**Danehill Parish Council Cemetery Regulations**

The Council is the burial authority for Danehill Parish and maintains the cemetery in Church Lane. The cemetery is administered from the Council office, with the maintenance carried out by external contractors, and the grave digging undertaken by external contractors and subcontractors employed by funeral directors.

This information is a guide to assist friends and family of people buried in the cemetery, funeral directors, stonemasons and other people that may visit the cemetery.

These regulations are here to;

* Protect the health and safety of staff and visitors;
* Maintain a respectful atmosphere within the grounds;
* Reduce environmental damage as much as possible.

They are here to make sure we are fair to everybody and to make sure you know what we expect of you, whether you are a funeral director, stonemason, or a member of the general public.

We have been asked why these regulations are necessary; why we discourage candles, glass holders and the like.

Unfortunately, when these items get broken or misplaced, they can harm visitors, staff, or animals and also cause damage to maintenance or mowing equipment used to care for the grounds.

These rules are for the benefit of us all, and we appreciate you following them.

**General Information**

The cemetery is located in Church Lane.

The Council works hard to ensure that the Cemetery is maintained to a high standard for burials, ashes interments of residents, and for quiet reflection when visiting the Cemetery.

The cemetery facilities include a general burial ground for traditional burials, and a Garden of Remembrance, for the interment of cremated remains.

The cemetery office is located in the offices of:

Danehill Parish Council Chelwood Gate Village Hall Beaconsfield Road Chelwood Gate West Sussex, RH17

Email: clerk@danehill-pc.org

We always try to meet the needs of the family and friends of people who are buried in the cemetery, and advice or support is available through the above office.

**Cemetery Opening Hours**

Burials and interments may take place every day except Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays.

**Burials: -**

Double depth - Monday to Friday 9.00am – 2.00pm

Single depth – Monday to Friday 9.00am – 2.30pm

**Interment of ashes: -**

Monday to Friday 9.00am – 3.00pm

The cemetery is open at all times for pedestrian visitors, but contractor access is restricted to: -

Monday to Thursday 8.00am - 4.00pm

Friday 8.00am – 3.30pm

These times may be subject to change, but notice of any changes will be put on the Cemetery gates and on the Council website.

Weekend contractor access may be possible with prior notice being given to the Council.

**Facilities**

There are no formal car parking facilities for the cemetery, although parking is permitted along the main road. There are no toilet facilities within the cemetery. Water points are provided around various different parts of the cemetery together with rubbish bins for the disposal of all unwanted waste.

**Children**

Families with children are always welcome, but we ask for your co-operation in keeping children under supervision at all times.

**Dogs**

Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times and prevented from fouling anywhere within the cemetery. Owners are required to clean up after their dogs and place it in the dog litter bin at the entrance to the cemetery.

**Security**

The council cannot accept responsibility for the security of any plants, memorials, personal effects or any other items placed on or around any graves.

Code of Conduct - Visitors to the cemetery should not;

* Ride bicycles, skateboards, or motorcycles;
* Allow dogs to foul within the cemetery grounds;
* Obstruct or cause nuisance to any officer of or person employed or contracted by the Council;
* Cause damage to any grave, memorial, plant, bulbs, tree or shrub;
* Use a radio or similar device without headphones in the cemetery.

**Arranging a Burial**

An interment form must be completed and forwarded to the Council, three working days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays) before the date of the interment;

* In the case of a full burial, either the green certificate issued by the Registrar of Births and Deaths in respect of the person to be buried, or the Coroner’s Certificate for burial must be included;
* A Registrar’s Certificate should be included in the case of a Stillborn Child. Any certificate issued in the case of unborn babies or neo natal deaths should also be sent in the same manner;
* For the interment of cremated remains, a Certificate of Cremation issued by the Crematorium Authority should accompany the interment form;
* All fees and charges connected with the interment should accompany the interment form with all cheques being made payable to Danehill Parish Council.

**Exclusive Rights of Burial**

Upon payment of the prescribed fee an exclusive right of burial is granted for a period of fifty years only, at the time of submitting the interment notice. The current Council policy is to not allow the pre-purchase of grave spaces. The exclusive right of burial can be issued to residents or non-residents of Danehill, but non-residents are subject to an increased charge.

**RESIDENT DEFINITION:**

Any person who, immediately before their death, was a resident within the boundary of Danehill Parish, during the previous 12 Months.

Or any one of the following:

* A still-born child, where the parents (or one of them) are, or at the time of the interment resident in the Danehill Parish.
* A person who lived in Danehill Parish immediately prior to moving into a Nursing Home or Residential Home outside of the Parish.
* A person who lived outside of Danehill Parish prior to moving to Nursing or Residential Homes within Danehill Parish should have been resident at the Nursing Home or Residential Home for a minimum period of 5 years.

When the interment involves re-opening an existing grave where the rights of burial have been issued, the grant of exclusive right of burial and the authority of the grantee must be produced before notice of interment in a purchased grave will be accepted.

If the name on the deed is not the same as the person signing the interment form an indemnity form will need to be completed in order for the interment to take place together with correspondence confirming their permission to re-open this grave.

Where the Deed Owner is the deceased, authority for the interment is presumed by Section 10(6) of The Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977. It is recommended that the next of kin of the deceased arranges for these Deeds of Ownership to be transferred and re-assigned to themselves or another near relative.

The Cemetery is a non-denominational burial ground. It is the responsibility of the person organising the interment to arrange for any religious blessings of the plot.

**Gravedigging**

All new graves will be excavated and filled in by an approved contractor at the Cemetery and the following depths will be observed:

* Single Grave 5’6” deep
* Double depth 7’6” deep
* Child’s grave 4’0” deep
* All graves are measured to 6’6”’ x 2’6”

The interment of three persons in any one grave may be authorised at the discretion of the Parish Council, but is always dependent on ground conditions and may be subject to an additional fee.

The Council may limit the depths of graves where drainage or other causes render such a restriction to be necessary.

Due to the location of some graves it may not be possible to machine dig a grave and if it needs to be hand dug and increased fee is applicable.

**Memorialisation**

This facility is available to the registered owner of the rights of burial of a grave. Applications to place or erect a memorial should be made on the Memorial Application Form available from the Council and the appropriate fee must be paid to the Council at the time of application before a permit is issued. All permits will be issued within 2 weeks of the application being received as follows;

* No memorial may be placed upon any grave unless a permit is obtained;
* A drawing showing the design and dimensions of every memorial together with details of materials and inscriptions, shall be submitted for approval to the Council;
* All memorials should accord to an approved standard of workmanship recommended by The National Association of Monumental Masons and all memorials must be fixed to a pre-cast concrete bearer below the ground level;
* All memorials above height of 18” must have a recommended NAMM stabilising fixing;
* The grave number may be engraved on the rear of the headstone, but trade names are not allowed;
* Additional inscriptions to memorials can be made by completing a Memorial Application Form in the same way as a new memorial application, but there is no fee for an additional inscription;
* The owner of the rights of burial is responsible for the maintenance of memorials placed upon the grave, and also for its removal and expense incurred to allow the grave to be re-opened for any subsequent burial should the need arise.

**Memorial Sizes**

For a grave, memorials in all cases must not exceed 3’ in height, 2’6” in width and 3” in thickness. Kerb sets are permitted and must be no larger than 6’6” by 2’6”.

In the case of the cremated remains plot, memorials must comply to the specification of the specific section of the Garden of Remembrance chosen for the interment: -

* Flat tablet – 18” width x 18” length x 2” thickness.
* Lectern – 18” width x 15” length x 5” thickness at the top edge narrowing to 3” at the front.
* Headstone- base: 16” width x 10 ” length x 2” thickness, headstone: 18” height x 14” width x 2” thickness.
* No memorial is permitted on an unpurchased (‘common’) grave.

Failure to comply with these regulations may result in the council requesting the memorial to be removed and any outstanding works to be completed at the cost of the applicant.

**Other Memorialisation**

The purchase of memorial seats is currently not permitted, but there is an opportunity to purchase a memorial plaque which can be placed on the memorial seat at the eastern end of the Cemetery.

## Planting of graves

Planting on graves is permitted subject to the planting being modest and within the designated area.

Please note, planting at the rear or sides of headstones or to the sides of cremation tablets is not permitted due to the impact on other burial areas.

The maintenance of this area and immediately around the headstone or tablet is the responsibility of the owner.  If planting becomes overgrown it will be removed by the Groundstaff.  The planting of trees and large shrubs is not permitted. The Council reserves the right to remove any objects/landscaping that may prove a health and safety risk, cause offence to visitors or obscure, and interfere with adjoining plots.

## Vases and other containers

Vases and plant containers may be placed on individual graves within the designated planted area.  Due to health and safety considerations, such containers must not be of a breakable\* nature and these will be removed by the Groundstaff. **The Council will not be held responsible for any loss or damage to items left at the Cemetery, this is particularly relevant during mowing and strimming periods.**

Other goods of a breakable nature or items that could cause problems for site maintenance such as stones or gravel unless in a formal kerbset (which could get caught in mowing appliances) are not permitted and will be removed from the grave site.

Breakable\* - including but not limited to: glass, china, ceramic.  Due to health & safety considerations, when assessing the fragility of items, the Council will always take a more cautious approach.

Free standing stone vases are permitted but must be located within the planted area in-front of the headstone.  A maximum of two free standing vases are permitted.  These will take up the majority of the planted area.

## Tributes - Floral

Visitors are requested to remove any wreaths or flowers placed on a grave as soon as they become wilted, otherwise they will be removed by the Groundstaff.

## Tributes - Other

Ornaments and toys may be left on graves at the Council’s discretion within the designated planted area.  Items which are offensive or disrupt the peace (wind chimes for example) will be removed by the Ground staff and brought to the office for collection. After a period of one month, if not collected, the items(s) will be donated to a charity or destroyed.  The Council will not be held responsible for any loss or damage to items removed in implementing this policy.

**Children’s Graves**

The Council appreciates that this is a particularly sensitive area within the Cemetery and the Council may use discretion when allowing ornaments and tributes on a child’s grave, but will use the following guidelines when making a decision about what is allowable: -

* Impact on surround plots (e.g. planting between graves)
* Safety issues (e.g. glass)
* Unsightly (which can be subjective)
* Offensive
* Is it modest (i.e. overbearing)
* Maintenance (will problems be caused when cutting/strimming grass)

***Disclaimer It should be noted that all the information provided is correct at the time of printing. The Council accepts no responsibility for errors which may occur and reserves the right to change or amend as necessary.***