



Okehampton Town Council

Okehampton Cemetery



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What 3 Words:

scanner.bibs.square

Council Cemetery

Okehampton Town Council only owns and is responsible for the newest Cemetery area at All Saints Church. This is known as Okehampton Cemetery and is highlighted in green on the map.

The Cemetery was managed by the Northmoor Team Ministry until 1st April 2021 when the Cemetery management was brought in-house and run by the Town Council under the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977. Management of all aspects of the cemetery is subject to the Town Council's regulations

The Cemetery area owned by Okehampton Town Council is un-consecrated.

Cemetery Regulations

The Council believe in offering as much choice as possible to bereaved people and have attempted to keep regulations to a minimum. It is recognised, however, that some regulations are necessary in order to ensure that the cemetery is a safe, attractive, and fitting place for all those who visit and work in them.

Full copies of the Council's Rules and Regulations, together with its Memorial Management Policy, are available from the Town Clerk. They can also be viewed online at www.okehampton.gov.uk.

A brief summary of some of the regulations and other factors relating to the upkeep and working of the cemetery are given here.

Okehampton Cemetery is a place of peace and quiet reflection. It is also a workplace. Visitors to the cemetery are welcome, but please respect the special nature of the site, the needs of all users, and safety factors.

Memorials on graves must be of good quality, hard-wearing materials and must be approved by the Council before being fixed. It is recommended that accredited memorial masons are used. More information is available from the Town Clerk.

We require cooperation in keeping the grassed area of graves free of pots, plants, and other artefacts. This is so that the grass can be cut using mowers without causing damage or risking injury to the operator and visitors from glass or plastic shards.

We recognise that you may wish to leave tributes, therefore we allow pot plants and suitable artefacts to be placed at the head of the grave where they are at less risk of damage by mowing. We ask that vases are made from non-breakable material, as glass or ceramic pots will shatter during

winter due to the freezing of any water in them. Broken glass or pottery presents a danger to visitors, staff, and wildlife in the cemetery. Plastic flowers are not permitted. Please think carefully about your choice of container and seek advice from the Town Clerk if necessary.

Please note that if you place articles along the length of the grave, we will not be able to cut the grass for you and the grave may look untidy compared to those around it. We reserve the right to remove the articles and place them at the head of the grave or take them to the Council offices for collection. Please be aware that the cemetery is a community asset and choose items for your grave that are in-keeping and appropriate.

Please note that it may be necessary at some point in the future to excavate the graves surrounding yours. If so, we will need to place boards over the grave and a box to accommodate the soil, and you may therefore not be able to visit the grave for a short while. Please be assured that this will only be necessary where there is no other option, and that the grave will be cleaned and tidied and returned to its usual condition as soon as the burial has taken place.

Exclusive Rights of Burial

When you purchase a grave, you do not actually buy the land that the grave occupies – that remains in the ownership of the Council. Purchasing a grave means that you purchase the Exclusive Right of Burial of the grave. This means that no burials can take place in the grave without your permission. In Okehampton Cemetery, purchasing the Exclusive Right of Burial also gives you the right to have a memorial placed on the grave, subject to current memorial regulations and the payment of a permit fee.

If the Exclusive Right of Burial of a grave is not purchased, the Council retains the rights, and may use any remaining space in the grave for further unrelated burials. No memorials are allowed on unpurchased graves.

The purchase of a grave gives you:

Control over who is buried in the grave

The right to place a memorial stone or other type of memorial

You can choose to transfer the rights to the grave to another person, but this must be done using an official form available from the Town Clerk, and it is subject to an administration charge. You may bequeath the rights in your Will, but the Executor will need to contact the Town Clerk in order to effect the Transfer to the new owner. If you do not leave a will, your next of kin will need to contact the Town Clerk for advice on how the rights can be transferred.

Deed of Grant

When you purchase a grave, the Council will issue you with a Deed of Grant. The Deed is proof of your ownership and is a very important document. You should keep the Deed in a safe place as you may be asked to produce it when you ask for a burial to take place in the grave.

Length of purchase

You may purchase a grave in Okehampton Cemetery for a period of 30 years. At the end of the lease the rights to the grave will revert to the Council, and any memorial on the grave may be removed. Leases may be extended during their lifetime but can only be extended back to the original 30 years.

Responsibilities of Owners

As the owner, you are responsible for the safety and condition of any memorial on the grave.

Although the Council has responsibilities under Health and Safety legislation to ensure the safety of visitors and staff in cemeteries, the responsibility for the safety of individual memorials rests with the owner. If a memorial becomes dilapidated and/or unsafe, the Council has the right to remove it or make it safe. The cost for any such work can be claimed from the grave owner.

The Council undertakes regular safety checks on all the memorials in the Cemetery. Where possible, the grave owner will be contacted if a memorial is found to be in need of work. The owner would then be given the option of having the work done themselves using a mason of their choice or paying the Council to do the work for them. If neither option is chosen, the Council retains the right to remove the danger presented by the memorial.

In order to keep our records up to date so that we may contact you, if necessary, it is important that any changes of address are notified to us as soon as possible.

Responsibilities of the Council

Whether the grave is purchased or not, the Council will maintain it to a decent standard by cutting the grass regularly and ensuring that it is topped up and levelled if it should sink.

The Council will carry out periodic testing of the stability of any memorial on the grave and will contact you if there are any problems. The Council is not responsible for the maintenance of individual memorials.