



Sudbury Cemetery Regulations

Sudbury Town Council

February 2025

The need for Cemetery Regulations

The foregoing rules and regulations will come into operation from 25 February 2025. All previous rules and regulations previously made by the council are hereby superseded. The council reserves the right to make alterations, additions or amendments to these rules and regulations specified herein.

These rules and regulations will be reviewed periodically and in accordance with legislation relating to cemetery management. Sudbury Town Council is a member of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) to promote best practice.

Sudbury Town Council (referred to as 'the council' in the regulations) is legally responsible for managing and controlling the cemetery. The council authorises the council officers, supervised by The Business Manager or Officers of the same seniority and The Town Clerk to act with its authority and enforce the regulations.

To comply with the relevant laws, the council runs the cemetery in accordance with the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977, as amended by the Local Authorities (Amendment) Order 1986 as well as any regulations made by the secretary of state.

Introduction

Sudbury Town Council's cemetery dates to 1859 and has some fine Victorian memorials as well as a 19th Century Gothic Revival flint chapel (opened in 1859 and designed by J.P. Pritchett Jr.) which can be used for services. Located in close proximity to the town centre, Sudbury Cemetery is an oasis of tranquillity with many mature coniferous trees that are an important part of the Cemetery's character, supporting a range of wildlife.

The council observes the rights and choices of any individual wherever possible, to keep everyone safe, to treat everyone equally and to maintain our cemetery to high standards by observing these regulations.

All customers, visitors, businesses and contractors visiting or using our cemetery and burial services must follow these regulations.



Definitions

- When we mention '**the cemetery**' in the regulations we are referring to our site at Newton Road, Sudbury, CO10 2RN.
- '**the council**' means Sudbury Town Council.
- '**deed holder**' means the owner of an Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB).

Contact and queries

If you have any questions about these regulations, please contact:

Sudbury Town Council (cemetery enquiry)
Council Offices
Town Hall
Old Market Place
Sudbury, Suffolk
CO10 1TL

Email: info@sudbury-tc.gov.uk

Website: sudbury-tc.gov.uk/the-cemetery

Phone: 01787 372331

Council office opening hours for enquires:

Monday – Thursday 9.00am – 5pm and Friday 9.00am – 4.30pm

Cemetery opening times

1. The cemetery is open 7 days a week, throughout the year. Although the gates are not currently locked at night, the cemetery is closed to the public during the hours of darkness.

The council displays times, maps, and any notices on the three notice boards within the cemetery located at the Newton Road, Constitution Hill and New and Green Cemetery gated entrances. Information can also be found on the council's website: sudbury-tc.gov.uk/the-cemetery.

Note: Parts of the cemetery may be inaccessible during grounds maintenance works which happen throughout the year.

Rights of use and admission

2. (a) the council reserves the right to:



- close or limit access to the cemeteries when necessary and
- withdraw the use of the cemetery from any person or organisation.

(b) You may bring dogs into the cemetery, but they must be always kept on a short lead and under your control.

(c) Dog fouling is strictly prohibited.

(d) Only vehicles associated with a funeral cortege, or contractors employed by the council, may drive into the cemetery beyond the chapel. Families or friends visiting graves may park between the Newton Road gate and the chapel if there is space. No vehicles are to go round the chapel or further into the cemetery without written permission. This parking may be restricted or withdrawn at any time by the council without prior warning.

Any vehicle entering must obey the following restrictions:

- driven slowly keeping to the 10 miles per hour limit.
- do not drive beyond the Chapel (signs are clearly displayed) except for council staff and contractors only with prior permission from the council. (Appendix I for Cemetery map)
- park in a way that does not inconvenience other visitors or staff.

(e) Cycling, scootering, and skateboarding is prohibited in any part of the cemetery; users of these modes of transport should dismount at the gate.

Fees

3. All fees for interments and memorials applications are payable in advance. If a stakeholder has a financial account set up with the council, then an invoice will be raised and sent. Payment of invoices must be made by bank transfer in conjunction with an invoice number. Cheques or cash may be accepted in the Town Hall as payment by families or relatives.

4. All cemetery fees and charges are reviewed annually and are clearly displayed on the council's cemetery webpage at: sudbury-tc.gov.uk/the-cemetery.

5. Non-sudbury residents will charged double interment fees.

Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB)

5. Before the first interment you must buy an exclusive right of burial for a grave for an agreed term, this is initially for a 99-year lease and the lease can be extended in the future but can never exceed 99 years at any time. The purchase will be subject to you paying the appropriate fee and completing the relevant application form, which needs the signature of the proposed owner (who then becomes the deed holder). The pre-purchasing of graves in the cemetery is not permitted before they are required for first use.



6. Only the deed holder can decide who is buried in the grave and apply for a memorial to be erected on it. EROB is a lease of land and forms part of the personal estate of the owner. It will pass to the legal heirs along with other assets and the future owner may be named in a will.
7. At any point during the lease period the deed holder may apply to extend the lease of a full burial grave bringing the exclusive right of burial back to its original term or increase it, but not to exceed 100 years. This is subject to the appropriate fee being paid.
8. The council's policy is to excavate graves to the maximum depth available. With regards to new graves, we will initially aim to excavate them to a depth of 2.13 metres (approximately 7ft). This will enable the grave to accommodate two interments. Requests can be made to dig the grave to 2.75 meters (approximately 9ft) subject to accessibility and ground stability. The council cannot be held responsible if, due to factors outside our control, the grave cannot hold the full number of interments applied for.
9. We will allocate new graves in strict rotation. Specific grave spaces cannot be reserved in advance.
10. The council keeps plans and records of graves which visitors may view by appointment during normal office hours.
11. When the exclusive right of burial period comes to an end the buyer (or his or her heirs or successors who have become the deed holder) will have the option of renewing that right, subject to any restrictions which may be in force at that time.
12. Deed holders will need to apply to renew the lease within 12 months of the previous grant expiring.
13. The council may grant a renewed right of burial to another person if the EROB grant period has finished, and nobody has informed the council that they want to renew it. Before we do this, we will where possible, notify the previous owner to give them the option to renew it. For this purpose, the council requires your permission to securely hold your contact details for the duration of the lease.
14. Where no interment has taken place in the grave, the owner of the EROB may surrender it to the council. We will pay the owner an amount which is in proportion to the number of years remaining for the EROB. We will not make a payment if the EROB has lapsed or finishes within ten years.
15. To exercise the rights as an owner of an EROB, the applicant will have to provide satisfactory evidence of ownership. As the ownership of EROB is inherited, an equal share may pass to each heir. This makes it very difficult to make changes as each owner of a share of the EROB will have to give written permission before any action can take place. The council strongly recommends that the EROB is passed to a single heir or at most two heirs. The ownership of an EROB or share of an EROB may be transferred to another person by making a formal application through the council and paying the appropriate transfer fee. Where a family dispute results in a stalemate and relevant consents are withheld, no further actions can take place. It is not the responsibility of the council to facilitate or resolve any disputes.



16. Provided that there is sufficient room and subject to receiving consent from the council, cremated remains can be interred in any adult grave in the cemetery for which you have the EROB. No adult interments, either full or cremated remains are allowed to be interred into the grave of a child or baby unless the child or baby was interred into a full adult grave, and the appropriate adult Exclusive Right of Burial fee was paid. For this reason, the council recommends using a full adult grave for a child or baby if there is any possibility of wishing to add another family member at a later date.

17. The lease for an EROB does not give ownership of the ground at any time and this remains with the council.

18. Before the reopening of a grave the ownership of the EROB must be proven by producing the deed document.

Coffins and caskets

19. To help us all respect the environment, all bodies and cremated remains entering the cemetery for burial must be contained in a coffin/wrapping/casket made of a perishable material (usually wooden, cardboard or wicker). Alternative coffin/casket materials maybe considered subject to prior written agreement by the council.

20. A supplement will be charged for a casket larger than 6'3" x 24" x 14", these must be approved by the Town Clerk in writing prior to sale. The cost will reflect the additional space or work required and the charges can only be calculated when the exact size of the proposed casket is known.

21. Green Cemetery burials: the council's green burial site provides the community with the choice of environmentally friendly burials in a natural setting. Green burial is designed to sensitively lay someone to rest in an ecologically friendly way. This is carried out with the least detrimental effect on the environment as possible. The burial is performed using only biodegradable materials.

22. All coffins must bear a durable plate with the full name, age, and date of death of the deceased. This will be checked against the burial documents by the council officer overseeing the burial.

Interments

23. You can apply for a burial by contacting the council (contact details are shown in the introduction section of this document). The service operates from 9am to 5pm, Mondays to Thursdays and 9am to 4.30pm on Fridays (other than Bank holidays). You must deliver a completed interment notice, the burial order, the coroners burial order or the certificate of cremation and the Deed of Grant to the council offices at least two weeks before the intended date of interment (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and Bank holidays) unless alternative arrangements have been agreed with the council.

24. If the burial is being arranged by a funeral director all coffin, casket and grave sizes must be sent to the council in writing by them. Verbal instructions will not be accepted from families or funeral directors.



25. Interments normally take place between Mondays and Friday beginning at 9.30am. The latest time for burial interments or for the interment of ashes is 3.30pm.

26. The interment fee includes the excavation and preparation of the grave, matting, and attendance by council staff and backfilling on the day of service. The fee also includes all administration, entries into the burial registers and onto the burial database. The fee does not include the removal or reinstating of any memorial (whether the memorial belongs to the grave to be opened or other graves within the area which need to be removed to provide access). The cost of any of these actions must be covered by the applicant. If the access to the grave is restricted by other graves and memorials, there may be an additional charge to have the new grave dug by hand or for the temporary removal of other memorials. All associated costs must be borne by the applicant.

27. The time booked for a funeral is the time the cortege is due to arrive at the cemetery. If the funeral director or person in charge of the funeral is later than the appointed time, he or she must act under the direction of the attending council officer as to when the funeral service may proceed. If the cortege arrives the cemetery earlier than the booked time, the Funeral Director is not to proceed to the grave or begin the interment without the presence of a council officer. The cortege is to wait in the prearranged location (in most cases this is by The Chapel) to be escorted to the grave.

28. The council will not open a grave covered by an EROB without the written permission of the registered deed holder unless the burial is to be that of the deed holder.

29. We will need to see and verify the deed document before a grave is re-opened. If the deed is lost or mislaid, then a statutory declaration must be made before the interment takes place.

30. We must receive the registrar's certificate for disposal or coroner's Order for Burial before any burial can take place.

31. Death certificates cannot be issued for the loss of a baby under 24 weeks gestation. Where you would like a burial in the cemetery in these circumstances, you are required to produce a medical certificate to authorise the burial and confirm the pregnancy loss. This can be obtained from the midwife or doctor at the hospital or from your local doctor.

32. We reserve the right to delay or reschedule a funeral if any burial area or excavated grave becomes unstable or dangerous due to severe weather, other naturally occurring instances or an act of God.

33. The responsibility for providing enough bearers to carry the coffin from the hearse to the bier and pull the bier (whether mourners are present or not), rests with the funeral director or person arranging the funeral.

34. Once we have a Notice of Interment, we reserve the right to instruct a local memorial mason to remove any existing memorial to allow the grave to be excavated. The applicant will pay the cost of removal and reinstating of all effected monuments.

35. We reserve the right of passage over all graves and to have any grave temporarily covered whilst carrying out excavations. Such covering may comprise of boxed platform or similar, onto which excavated soil may be placed prior to a burial in an adjacent grave. We also reserve the right to move memorials to allow access to a grave. The memorials will be returned to their original positions and in accordance with the current standards (BS8415) and any disturbed neighbouring graves made tidy as soon as possible after the burial.

36. Only the council can authorise or employ people to prepare graves.

37. Council staff are not permitted to accept tips.

38. A council representative will be present at all interments to make the final checks to ensure the funeral is completed lawfully.

39. During a funeral (or before) we have the right to exclude those who are not mourners or not officially connected with the funeral from the area of the burial.

40. The cemetery contains a children's grave section. We do not permit the interment of adults in children's graves in the children's section.

41. Only persons authorised by the council will carry out the back filling of any grave.

Management of memorials

42. The council will provide an Application for Permission to Erect a Memorial or Inscription form to complete if you wish to apply for permission to erect a memorial, add an inscription, or carry out any other work on a memorial including refurbishment, cleaning or like for like replacement. The form will include:

- name and address of the memorial mason who will carry out the work
- material and measurements of the memorial
- size restrictions of memorials
- required time between interment and adding memorials to plots
- details of inscription and a diagram of the proposed memorial including fixing methods and
- full names and signatures of the registered grave owner(s) to give permission for the work.

43. The applicant must not start any work until they have received the letter of authorisation from the council. The council will normally give permission as long as the work undertaken fully complies with the details specified within the Application for Permission to Erect a Memorial or Inscription, the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM) or National Association of Memorial Mason's (NAMM) schemes and the requirements of these regulations.

44. You may be required to remove any work that you do, or any memorials or kerb sets, and pay all the costs of removal, if these have not been authorised in advance by the council.



45. All memorials must be erected in accordance with BS8415 and the National Association of Memorial Mason's (NAMM) or the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM) code of practice current at the time of installation. The owner of the exclusive right of burial is responsible for keeping the memorial in a good and safe condition. The council is permitted to instruct the removal any memorial that becomes unsafe or is otherwise dilapidated and pass on the cost to the owner of the EROB.

46. All memorial mason companies who work within the cemeteries must be registered with the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM) or National Association of Memorial Mason's (NAMM). Fixing teams will contain at least one mason in possession of a BRAMM or NAMM fixer's licence. At all times memorial fixing teams will operate in accordance with the BRAMM or NAMM scheme and these regulations.

47. The council cautions deed holders not to cover a grave with a kerb set or slab if there is any possibility of having further burials in the plot. The council will not give permissions for the re-opening of any plot for additional burials or interment of cremated remains where the plot has been covered over or kerb set enclosed by any material other than grass / turf, unless all the obstructions are removed in advance by a profession memorial mason.

48. You may only use granite, marble, slate, or other suitable material of durable and sound quality for memorials.

Grave maintenance

49. Graves in all sections of the cemeteries will be grassed, with no mounds unless there is a kerb set or slab fitted by a registered stonemason. You may install a memorial of the dimensions indicated below at the head of the grave once prior permission has been granted by the council. You may not place any other memorial or other items in or around the grave space or on the grassed area in front of the grave including shrubs, plants, and bulbs without prior written permission from the council. Permission will only be granted for small plants, such as a rose bush, and these must be regularly maintained by the owner of the EROB. No plant may be allowed to exceed 2 feet in height or extend beyond the grave. If the plant becomes unruly and is not maintained for any period of 2 months, the council will remove the plant and return the grave to a flat grass surface.

50. Artificial grass is not to be laid on graves at any point after an interment has taken place or at any other time. Any artificial grass laid will be removed by site staff without notice. Graves in all sections of the cemeteries will be made good with turf or grass seed during the months that follows a burial. All sections of the cemetery will have natural grass covering the graves except in compartments where a kerb set is permissible.



Memorial sizes

For burial plots:

51. Headstones and memorials must not exceed 5ft in height (above ground level) and 2 ft 3 inches in width. The stone must be of sufficient thickness to support its height, and any reasonable force exerted upon it to ensure its stability. The foundation must be sunk into the ground so that the top surface of is flush with or below the adjoining ground level. The foundation stone should have a projection of no more than 3 inches to the length and width of the base and should be 3 inches deep. All foundation stone dimensions should be included on the memorial application. The dimension of the original foundation stone is not affected by the all-round 3-inch projection unless a new foundation stone is used. Headstones, headstones bases, or foundations may not be linked over two or more graves.

52. All other memorials such as a Tablet, Scroll, Open Book or Recumbent Cross should not exceed 1ft 6 inches in height, 2ft 3 inches in width or length. The memorial may also contain:

- up to two flower containers not exceeding the dimensions set above in total
- up to two natural stone vases not exceeding the dimensions set above in total
- up to two natural, reconstituted, stone figures, not more than 1ft 6 inches high provided the stone is not covered, coated in plastic, gilded, glazed, or painted.

Any such vase, tablet or figure must not extend beyond the perimeter of the base.

53. Alternatively, or additionally, a memorial may include:

- A kerbstone or kerb set not exceeding 6ft 6 inches (l) 2ft 6 inches (w).
- A slab, with or without a kerb, not exceeding 6ft 6 inches (l) 2ft 6 inches (w).
- Any chippings contained within the kerbstone must be at least 1.2 inches in length.

54. A Plant or Flower container(s) that can be incorporated into a tablet or flat base. Any plant or shrub contained within must be maintained at a height of under 2ft and not exceed the boundary of the plot in any direction. The upkeep and pruning of any potted plant are the responsibility of the plot owner. The council reserves the right to prune, maintain or remove any unmanaged shrubs, plants, flowers or trees within the cemetery at any time.

55. You may not fix photographic plaques, either ceramic or other material, without prior written approval from the council. All unauthorised pictures will be removed by the council.

56. The grave number must be inscribed on all memorials erected in the cemetery. Normally, this will be on the lower right corner of the rear of the base (or other conspicuous position as approved by the council), in characters of not less than 1 inch in height, to match the main inscription. The name of the stonemason responsible for the fabrication and installation of the memorial must also be inscribed on the rear of the memorial.

57. All contractors engaged on work in the cemetery must comply with all council directions and requirements. Proof of Public Liability Insurance and membership to one of the national associations for memorial masons should be supplied to the council prior to working in any of the council's cemeteries.

58. All materials and equipment must be conveyed in the cemetery in such a manner as to prevent damage to walks, paths, roads or turfed areas and all soil or waste material must be removed in a like manner. Mats, boards, or canvas must be used as directed by the council to achieve this end.

59. Masons must notify the council of intent to work in the cemeteries at least 48 hours before arrival at the cemetery. No work will be permitted outside of the opening times of the cemetery or at weekends unless specifically approved by the council.

60. Any person removing a memorial to permit a further interment may only do so after informing the council. This removal must be completed at least a full working week before the interment is due to take place. Failure to remove the stone within this time frame may result in the council appointing an alternative stone mason to carry out the work and the cost of which will be passed to the Funeral Director who has booked the interment. Upon reinstallation of such memorials, they shall be re-fixed in accordance with BS8415 and the NAMM or BRAMM code of practice, this will include the installation of new dowels between the base and headstone plate.

61. We will remove any unauthorised memorial and charge the cost to the grave owner.

62. The council requires that least 12 months lapse between a full burial and the setting of a memorial headstone.

The Green Cemetery

Green burial is designed to sensitively lay someone to rest in an ecologically friendly way. This is carried out with the least possible detrimental effect on the environment. The burial is performed using only biodegradable materials.

The graves are not marked but are recorded on a plan (Appendix II). Native trees and shrubs will be planted periodically on the site, this planting may only be done by the council. This introduction of native species is designed to attract and provide a home for wildlife. The council intends to manage the Green Cemetery as a 'no mow' summer meadow between May – October.

63. All cemetery regulations apply to the Green Cemetery, except for permitted casket and memorial types in this part of the cemetery, as described below:

64. Cremated remains may be interred in a biodegradable container or poured directly into the cremated remains plot.

65. Only the council will carry out all planting within the Green Cemetery.



66. Only cut flowers without ribbons and wrappings are permitted to be left on the grave after the burial. No other items or memorials are permitted on the grave or in the grave area.

67. In green burial, bodies are typically not embalmed, and instead, natural methods like refrigeration or biodegradable shrouds are used for temporary preservation.

68. All coffins must be made of biodegradable materials. Therefore, no metal lined coffins or caskets are permitted, and all linings and fittings of the coffin must be biodegradable.

69. All coffins must also bear a durable plate with the full name, age, and date of death of the deceased. This may be made of a durable metal, such as brass, but a natural durable substance, such as a small slate tile, may be a better option.

Maintenance

70. All tributes left on a grave will be removed two weeks following the interment unless the council is informed in writing that the family have made alternative arrangements for their removal within this time. It is forbidden to place glass containers or shades, items of pottery, tins, plastic or wire mesh fences or other items of metal, plastic, or other material on graves. Helium balloons are strongly discouraged and any balloons left on a grave, or elsewhere in the cemetery, will be removed by the council. The council may remove any unauthorised tributes without notice. If families wish to leave some form of tribute on the grave, they must apply to the council in advance explaining exactly what they wish to do. The council retains absolute discretion on allowing any other form of tribute to be left on a grave.

71. The council will remove Christmas wreaths or other tributes at the beginning of February each year.

72. Temporary wooden markers are permitted subject to the council's approval. These should be removed from the grave if and when the permanent memorial headstone is set.

73. The council reserves the right to remove and dispose of from any grave space flowers, plants, floral tributes, or wreaths which have deteriorated or become unsightly. All grassed areas of the cemeteries including graves will be cut with a mechanical mower and strimmer.

74. No floral tributes should be placed on graves which are not owned by the deceased family. If there are excessive amounts of tributes, they are to be placed at a location directed by the council.

75. A fee for the removal of floral tributes may be levied on the EROB owner by the council where there are large amounts (over 20).

Scattering of cremated remains

76. The scattering of cremated remains on purchased or unpurchased graves or in any other area in the cemetery is forbidden.



Safety of memorial headstones

77. The council reserve the right to test headstones for safety at any time and this will be done as a routine activity.

78. Memorial headstones that fail the safety test will be required to be repaired as soon as possible and funded by the deed holder. If the deed holder does not complete the remedial work within the specified period, the council will make the memorial safe and charge the cost to the deed holder.

Photography in the cemetery

79. Please respect your surroundings and the bereaved families visiting the cemetery when photographing and sharing images of the cemetery online. Photography and filming during funerals is at the discretion of the family of the deceased. The council reserves the right to restrict photography if it believes that it may not be in keeping with the solemnity of the cemetery.

Funerals requiring brick lined or vaulted graves

80. The council will not normally agree to new vaulted or brick lined graves. Where a owner wished to reopened an existing brick lined or vaulted grave, they must apply to the council giving a minimum of 10 working days' notice. This work must be carried out by a qualified trades person who holds adequate public liability insurance, a copy of which must be supplied to the council.

81. Work carried out by third parties (i.e., stone masons, builders for bricking out of pre purchased graves) may only take place between Monday- Friday and within the opening times of the cemetery.

Balloons and sky lanterns

82. The release of air filled or helium balloons or sky lanterns from the cemeteries is strictly forbidden due to the adverse effect the balloon material, cords, ribbons and lantern parts potentially have on the environment.

List of Appendices

APPENDIX I.

Cemetery Map showing sections and footpaths.

Appendix II.

Green Cemetery Map (last updated February 2025)



APPENDIX I.

Cemetery Map showing sections and footpaths





Appendix II.

Green Cemetery Map



Green Cemetery Plot Map

GA - GE

Last updated: 23.01.2025

