CEMETERIES AND CREMATORIUM REGULATIONS
1. All persons entering the cemetery will be subject to the orders and control of the registrar.

2. All persons admitted to a cemetery, shall conduct themselves in a decent, quiet and orderly manner; and are reminded of the provisions of the Local Authorities’ Cemeteries Order 1977, Article 18 (1) below:-

No person shall:-
(a) wilfully create any disturbance in a cemetery;
(b) commit any nuisance in a cemetery;
(c) wilfully interfere with any burial taking place in a cemetery;
(d) wilfully interfere with any grave or vault, any tombstone or other memorial or any flowers or plants or any such matter; or
(e) play at any game or sport in a cemetery.

3. All enquiries, complaints and requests by members of the public must be made at the Central Cemeteries Office, Putney Vale Cemetery, and not to the ground staff employed in the cemetery.

4. All dogs entering the cemetery must be kept on a lead and any fouling cleared up. Only guide dogs for the blind may enter the cemetery office or chapels.

5. No person shall operate any sound reproducing equipment or play any musical instrument in the cemetery or chapels without the prior consent of the registrar.

6. No person shall sell or offer or expose for sale any article, commodity or thing of any kind whatsoever or solicit orders for the same, within the cemetery, or on any ground owned or administered by the council in conjunction with the cemetery without the permission of the council.

7. All visitors to the cemetery must keep to the footpaths or roads provided for that purpose, except whilst visiting a grave or vault, and refrain from touching the trees, shrubs, plants or flowers.

8. No person shall drop, discard, throw or otherwise deposit and leave in the cemetery any wastepaper or refuse of any kind, except in the receptacles provided for that purpose.

9. The taking of photographs within the cemetery shall be subject to the approval of the registrar, who may demand production of the Deed of Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial or an indemnity in the council’s favour where it is proposed to photograph a private grave or memorial.

10. Smoking is prohibited in the chapels.
11. The operation of the cemetery, and any interments therein, will be carried out strictly in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities’ Cemeteries Order 1977 and such other Regulations as may be made by Her Majesty’s Secretary of State, from time to time.

12. The council reserves the right to close the cemetery or limit the entry of persons thereto at any time.

Interments and Purchase of Graves

13. Except with the prior approval of the registrar business will not normally be transacted or interments permitted on Good Friday, Christmas Day or any public holiday.

14. Interments may take place during the opening hours of the cemetery subject to the prior approval of the registrar.

15. Written notice of interment on the form provided by the council must be given and all fees paid to the central cemeteries office before 12 noon two working days before the proposed interment. Longer notice may be required for reopening graves with heavy memorials.

16. The council shall not be responsible for any error or the consequences thereof which may arise by reason of any inaccuracy in or late receipt of a notice of interment and will accept orders or instructions by telephone only at the sender’s risk. All telephoned orders or instructions must be confirmed immediately in writing.

17. In cases of emergency, certified by acceptable medical authority, Regulations No.15 and 16 may be waived in the interest of public health.

18. The person or persons arranging the interment shall be responsible for the attendance, if required, of a Minister of Religion to officiate at the funeral service and for the payment of any fee to which the minister/priest is entitled.

19. The time appointed for an interment shall be determined by the registrar and will be that at which the funeral cortege is to arrive at the entrance gate of the cemetery where the interment is to take place. The funeral director or person in charge of any funeral arriving after the appointed time must act under the direction of the registrar as to when the funeral service may proceed.

20. No interment may take place until a registrar’s certificate for disposal or a coroner’s order, or in the case of cremated remains the crematorium authority’s certificate for burial or
documentary evidence that the death is not required to be registered in England, has been delivered to the registrar.

For the interment of a foetus a certificate from a doctor or other responsible person attendant at the birth, that it took place before the end of the twenty-eighth week of pregnancy must be produced.

21. Coffins. Save when these regulations allow an exception, no body shall be accepted for interment unless it is enclosed in a coffin of traditional type normally accepted by the registrar. Details of any special type of coffin or container must be advised to and approved by the registrar at the time when the initial reservation is made. The opening of a coffin is not permitted within the grounds of any cemetery. A coffin may only contain one body except in the case of a mother and her baby or babies. Bodies without a coffin may be accepted for a Muslim coffinless burial on Block X12 at Morden, the interment to take place within a burial chamber as prescribed by the Muslim faith.

22. The scattering of cremated remains over graves is not permitted. Cremated remains may only be interred in the cemetery in containers approved by the registrar.

23. Where cremated remains are to be interred, and where the cremation was not undertaken by the council, a certificate for burial purposes, issued by a cremation authority will be required.

24. Undertakers conducting funerals shall come under the direction of the registrar immediately on entering the cemetery gates. They must provide sufficient bearers for carrying and lowering coffins into graves. Their drivers must not leave their vehicles unattended.

25. Funerals arriving late may be required to wait.

26. Funeral directors must arrange where necessary for memorials to be removed to allow graves to be reopened and for the memorials to be replaced as and when directed by the registrar.

**Exclusive Right of Burial**

27. A grant of exclusive right of burial confers no other right than that of burial, and each applicant for an exclusive right of burial must confirm receipt, in writing, of the Deed of Grant.
28. The owner of the exclusive right of burial in a grave holds that right subject to the regulations from time to time in force, which shall include the following:

(a) The right of burial shall be exercisable only (subject as mentioned below) for a period of 40 years from the date of grant, after which it will lapse and revert to the council.

(b) The grantee (or his successor in title) may, during the last five years of the above-mentioned period on payment of a fee, obtain a renewal of the grant for a further period of 40 years, subject to such regulations and restrictions as may be in force at that time.

(c) Where the period of grant of an exclusive right of burial has lapsed, and no notification of the intention to renew has been received from the person who held the exclusive right of burial, the council may grant a new exclusive right of burial to another person.

(d) The first and any subsequent interment in any grave shall be at a depth to be prescribed by the council.

29. The council cannot be held responsible if, due to factors outside its control, the full number of interments in a grave cannot be achieved.

30. The sale of the exclusive right of burial in any grave shall be at the sole discretion of the council and the selection of grave sites shall be subject to the approval of the registrar.

31. The council will not recognise any assignment whether by deed or otherwise of an exclusive right of burial without proof of such assignment.

32. The exclusive right of burial in a grave may be purchased at parishioner rates (a) for the interment of a deceased person whose home address at the time of death is in the London borough of Wandsworth, (b) in reserve by a person whose home address at the time of purchase is in the London borough of Wandsworth, except that if the first interment in the grave takes place within one year of the date of purchase and is that of a person whose home address at the time of death was not in the London borough of Wandsworth, the non-parishioner rate will apply and the difference must be paid.
33. Upon the assignment by an owner of the exclusive right of burial purchased at parishioner rates to a non-parishioner, there shall be payable to the council the difference between parishioner and non-parishioner rates applicable at the date of such assignment.

34. If the council agrees to accept the surrender of the exclusive right of burial in an unused grave, there shall be paid to the person surrendering a sum determined by the following conditions:

(a) Where the exclusive right of burial has been held for less than five years, payment of 100 per cent of the original purchase price, less 20 per cent administrative charge.

(b) As above, but longer than five years, payment of 100 per cent of the original purchase price or 25 per cent of current charges whichever is the greater, less 20 per cent administrative charge.

(c) Where one interment space remains in a grave, the council will accept the surrender of the rights of burial in that grave and will pay £10 for the remaining interment space. If the registrar is satisfied that more than one interment space remains in that grave, he is empowered to increase this amount at his discretion. Before any transaction can be completed, the applicant/grave owner must remove any headstone or memorial thereon, or authorise the council to remove, break up and dispose of the memorial at no cost to the applicant.

35. Vaults or mausoleums may be permitted to be constructed or erected in the cemetery subject to the availability of land and the registrar being satisfied as to adequate construction and future maintenance.

36. All graves will be prepared by persons employed by, or acting on behalf of the council.

37. No body shall be buried in a grave in such a manner that any part of the coffin is less than 3’ (900mm) below the level of any ground adjoining the grave, provided that the council may, where it considers the soil to be of a suitable character, permit a coffin to be placed not less than 2’ (600mm) below the level of any ground adjoining the grave.

38. No body shall be buried in a grave unless the coffin is effectively separated from any coffin already interred in the grave, by means of a layer of earth not less than 6 inches (150mm) thick.
39. After interment, no body or cremated remains may be removed from a grave without the production of the ecclesiastical faculty and/or Home Office licence for exhumation required by law. The original documents will be required for this purpose.

**Memorials**

40. A monument or memorial may only be erected on a grave space within the cemetery in accordance with these regulations and upon payment of the appropriate fee. The right to erect a monument or memorial will be for the unexpired portion of the grant of exclusive right of burial.

41. The right to erect monuments or memorials on a public or common grave is at the sole discretion of the council. At the expiration of the period of any such right or any extension of such period the council may move to another place in the cemetery or remove for destruction any such monument or memorial.

42. Application for permission to erect a memorial or to carry out work on an existing memorial must be made to the registrar on the form issued by the council and must be accompanied by the appropriate fee. In the case of a private grave, the application must be signed by the owner (or the personal representative of a deceased owner). When the application is approved a permit will be sent to the monumental mason and no work may be commenced at the cemetery before such permit is produced to the registrar.

43. No monumental mason or other person or firm will be permitted to execute any work in the cemetery before a form of indemnity against all claims, costs or losses which the council may suffer arising out of such work has been deposited with the registrar.

44. Monumental masons who wish to be considered for inclusion on the council’s approved list will be required to complete a questionnaire giving details of employers liability insurance and public liability insurance held by them. This is to cover any accident resulting from poor workmanship and ensure that properly qualified craftsmen carry out the work.

45. The use of landings, kerbs, flatstones, chippings, paving, rockery, and edging materials is prohibited on lawn sections in the cemetery.
46. Where permitted, kerbs and flatstones must be securely fixed on solid landings, and kerbs, flatstones and landings must be of the following sizes:

(a) Full memorials not to exceed 7’ (2100mm) in length (900mm) in width on ‘A’ Class graves and 6’6” (1950mm) in length and 2’6” (750mm) in width on all others. Frame landings are not permitted.

(b) Cemetery lawn sections – headstones not to exceed 3’ (900mm) in height, 2’6” (750mm) in width and 1’ (300mm) in depth. Except with the specific written approval of the registrar, whose deciding criteria will be the safety and amenity of others, no memorial shall exceed 5’ (1500mm) in height. No memorials on a common or public grave shall exceed 2’6” (750mm) in height, 1’6” (450mm) in width and 1’ (300mm) in depth. Height measured from natural ground level.

47. All joints must be properly cemented and cramped, joggled or dowelled. Cramps or dowels for this purpose must be of solid copper, stainless steel, or heavily galvanised steel, and not less than three-eighths of an inch in diameter. There must be at least one dowel for each dowelled joint. Kerbs must be dowelled to landing. The position of dowels must be shown on sketch/drawing on permit application.

48. No materials used in the construction of a memorial shall be less than 2” (50mm) in thickness.

49. Only natural quarried stone memorials, (excluding Bath stone, Caen stone or other soft stone) may be erected. Ironwork, alloys, woodwork, pottery, plastic, glass or fibreglass or reconstructed stone apart from approved concrete foundations are not permitted unless prior written approval has been given by the registrar. (Small temporary wooden crosses not exceeding 2’6” (750mm) in height are accepted for the period between the date of burial and the installation of a permanent memorial.) The council reserves the right to remove anything placed on or around a grave without authority.

50. Flowers and wreaths may be placed on graves and memorials. The registrar reserves the right to remove any flowers, wreaths, vases or other articles or items of memorialisation/decoration which are considered dangerous or unsightly.

51. The grave number and section must be clearly inscribed on all memorials.
52. Memorials must be prepared for fixing before being delivered to the cemetery. Work or deliveries of memorials, materials etc. will only be permitted on Mondays to Fridays, excluding public holidays, between 8am and 4pm. Workmen must provide their own tackle, tools and materials. The work, when begun, must be proceeded with expeditiously. The registrar is empowered to prohibit work if in his opinion any circumstances, such as inclement weather, necessitate this.

53. Any memorial placed on a grave in which a further interment is to take place, shall be removed by and at the expense of the owner of the grave or the person giving the order for the further interment, and shall be re-erected or replaced by and at the expense of such owner or person as soon as practicable after the further interment. Any such memorial if unnumbered shall have the number of the grave space engraved thereon before the re-erection takes place.

54. The council reserves to itself the right of passage over all graves and the right temporarily to cover or remove, without notice, the memorial upon any grave in order to permit the re-opening of another grave in the vicinity of that grave or for any other purpose.

55. The council accepts no responsibility for damage to a grave or to anything (including any kind of memorial) on a grave, and reserves the right to remove any memorial of whatever kind which has become dilapidated, unsightly or unsafe.

56. The council accepts no responsibility for graves which may sink after completion of turfing or moulding.

57. The council reserves the right to remove any tree, shrub or other plant from a grave where it deems such removal to be necessary.

58. No flowers, shrubs, plants or trees of any kind, or wreaths, vases or flower holders may be taken out of the cemetery without the permission of the registrar.

59. The receipt or demand by any employee, agent or sub-contractor of the council of any gratuity or unauthorised charge is strictly forbidden.

Crematorium and Gardens of Remembrance

60. Cremation may take place during the opening hours of the cemetery subject to the approval of the registrar.

61. No cremation may take place except on the written authority of the medical referee.
62. All cremations shall be carried out strictly in accordance with such regulations as may be made by the Secretary of State for the Home Office from time to time; and in accordance with the code of cremation practice as prescribed by the Federation of British Cremation Authorities.

63. The medical referee may in any case decline to authorise cremation without stating any reason.

64. The foregoing regulations shall not apply to the cremation of human remains which have already been buried for not less than one year. Such remains may be cremated, subject to such conditions as the Secretary of State may impose in the exhumation licence and any such cremation in which those conditions are not observed shall be deemed a contravention of these regulations.

65. The responsibility for providing sufficient bearers to carry the coffin reverently from the hearse to the catafalque, whether mourners are present or not, rests with the funeral director or person arranging the cremation. The responsibility of the council commences as soon as the coffin is placed on the catafalque.

66. Each body will be cremated separately. An exception will be permitted where death is due to childbirth, when mother and child or children may be cremated in the same coffin, provided the necessary authority to cremate has been granted in each case.

67. Coffins for cremation must be made of easily combustible material such as wood or wood by products. No metal or metal coffin furniture must be used other than as required for the safe construction of the coffin. The lining of the coffin should not contain zinc, lead or similar material.

68. A coffin must not exceed 7’3” (2175mm) in length, 1’8” (500mm) in depth, 2’3” (675mm) in width.

69. In no circumstances will the council permit any portion of the coffin or its contents to be removed after it has been received in the crematorium.

70. Any form of religious service and/or Humanist service may be used, but any other ceremony is subject to the approval of the registrar. Alternatively the coffin may be committed without a service.
71. A body containing a cardiac pacemaker or radioactive implant will not be accepted for cremation. It is the responsibility of the funeral director to ensure that such pacemaker or implant is removed.

72. After the cremation the remains will be given by the registrar to the applicant for the cremation or to his or her properly authorised representative, but if the applicant so authorises in writing and subject to representatives of the deceased being enabled to make arrangements in the meantime to witness if they so wish, the cremated remains will be dispersed in the garden of remembrance not less than 14 days after the cremation except where the authorisation permits earlier disposal.

73. If the cremated remains have not been dispersed or otherwise disposed of within one month after the cremation, a fee will be payable for their temporary deposit for a period not exceeding three months from the date of cremation. If such fee is not paid or if at the end of the three months no other arrangements have been made for the disposal of the remains, the registrar will, after giving 14 days notice to the applicant for the cremation, disperse them in the garden of remembrance.

74. No person shall be permitted to enter the crematory without the prior written consent of the registrar.

75. Funerals arriving at the crematorium later than the time arranged will be required to wait until it is convenient to proceed if another cremation is in progress or is scheduled to arrive.

76. All persons attending a burial or cremation service will leave the chapels immediately after the conclusion of the service.

77. Certificates of cremation may be obtained on application to the registrar on payment of the prescribed fee.

78. All proposed inscriptions on memorial plaques or in the books of remembrance must be submitted for approval of the registrar, and if approved, fees paid as prescribed.

79. Where a niche in the columbarium or a cremation memorial vault in the garden of remembrance has been leased for a given period on expiry of the lease, notice of renewal will be posted to the last known address of the leaseholder. If the lease is not renewed within 28 days and no other arrangements have been made for the disposal of the remains, the registrar will, after giving 14 days notice to the applicant for the cremation disperse them in the garden of remembrance.
80. Flower holders, where provided as an integral part of a memorial, should be used. The placing of flowers on the grass or lawn areas may only take place at the discretion of the registrar. Vases, flower holders, bricks or stones placed on the grassed areas are likely to be removed if it is considered that they are a hazard.

81. Cards, cut flowers, pot plants, Christmas decorations, holly wreaths or ribbons should not be placed on or around the memorial roses but placed in the recordia room within the crematorium building. Vases for cut flowers will be provided for this use.

The council shall be at liberty to revise, alter or dispense with any or all of the aforesaid regulations at their discretion.
**DEFINITION OF TERMS**

In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions shall have these meanings assigned to them:

“Cemetery” means any place provided by the council for the interment of human remains and any reference to “the cemetery” shall refer to any or all of the cemeteries to which these regulations apply.

“Crematorium” means any building fitted with appliances for the purpose of incinerating human remains, and shall include everything incidental or ancillary thereto.

“Chapel” means the consecrated and unconsecrated buildings, situated within the boundaries of any of the cemeteries, used for the purposes of burials or memorial services.

“Council” means Wandsworth Council.

“Registrar” means that person holding the office of Senior Cemeteries Office and Registrar as appointed by the council or the person who shall be acting for him, on his behalf, or in his absence.

“Exclusive right of burial” means the exclusive right, granted by deed, of the registered owner to determine who may be interred in or commemorated on the grave in question; such exclusive right to be for a limited period determined by the council.

“Grave” means a burial place formed in the ground by excavation and without any internal wall or brickwork, stonework, or any other lining.

“Grave space” means that area allowed by the council for the establishment of a grave.

“Lawn grave” means a grave laid in an avenue of level grass, where a concrete beam is provided at the head of each grave, and where a memorial consisting of a headstone or book or vase or small plaque may be erected on this beam.

“Traditional grave” means a grave on which a full memorial, i.e. headstone kerbs and landing, or a flatstone or any type of memorial may cover the grave area if desired, so long as it is within the dimensions allowed by these regulations.

“Purchased grave” means a grave in which a grant of exclusive right of burial for a fixed number of years has been purchased.

“Public grave” means a grave in which no exclusive right of burial will be granted by the council and in which unrelated persons will be interred; formerly referred to as a common grave.
“Inscription” means a reference on a memorial to ONE deceased person, whether that person be interred in the grave or not.

“Additional inscription” means each inscription, inscribed after the first inscription, to ONE other deceased person whether that person be interred in the grave or not.

OPENING TIMES

The cemeteries and crematorium opening times are as follows:

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Christmas Day 10am to 1pm (all other bank holidays as per Sunday of that particular month)

Office opening hours 9am to 5pm (Monday to Friday)

Any unauthorised entry when the cemetery is closed to the public contravenes the Local Authorities’ Cemeteries Order 1977, Article 18(2).
If you would like this booklet in a different format (for example, large print), please phone Putney Vale Central Cemeteries Office on (020) 8871 7820