test is undertaken, if movement of a memorial is detected or it is deemed to be unsafe, under the guidelines issued by the HSE the memorial may be laid down for safety reasons and we will endeavour to contact the grave owner to inform them.

When visiting the cemetery, if you notice any movement of your memorial, please inform the cemetery staff and contact your stonemason to secure your memorial, if you are not sure what to do, please ask the cemetery staff to check the memorial with you.

Stonemasons who erect memorials in the council cemeteries have agreed to the fixing procedures recommended by Stevenage Borough Council.

The Memorial Gardens – Cremated Remains Only:

The Memorial Gardens are located on the left-hand side as you enter the cemetery, opposite the car park and comprise of; The Sanctum Vaults, Garden of Rest and Rose Gardens which have been designed for two interments only in each plot/vault.

Sanctum Vaults - Vaults Available:

With views across the rose gardens, our Sanctum Vaults are situated on the edge of the Garden of Rest.

The Sanctums are above ground memorial vaults, with enough room for two sets of ashes. Each vault comes with a polished granite plaque that can be inscribed with a personalised inscription or design with a floral tribute vase fitted in the base. There are some standard designs to select from and families can also attach a photo plaque with a picture of those commemorated.

The Sanctums are leased for a period of 25 years, which can be renewed when this period expires. We will write to lease holders inviting them to renew or terminate the lease. Please remember to keep us updated should you change address.

If you choose not to renew your lease, please contact us so we can decide for the care of the ashes and the plaque.

- The ashes containers must be made from a non-biodegradable material such as plastic, china, glass or metal and should not exceed 12" in height.
- Due to the nature of the natural granite, the only items permitted are the fresh cut flowers for the vase provided. Any other items found may be removed without notice.
- Unauthorised items placed on or around the Sanctum may cause damage to the stonework and should this happen; the lease holder will be responsible for the cost of replacing the memorial vault.

Garden of Rest – No New Plots Available:

This area has been laid onto lawn with a maximum of one memorial placed on a base slab provided by the council.

- The base slab will measure approximately 20" x 18" (508mm x 457mm)
- The memorial must not exceed 18" x 16" x 3" thick (475mm x 406mm x 76mm) with a maximum height of 18". The base stone must not exceed 20" x 18" x 2" thick (508mm x 457mm x 51 mm).
- All memorials in the garden of rest must be fitted to the base slab provided by the council and we shall not permit any gravestones, fencing, railings, vases or the like.
- Permanent memorials may only be erected on Garden of Rest plots where the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased.
- The Memorial Application Form will be supplied from a Stonemason of your choice and requires the signature and printed name and address of the grant owner before any work is approved.
- Please be aware that there is a memorial approval fee charged by the council in respect of all new memorials affixed in the cemetery and additional inscriptions on existing memorials.

Memorial Rose Gardens – No New Plots Available:

The Rose Gardens have been set out with individual beds surrounded by mature trees, the Memorial Walls and the Garden of Rest; the Council will determine the planting position of the Rose.

- The only items permitted within the rose gardens are the authorised roses and plaques, any items found will be removed.
- If the Rose deteriorates or the plaque breaks, at any time, please inform the cemetery office who will arrange a replaced, a fee maybe charged.
- Maintenance of the gardens will be carried out by cemetery staff during the appropriate seasons

Natural Burial Glade – Graves Available:

We have created a natural burial ground at Almond Lane Cemetery which will develop over the years so that future generations can walk and sit in an area that is alternative to the more traditional approach.

- There are no fixed headstones or memorials in this area but rather a carved wooden marker placed horizontally on the grave.
- The burial plots will be dug to single depth only allowing in time for the grave to become part of the landscape
- Embalming can cause pollution by introducing formaldehyde to the soil. We request that your funeral director informs us beforehand for us to consider.
- Only biodegradable coffins, caskets and their linings may be selected for burial; these include cardboard, wicker, or soft woods. Your local funeral director or supplier should be able to provide information about what is available.
- Ashes can be buried in the natural burial ground, either loose or in a biodegradable container. Again, your funeral director or supplier will be able to help you with this.
- The trees within this area will offer foliage wildlife and shade. To maintain the healthy growth of trees, it will be necessary to manage them by removing the trees that have not flourished.
- As trees need a certain amount of space to develop, it will not be appropriate to plant a tree on each burial plot.
- The Natural Burial Glade will be managed to produce healthy trees and a natural environment and therefore will not be maintained in the usual manner and will not have the appearance of traditional cemeteries.
- Before placing freshly cut flowers on the burial plots, please remove the cellophane, ribbons, and non-biodegradable wrapping.
- Flowers and wreaths placed upon each burial plot at the time of the burial will be removed once the flowers have died and will be recycled.
- Artificial flowers are not permitted, and no vases or containers should be left.
- Planting or cultivation in the Natural Burial Glade is not permitted and we reserve the right, without prior notice, to remove any items that are not in keeping with the natural habitat we are creating.

- Grass cutting will occur at the appropriate times to encourage and promote natural habitats. Please be especially careful to avoid trips and falls on grassy areas.
- Please remember that this is a natural burial ground, it is therefore necessary to wear appropriate footwear and clothing when visiting the site or attending services.

Memorial Walls:

Positions on the Memorial Walls are available to place floral tributes. For people wishing to purchase a position on the wall with a plaque and flower container, a fee will be charged for a period of 5 years which can be renewed.

Remembrance Online:

Celebrate and honour the lives of your loved ones with Remembrance Online, a platform that beautifully merges tradition with the convenience of the digital age. Our unique memorial entries mirror the timeless elegance of the traditional Book of Remembrance, offering you a heartfelt space to cherish.

Memorial Benches:

- Stevenage Borough Council will purchase and locate all memorial benches; however, families can request a particular area and if it is deemed suitable the bench will be positioned as requested.
- The benches will be maintained by the council only and will remain council property.
- A name plaque may be purchased and installed on a memorial bench for a period of 10 years, with the ongoing option to renew the agreement.
- No items are to be placed on or around the memorial benches and any such item may be removed without prior notice.
- Regular inspections of all memorial benches will be undertaken and any that are deemed unsafe will be removed. All reasonable efforts will be made to inform the purchaser if the bench should be removed.

Grave Maintenance/Attendance Services:

We have a variety of grave maintenance options available to assist grave owners and families that do not live close to the area and are unable to visit on a regular basis. The options have been designed to help keep your loved ones plots clean and tidy all year round.

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|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Platinum Service | 4 x per annum
Grave tidy/weeding, memorial wash
2 x per annum
Planting of spring and autumn bulbs ² |
| 2. Gold Service | 2 x per annum
Grave tidy/weeding, memorial wash
1 x per annum
Planting of spring OR autumn bulbs |
| 3. Silver Service | 2 x per annum
Grave tidy/weeding, memorial wash |
| 4. Turf Laying | |
| 5. Turf Maintenance / General weeding | 2 x per annum |

If you would like to discuss these options further or make an application for our grave maintenance services, please contact the cemetery team either by email: cemeteries@stevenage.gov.uk or by calling 01438 367109

Further information and guidance about our cemeteries is available in the Cemetery Services Policy

<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/about-the-council/cemeteries/our-cemeteries>



How to Get There: Almond Lane Cemetery lies in the north of the town, the entrance is from Almonds Lane and is within easy reach of a frequent bus service to and from the Town Centre and railway station.

The address is:

Almond Lane Cemetery, Almonds Lane, Stevenage, SG1 3RR

Contact Details:

Cemetery Services
Stevenage Borough Council
Cavendish Road
Stevenage
SG1 2ET
01438 367109

cemeteries@stevenage.gov.uk

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