



**Amersham Town Council**

**A GUIDE TO THE  
CEMETERIES OF AMERSHAM**

# Contents

This guide is intended to provide the reader with a straightforward insight into the services provided by Amersham Town Council available at Stanley Hill Cemetery, St Mary's Cemetery and The Platt Cemetery in Amersham.

The contents of this guide are as follows:

Introduction

Administration

Register of Burials

Exclusive Right of Burial

Graves

Interments

Interment of Cremated Remains

Memorials

Lawn Cemetery Rules & Care of Graves and Memorials

## Introduction

The cemeteries are owned and managed by Amersham Town Council for and on behalf of the residents of Amersham. In the first instance, all enquiries should be made to:

The Town Clerk - Amersham Town Council,  
Flint Barn Court,  
Church Street,  
Amersham,  
Bucks,  
HP7 0DB

Tel: 01494 434000 - Email: [townclerk@amersham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@amersham-tc.gov.uk)

Stanley Hill Cemetery is located off the A404 Stanley Hill, close to the Amersham School.

St Mary's Cemetery is located behind St Mary's Church and the Memorial Gardens in Amersham Old Town.

The Platt Cemetery is located at the end of The Platt behind the Kings Church in Old Amersham High Street.

Access to the cemeteries is available daily without restrictions.

Our Cemeteries are places of peace and quiet reflection. Visitors to our Cemeteries are welcome, but please respect the special nature of the sites, the needs of other users, and safety factors. All visitors to our Cemeteries must keep to the roads or paths, except when visiting graves. Visitors must not stand, sit or lean on any memorial or otherwise act in such a way as to cause damage to property or offence to passers-by.

Everyone is welcome to visit the cemeteries. We ask that all visitors treat them with respect by:

- Conducting themselves in a decent, quiet and orderly manner
- Respecting any burial taking place
- Respecting with any grave or vault, any tombstone or other memorial, kerbstones, flowers or plants
- Keeping vehicles on the roadway and speed to 5 mph maximum
- Not dropping litter
- Taking no alcohol or illegal substances into the cemeteries
- Playing no games or sports
- No dogs except on lead and under control of their owner
- Complying with all rules in force at the time

## **Administration**

Administration of the Cemeteries is dealt with at the Amersham Town Council office by the Burials Administration Officer and the Town Clerk.

Detailed plans and registers are kept at the Town Council office and information may be sought during office opening hours, which are Monday – Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm.

## **Register of Burials**

A Register of Burials is kept by Amersham Town Council. Searches in the Register, which contains information regarding the name and age of the person buried, the grave number and the date of burial, may be made during office hours. There is a small fee for this service.

## **Exclusive Right of Burial**

The Exclusive Right of Burial entitles the deed holder to determine who is buried in the grave and whether a memorial can be erected on the grave (subject to the Town Council's specifications regarding memorials (pages 7 to 9)).

The Exclusive Right of Burial of a grave space for a period of 75 years may be purchased when applying for an interment or for future use. Grave spaces may be purchased by residents and non-residents of the town of Amersham.

Residents of the town of Amersham Town Council are entitled to a 50% reduction from the standard rate (see table of fees which are reviewed annually).

At the expiration of the 75 year period of the Exclusive Right of Burial, the owners, or his/her heirs, shall have the choice of renewing that right subject to the rules and regulations in force at that time.

The transfer of the ownership of the Exclusive Right of Burial requires the approval of the Town Council, and will require the production of evidence as to the ownership of the Right and full details of the proposed new owner. Any such transfer of ownership must be recorded by the Town Council.

It is advisable that once the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial has been interred within the grave, then arrangement be made for transfer of ownership. No further burials, interments of cremated remains, additional inscriptions or installation of new memorials will be permitted until revised entitled ownership has been established.

### **Please Note:**

Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate the purchasers' wishes, the allocation of grave spaces will be at the discretion of the Burials Administrator. However, the final decision will be determined by the Town Clerk.

## Interments

A provisional booking for a funeral may be made by telephone to the Town Council Office. The provisional booking should then be followed up by the submission of a completed Notice of Interment, (form supplied by the Town Council), to the Town Council Office at least 5 working days in advance of the intended date and time of the funeral. Receipt of the fully and correctly completed Notice of Interment will act as confirmation of the provisional booking. The Certificate for Burial or Cremation, issued by the Registrar of Births and Deaths must be delivered to the Council Office at least 3 working days prior to the interment. **All fees due to Amersham Town Council must be paid prior to the interment.**

Notice sent by post shall be deemed to be delivered when it is received by the Town Clerk or Burials Administrator (any such Notice which is delivered on a day other than a working day shall be deemed to be delivered at 9.00am on the next working day).

Responsibility for error therein must rest with the person giving the Notice. If circumstances are such that a particular interment is not convenient or practicable on the day or the time stated in the Notice of Interment, the Town Clerk or Burials Administrator will immediately notify the person giving the Notice of Interment of the grounds of his or her objection.

The exact size of the coffin, or casket must be given in writing to the Town Council as soon as possible after the provisional booking, together with any other pertinent information relating to its size and shape. Furthermore, as much information relating to the funeral as possible must be given to the Town Council in advance, especially if it is unusual, e.g. large number of mourners expected or there is to be a horse drawn carriage etc. Any form of religious service is allowed, but any other ceremony is subject to the approval of the Town Clerk. In addition, it is the responsibility of the person making the funeral arrangements to organise a Minister or Officiant for the funeral if one is required.

**Any floral tributes from the funeral will be placed on top of the grave following backfilling, and will remain in situ for a minimum of 14 days before being cleared by Town Council staff, (unless family have already removed them). After a period of six months (providing the ground has sufficiently settled following an interment), the grave will be turfed and returned to lawn by Amersham Town Council.**

The placing of an unbreakable plant pot, trough or other receptacle is permitted for a **temporary period of six months** until a headstone may be erected.

Interments shall take place between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm Monday – Friday during British Summer Time, and 10.00am and 2.00pm during the rest of the year on weekdays (excluding Bank or other Public Holidays). The time appointed for an interment must be punctually observed, with the Town Council reserving the right to delay a late arriving funeral in the event that it impacts on another service. All preparations of the graves are carried out by Amersham Town Council.

## **Interment of Cremated Remains**

The Exclusive Right of Burial may be purchased for plots for the interment of cremated remains.

Urns or receptacles containing cremated remains may be interred in otherwise full graves, (including graves designated as children's graves) subject to the provisions of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order, 1977 relating to the reopening of such graves and the payment of the prescribed fee.

### **Stanley Hill Cemetery - New Ashes Section**

Parts of the cemetery are set aside of the interment of cremated remains, a certificate for burial purposes issued by the Cremation Authority will be required prior to the interment.

There is a designated area for the interment of cremated remains in the Garden of Remembrance, this area is unconsecrated. The grave may be blessed by a Minister and this would need to be arranged by the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial. Following interment, a concrete base slab measuring 2' x 2' (61cm x 61 cm) is laid by the Town Council.

The allocation of grave spaces within these sections are by strict rotation and shall be determined by the Burials Administrator (with the final decision being made by the Town Clerk).

### **The Platt and Stanley Hill Cemeteries (existing Ashes Section)**

There are also other designated areas for the interment of cremated remains within The Platt and Stanley Hill Cemeteries.

All fees due to the Town Council must be paid at least 3 working days prior to the interment.

It is the responsibility of the person or persons arranging the interment to pay all fees due for the services of a Minister, Undertaker and Monumental Mason if so engaged.

## Memorials

Headstones and tablets are permitted to be erected or placed on a grave or vault subject to application to, and permission being granted by Amersham Town Council and upon payment of the appropriate fees.

Memorials for which non-renewable Permits have been issued may be removed by the Town Council without further reference if they are deemed to be unsafe or unstable.

In the new extension of Stanley Hill Cemetery memorials are permitted for a 10 year period only. This permit will be renewed at the request of the Deed Holder subject to the memorial being in a safe condition.

Applications for the approval to erect or place a new memorial, to replace, add to or remove from the cemetery any memorial, to add to or alter any inscription on any such memorial, **must** be submitted to the Town Council on the appropriate form along with all fees due at least **two weeks** prior to any such installation or alteration. It is necessary to allow a settlement time of six months before approval can be given for erection of a headstone.

Details on the application form must include:

- The grave number and cemetery
- The full name of the deceased
- In the case of a new or replacement memorial, a drawing of the memorial showing the specifications (see below) and including the material (stone) to be used along with the colour and finish.
- The text of any inscription (or alteration to any existing inscription) and including the type, colour and finish.
- The name, address, and signature of the person making the application (who should be the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial).

### **Specification:**

Please ask for a copy of the Cemetery Rules and Memorial Specifications, available at Amersham Town Council office.

The inscriptions should be 'simple and reverent'. All memorials shall be inscribed with the grave number.

No installation or alteration to any memorial can take place without prior written approval of the Town Council.

All monumental work must be carried out by an experienced monumental mason and in accordance with the National Association of Monumental Masons (NAMM) Code of Practice 1998 and all subsequent amendments. Amersham Town Council reserve the right to order the removal or improvement of any memorial considered to be unsafe or to be in breach of the specifications originally approved, and at the expense of the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

The removal and replacement of a memorial to facilitate the reopening of a purchased grave shall be at the expense of the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

The Platt and Stanley Hill Cemeteries are now mostly a lawn style, particularly the newer Sections, in order to facilitate maintenance and grass cutting and to maintain a uniform appearance.

Kerbstones may be permitted in certain Sections at the discretion of the Town Council and existing kerbs may be replaced by permission of the Town Council and upon payment of the appropriate fee.

All persons at work in the cemetery in connection with graves, monuments or otherwise:

- Shall comply with all reasonable directions and requirements of the Town Clerk or Burials Administrator.
- Shall only work during the normal working hours of 9.00am to 5.00pm, unless the prior written permission from the Town Clerk or Burials Administrator, has been obtained.
- Shall clear away and dispose, (of offsite all dirt), rubbish or other debris and leave the Cemetery in a clean and safe condition.
- Shall make good any damage that may be caused when carrying out work in the Cemeteries.
- Shall notify the Town Clerk or Burials Administrator before starting work.

No memorial or part of a memorial, may be removed from the Cemeteries without the prior approval of the Town Clerk or Burials Administrator. Any memorial removed in the process of opening a grave shall be removed at the risk and expense of the person requiring the grave to be opened.

## **LAWN CEMETERY RULES**

**Applicable to:-**

**Stanley Hill Cemetery, Sections 4 & 5 and 6, The Platt Cemetery, St Mary's Cemetery**

The above cemeteries are designated 'lawn cemeteries' which means that all graves have flat turfed surfaces and only headstone type memorials are permitted. No flower vases may be placed on or around the grave other than in any receptacle approved by the Council as part of a permanent memorial. **SHRUBS, TREES, BUSHES ETC. MAY NOT BE PLANTED ON THE GRAVE AND FLOWERS SHOULD BE PLACED ONLY IN RECEPTACLES WHICH FORM PART OF THE MEMORIAL ITSELF. STONES SURROUNDING THE PLOT ARE NOT PERMITTED**

The following guidelines relating to memorials are to be observed: -

No burial shall take place, no cremated remains shall be scattered and no memorial shall be placed in the cemetery without permission of the Town Council.



## Memorials

Permanent memorials may be placed only on graves to which the burial rights have been purchased. For a temporary period not exceeding 6 months a wooden marker or cross (the cross not to exceed 30" x 24" overall) showing the name, age and date of death of the deceased may be permitted, subject to the Town Council's approval. Such a marker shall be removed by the Town Council on the expiry of the six month period. The Town Council reserves the right to remove permanent memorials erected where the burial rights have not been purchased.

Memorials on full size graves are to be of the headstone type, not more than 3 feet high by 2 feet wide by 4 inches deep, in a shoe, and placed at the head of the grave in line with existing headstones. (Not permitted to place a headstone in between grave plots.) A plinth not exceeding 6 inches front to rear (see attached diagram), may be placed at the foot of the headstone. **Please note total measurements including plinth not to exceed 3 feet x 2 feet x 10 inches.**

All memorials (including replacements) erected in the cemeteries will be installed in accordance with the standards laid down by National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) as in existence at the time of installation.

### Ashes

Horizontal tablets, not more than 18 inches by 18 inches may be placed on cremated remains burial plots.

Alternatively a headstone not more than 2 feet high x 2 feet wide x 4 inches deep may be placed at the head of the grave in line with existing headstone.

### **General**

The small brass plaque that is placed on the grave by the funeral directors is considered to be a temporary headstone and should be removed when a permanent memorial is in place.

### **Stanley Hill Extension**

Health & Safety Regulations require the Town Council to ensure memorials are maintained in a safe condition. Whilst the maintenance is the responsibility of the Title Deed Holder in perpetuity approval has led to difficulties particularly after a long period of years has elapsed.

Memorials and monuments will therefore be granted Approval Permits for a 10 year period which may be renewed on application only by the Title Deed Holder. Where memorial permits are not renewed the responsibility for maintenance will automatically transfer to the Town Council who may remove or repair at its absolute discretion any memorial deemed to be unsafe.

### **Generally**

It is essential that those responsible for the erection of headstones or other memorials arrange for their placement in exactly the right positions after consultation with the burial authority.

In any circumstances where these memorials have been located incorrectly, the Town Council reserves the right to arrange for their replacement into the correct position and for the costs thereof to be recovered from the persons originally responsible.

**KERBS, FENCES, ORNAMENTS (INCLUDING – BUT NOT LIMITED TO - TEA LIGHT HOLDERS, LANTERNS & SOLAR LIGHTS), STONE VASES (MEMORIAL OR NOT), OR THE PLANTING OF ANY FLOWERS, SHRUBS OR PLANTS ALONG THE GRAVE SPACE ARE NOT PERMITTED AND THE TOWN COUNCIL WILL RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REMOVE ANY SUCH ITEMS IN ORDER TO PROPERLY UNDERTAKE THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF THESE CEMETERIES. ANY UNAUTHORISED OBJECTS, DEAD FLOWERS OR UNSUITABLE ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS MAY BE REMOVED AT ANY TIME BY THE TOWN COUNCIL.**

Dogs will only be permitted into the cemetery if kept on a lead and under the control of the owner.

**THE TOWN COUNCIL HAS ADOPTED THESE RULES IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT THE LONG TERM MAINTENANCE OF THE CEMETERY CAN BE PROPERLY AND EFFICIENTLY UNDERTAKEN IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE FEELING OF SERENITY AND DIGNITY AS BEFITS CEMETERIES OF THIS TYPE. SUCH RULES ALLOW FOR THE LONG TERM CARE OF ALL GRAVE SPACES, PERHAPS FOR LONG AFTER THOSE WHO INITIALLY WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR SUCH CARE ARE ABLE TO CONTINUE THAT OBLIGATION.**