

Personalising a grave space



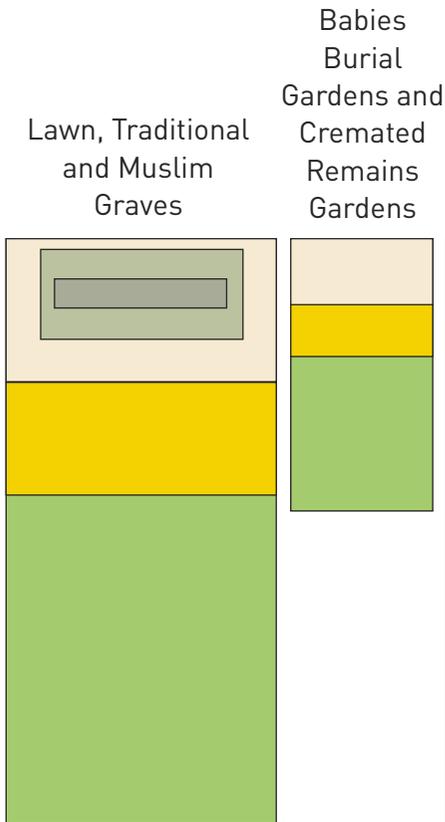
Personalising a grave space

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 cemetery staff are able to carry out operational tasks and 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 on significant dates such as religious festivals and anniversaries, or during the festive period, 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 may damage your own memorial and also those on neighbouring graves.

If we discover such a plant then we may write to you to request its removal within 14 days. If we are unable to contact you, then we will carefully remove the plant ourselves

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:

- Kerbs, 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

What if a grave is personalised outside the agreed area?

The installation of kerbs, fences, edging stones and other surrounds around the whole of the grave space can create significant difficulties in gaining access to neighbouring graves for funeral mourners, coffin-bearers and other cemetery visitors. Such items can also restrict grave-digging and general maintenance by our cemeteries staff.

Similarly, the placement of smaller personal items, or planting outside the agreed area can lead to the same difficulties.

If such items are placed, then we will contact you if:

- The items prevent or restrict access for grave-digging or funeral attendance
- The items encroach upon or affect a neighbouring grave
- We have received a complaint about the items

If the need to access a grave is urgent, because of a forthcoming funeral, we will ask you to remove the items as soon as possible. If we are unable to make contact, then we will need to carefully remove the items ourselves.

If the situation is less pressing, then we may write to you and invite you to attend on-site to discuss matters with a member of our staff, and to reach agreement upon a reduction of your personalisation, to a level which does not cause a problem.

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

Again, we may write to you, if:

- Planting within the personalisation area poses a risk to the stability of your own family memorial, or that of a memorial in a neighbouring grave
- We receive a complaint about the items or plants

In such circumstances, we will invite you to attend on-site and discuss the situation, with a view to reaching agreement as to the removal or reduction of the items or plants in question. If we are unable to contact you, then we will carefully remove unsuitable plants ourselves

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.

If you have any queries, or if you would like 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

Email: bereavement.services@stockton.gov.uk

www.stockton.gov.uk/bereavementservices

If you would like this information in any other language or format for example **large print** or audio please contact 'Bereavement Services' 01642 527341/42.

إذا كنت ترغب الحصول على هذه المعلومات بلغات أو بأشكال أخرى على سبيل المثال بالطبعة الكبيرة أو بالشرطة المسجل فالرجاء الإتصال 'بداوية ستني تيم' (Bereavement Services) على هاتف رقم 01642 527341/42

ARABIC

敬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 مثلا چاپ بزرگ یا بصورت صدا میخواهید لطفا ما تيم داویرستني (گوڤڤوني) (Bereavement Services) با شماره 01642 527341/42 به تماس شويد

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

هه گهر جهوت لهن به نهم زانباريه به دهستت بکه جهوت به زمانه کانی تر یان به شتوهه کی تر یو نمونه چاپی گه ره/یان به تیبی نومارکوا نکه به به دهوتی بکه به تیبی دا یقینستنی (Bereavement Services) له سهه (زهاری ته لهنون) 01642 527341/42

KURDISH

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਢੰਗ ਵਿੱਚ, ਵੱਡੀ ਛਪਾਈ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਂ ਆਵਾਜ਼ੀ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 'Bereavement Services' ਨੂੰ 01642 527341/42 ਨੰਬਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

PUNJABI

اگر آپ ان معلومات کو کسی بھی اور زبان یا انداز مثلاً بڑے پرنٹ/آڈیو تیبی وغیرہ میں حاصل کرنا چاہیں تو براہ کرم 'بداویہ ستنی تيم' (Bereavement Services) کو اس نمبر پر فون کیجئے 01642 527341/42

URDU