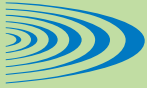


Personalising a grave space



**Stockton-on-Tees**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

*Personalising  
a grave space*

July 2011

## *Personalising a grave space*

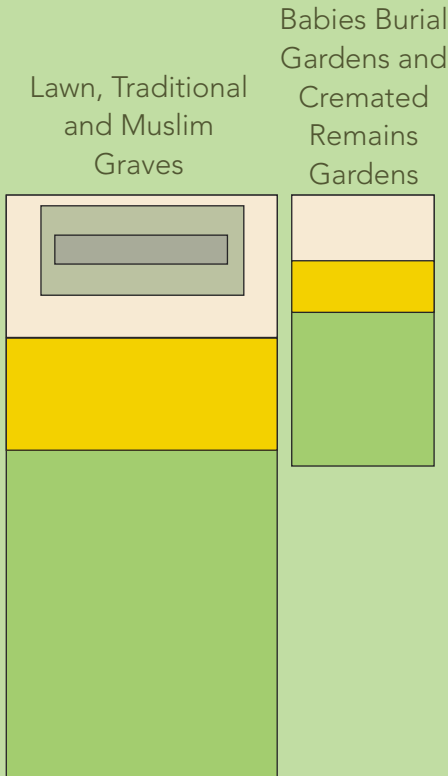
The grave of a loved one is a special place where many of us find comfort in tending and tidying as an act of care and respect. Many families also choose to place personal items upon a family grave to reflect the personality and character of their loved one.

We appreciate the benefits of personalising a grave space, but we must also consider the feelings of families who have chosen not to personalise a grave or have placed just a small number of items. We also need to ensure that the cemetery staff are able to carry out grounds maintenance and that coffin bearers and mourners can walk safely and easily to graveside for funerals.






# What area is available for personalisation?

The actual area available is dependent upon the type of grave; for Lawn, Traditional and Muslim graves, this area is 1'9" (53cm) x 4' (122cm) and for Cremated Remains Gardens and Babies Burial Gardens, the area is 9" (23cm) x 2' (60cm). These dimensions are shown in the diagram below and illustrated in the photograph.



## Key

-  Memorial Area
-  Personalisation Area
-  Lawned Area



## *Following a funeral*

Where a burial has recently taken place, there will usually be more floral tributes than can be placed within the personalisation area; these will only be removed by the Council when they become spent.

As soon as possible following the funeral, the cemeteries staff will turf or seed the whole of the grave space. Any floral tributes will be temporarily moved to allow turfing and replaced following the completion of the works.

After approximately 3-months following the burial, only the personalisation area should be used for flowers. Vases and flower holders made from glass, porcelain or other fragile materials should not be used.

We understand, however, that during significant dates such as religious festivals or anniversaries you may need to place floral tributes or wreathes outside of the personalisation area.

## *How will I know exactly how much of the grave can be personalised?*

The cemetery staff will mark out the personalisation area on individual graves by request. Where the whole of the grave space is grassed, the cemeteries staff will remove the turf from the agreed area ready for planting.

To arrange for the personalisation area to be marked out on your family grave, speak to a member of the cemeteries staff or telephone Bereavement Services on (01642) 527341/42.

## *What kind of plants should I use to personalise this area?*

We recommend that planting is restricted to bedding plants, alpines and flowering bulbs to avoid plants quickly out-growing the personalisation area.

Conifers and other fast-growing shrubs should not be planted within the personalisation area, as these can not only hide a memorial, but also weaken the foundations, which could lead to damage to the memorial.

## *What personal items are not allowed?*

Stockton Council has endeavoured to develop a policy that will be acceptable to both the families that wish to personalise a grave space and those who object to the placement of personal items.

A small number of personal items may be placed within the personalisation area, to allow a degree of variety for families personalising graves and to ensure that the carefully chosen personal items can be appreciated fully by visitors.

The types of items that are not permitted are:

- Fences, edging stones and other surrounds
- Gravel and other decorative chippings
- Glass, porcelain, brittle plastics or other fragile items
- Items that make a noise
- Balloons

In order to prevent memorials being hidden, height restrictions on the items that are placed are also in effect. Items placed on lawn and traditional graves should be no taller than 12" (30cm) and for cremated remains and babies burial gardens, no taller than 6" (15cm).



## *What if a grave is personalised outside of the agreed area?*

Where possible, the Council's Cemeteries Inspector will move items to the personalisation area, but we may not always be able to do so, especially where a large number of items are present.

In these cases, Bereavement Services will notify you asking for items to be moved and placed in the personalisation area within 14 days. If, after 14 days, items are still present outside of the personalisation area, the items will be carefully removed, labelled and stored for your collection. We will try to allow some flexibility around significant dates such as religious festivals and anniversaries.

Arrangements for collection can be made by contacting Bereavement Services on (01642) 527341/42. Items, which have not been collected after 3-months will, unfortunately, need to be disposed of.

## *What if items or plants within the personalisation area have been identified as unsuitable?*

Again, the Cemeteries Inspector may remove any items or plants that do not fall within our guidelines, but will make every effort to do so with the greatest of care and avoiding significant dates. Where items are removed from the personalised area, we will notify you by post and place a notice on the grave space.

To be able to contact grave owners, it is very important that Bereavement Services are informed of any changes of address.

*What if I am not sure if an  
item or plant is suitable?*

If you are unsure about any item or plant, please either ask a member of staff at the cemetery, or telephone the Bereavement Services Team on (01642) 527341/42.

For further information about the range of leaflets we have available, please contact:

Bereavement Services  
The Register Office  
Nightingale House  
Balaclava Street  
Stockton-on-Tees  
TS18 2AL

Telephone: (01642) 527341/42

Fax: (01642) 527725

Email: [bereavement.services@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:bereavement.services@stockton.gov.uk)

[www.stockton.gov.uk/bereavementservices](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/bereavementservices)

[www.stocktonroots.co.uk](http://www.stocktonroots.co.uk)



If you would like this information in any other format or languages please contact 'Bereavement Services' on (01642) 527341/42

إذا كنت ترغب الحصول على هذه المعلومات بلغات أو بأشكال أخرى على سبيل المثال بالطبعة الكبيرة أو بالشمريط المسجل فالرجاء الإتصال 'بدايفرستي تيم' [Bereavement Services] على هاتف رقم 01642 527341/42 ARABIC

若要這份資訊的其它語言版或其它版式例如大字體印刷/錄音帶，請致電 01642 527341/42 接洽 '多元化隊' (Bereavement Services) MANDARIN

اگر شما این اطلاعات را به زبان یا شکل دیگری مثلاً چاپ بزرگ یا بصورت صدا میخواهید لطفاً با تیم دایورستی [Bereavement Services] با شماره 01642 527341/42 به تماس شوید Farsi

Si vous souhaitez obtenir ces informations dans d'autres langues ou sous un autre format, par exemple, en gros caractères / version audio, veuillez contacter l'équipe "Bereavement Services" au n° 016 42 52 73 41/42 FRENCH

ئەگەر تۆمەر ئەمە زانیاریە بە دەستت بکەویت بە زمانەکانی تۆمان بە تەنۆهەکی تۆمان نۆمۆه جایی گەورە/یان بە تەنۆه تۆمان کۆراو تۆمان بە یۆهەندی بکە بە تۆمانی دایفیرستی [Bereavement Services] لە سەر زمارەکی ئە لە فۆن 01642 527341/42 KURDISH

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਬਣਤਰ ਜਾਂ ਬੋਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ, ਵੱਡੀ ਛਪਾਈ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਂ ਟੇਪ/ਸੀ ਡੀ 'ਤੇ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 'Bereavement Services' ਨੂੰ 01642 527341/42 ਨੰਬਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ। PUNJABI

اگر آپ ان معلومات سے کوئی بھی اور زبان یا انداز، مثلاً بڑے پرنٹ/آڈیو ٹیپ وغیرہ میں حاصل کرنا چاہیں، تو 'ڈاؤن ریسی تیم' (Bereavement Services) کو اس نمبر پر فون کیجئے 01642 527341/42 URDU



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