



**Melton
Borough
Council**

Thorpe Road Cemetery Regulations & Policy

Key policy details

Item	Details
Author:	Cemetery & Environment Officer
Owner:	Waste & Environmental Services Manager
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Version Control

Version No	Version Date	Author	Summary of Changes
1.0	01/04/2026	Cemetery & Environment Officer	Initial policy document
1.1	16/04/2026	Waste & Environmental Services Manager	Implemented feedback from Portfolio Holder for Policy Development & Review.

Approvals

Designation	Title	Date of Approval	Version
Cabinet	Approval by the Council's Cabinet	08/09/2026	1.1

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1 General Information

Melton Borough Council holds responsibility for the management and ongoing maintenance of Thorpe Road Cemetery. The Council is committed to ensuring that the needs of bereaved individuals and future visitors are addressed with sensitivity, dignity, and respect, in alignment with best practices in cemetery management and public service provision.

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'memorials' encompasses not only traditional headstones and monuments, but also other commemorative installations such as benches, trees, and plants placed in remembrance of a loved one.

1.1 Cemetery Access and Conduct

All visitors must enter and exit the Cemetery via the designated main entrances and pedestrian gates only.

The Council reserves the right to refuse entry to Thorpe Road Cemetery to any individual who is intoxicated or exhibiting signs of substance misuse that may result in public nuisance or disorderly conduct.

No person shall display printed materials, notices, or signs, or engage in canvassing, promotion, or the sale of services within the Cemetery without prior written authorisation from the Council.

In accordance with Article 18 of the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977, the following actions are considered offences:

- Wilfully causing any disturbance within the Cemetery
- Committing any nuisance within the Cemetery
- Interfering with any burial taking place
- Tampering with any grave, vault, tombstone, memorial, flowers, or plants
- Playing games or sports within the Cemetery

Any person found in breach of these provisions may be subject to a fine as outlined in Article 19 of the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977.

Additionally, under the Criminal Damage Act 1971, it is a criminal offence to intentionally destroy or damage property belonging to another person within the Cemetery, including but not limited to statues, monuments, memorials, railings, and fences.

The Council maintains a zero-tolerance approach to insulting, threatening, abusive, or anti-social behaviour directed towards its staff. Council Officers reserve the right to remove, or request the removal of, any individual whose behaviour is deemed inappropriate or disruptive.

1.2 Responsibility for Loss and Damage

The Council accepts no responsibility for the loss of or damage to any private property within the Cemetery, except where such loss or damage arises directly from the proven negligence of Council employees.

Owners of exclusive rights of burial are strongly advised to arrange appropriate insurance cover for their memorials to protect against potential loss or damage.

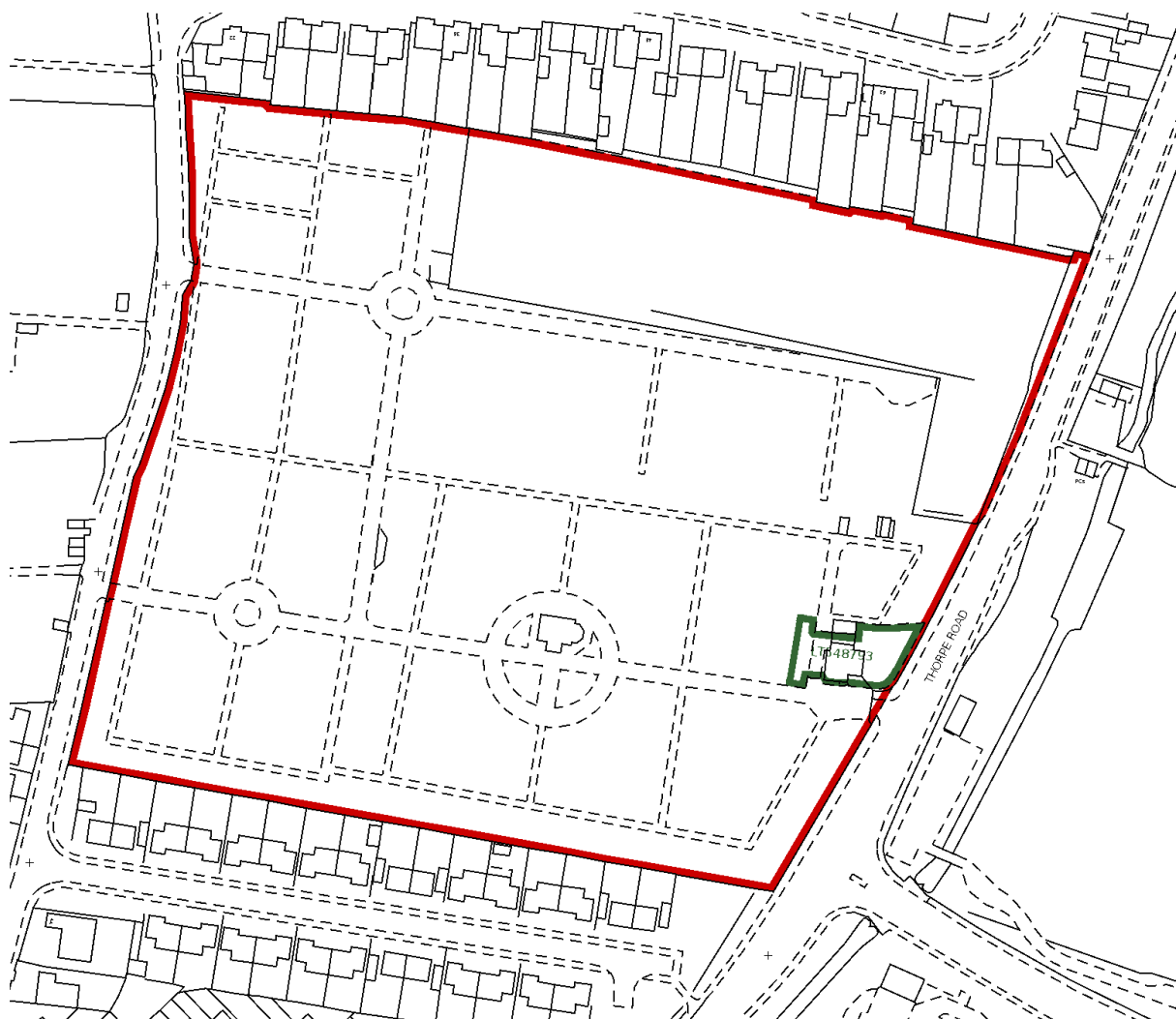
1.3 Service Standards

Melton Borough Council is committed to providing a professional, respectful, and compassionate service to all families using our Cemetery facilities.

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the service received, we encourage you to contact us directly. We will make every effort to address your concerns promptly and aim to resolve the matter.

2 Cemetery Site Plan

The site boundary for Thorpe Road Cemetery is shown outlined in red below. The area outlined in green represents The Lodge, which is no longer owned or managed by Melton Borough Council and is therefore excluded from this policy.



3 Site Information

3.1 Contact Information

Thorpe Road Cemetery is open to visitors daily, including weekends and public holidays.

Melton Borough Council reserves the right to close the Cemetery at any time, without prior notice, where circumstances require such action.

3.2 Contact Details and Feedback

We welcome all feedback regarding our cemeteries, whether it is a general comment or observation from your visit, a compliment about the service you have received, or a complaint about something you are dissatisfied with.

Melton Borough Council is committed to listening to and acting upon the feedback we receive to continuously improve the quality and accessibility of the services we provide.

If you would like to share your feedback, please contact the Cemetery Office using the details provided below:

Parkside
Station Approach
Burton Street
Melton Mowbray
Leicestershire
LE13 1GH

Telephone: 01664 502 502

Email: cemetery@melton.gov.uk

Website: www.melton.gov.uk

3.3 Cemetery Sections

Thorpe Road Cemetery provides designated sections to accommodate a range of interment needs, including:

- **Full Burial Section:** For individuals aged over 12 years.
- **Children's Section:** For full burials of children up to and including 12 years of age.
- **Cremated Remains Section:** For the interment of ashes of both adults & children.
- **Garden of Remembrance (G of R):** For the scattering of ashes.

Each section is managed in accordance with this Cemetery regulations document and is intended to support the diverse needs of families and loved ones.

3.4 Vehicles

Vehicles are permitted within Thorpe Road Cemetery and must adhere to the designated speed limit of 5 mph at all times. All vehicles must be parked considerately to ensure unobstructed access for funeral processions and other authorised vehicles.

Under no circumstances are visitors permitted to drive on footpaths, grassed areas, or over any planted sections. Such actions will be considered a public nuisance and may be dealt with under the provisions of Articles 18 and 19 of the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977, as referenced in Section 1.1 of this policy.

The Council accepts no liability for any loss or damage to vehicles parked within the Cemetery. All vehicles are parked entirely at the owner's risk.

The use of diggers or other heavy machinery is prohibited throughout Thorpe Road Cemetery, unless agreed with Melton Borough Council.

3.5 Toilet Amenities

A single toilet facility is available on site at Thorpe Road Cemetery. This facility is accessible to disabled visitors and requires a key for entry, which can be obtained from Cemetery staff during opening hours.

The toilet will be unlocked upon request during any scheduled service taking place at the Cemetery.

3.6 Animal Burials

Thorpe Road Cemetery does not provide facilities for the burial of animals. The Cemetery is designated solely for the interment of human remains.

3.7 Water

Water is available at fixed points throughout Thorpe Road Cemetery for maintenance and memorial purposes.

Please note: This water is not suitable for drinking.

During periods of cold weather, water supplies may be temporarily turned off to prevent freezing and damage to infrastructure.

3.8 Dogs in the Cemetery

Dogs are permitted within Thorpe Road Cemetery but must be kept on a short lead at all times.

Only assistance dogs are allowed within the chapel; all other dogs are prohibited.

Owners are required to clean up after their dogs and dispose of waste in the designated litter or dog waste bins provided on site. Failure to remove dog fouling may result in enforcement action, including a fine or prosecution, in accordance with relevant legislation.

3.9 Cemetery Chapel

The Chapel at Thorpe Road Cemetery is available for services upon request and can accommodate approximately 55 attendees.

The applicable fee for Chapel use is outlined in the Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.

The Council do not make arrangements for the employment of a keyboardist or organist, and the council do not provide any other amplified music requirements. Funeral Directors may be able to arrange for this and should be consulted directly to find out more information.

3.10 Letters To Heaven

Located adjacent to the car park at Thorpe Road Cemetery, the white Letters to Heaven post box provides a dedicated space for individuals to write and deposit letters, cards, and messages addressed to loved ones who have passed away.

This may include letters, postcards, birthday or anniversary cards, Mother's Day or Father's Day cards, Christmas cards, or any other written message. The post box is available to anyone who feels they may benefit from using it, regardless of when the bereavement occurred or where the funeral took place.

All messages placed in the post box are treated with the utmost respect and confidentiality. Items are stored securely and are never opened or read. As the post box is not operated by Royal Mail, no address or postage is required.

Through an environmentally sustainable process, the deposited correspondence is transformed into compost, which is then used within the Wildflower Meadow at the Doctors Lane entrance to Melton Country Park.

This sensitive and respectful process ensures that they are returned to nature in a meaningful way. The enriched soil created from the letters contributes to the ongoing growth and biodiversity of the meadow for the benefit of all visitors.

3.11 Cleaning

Toilet Amenities

Toilet amenities undergo weekly visual inspections and are cleaned as required by

staff employed by the Council. These checks are carried out alongside routine compliance inspections.

Chapel

The chapel is cleaned on the morning of every scheduled service when in use. Cleaning is undertaken by Council staff.

Footpaths and Roadways

Footpaths and internal roadways are swept quarterly in accordance with the approved cleansing schedule delivered by the Council's contracted service provider.

4 Maintenance

Maintenance of the grounds (e.g. grass cutting, spraying, leaf and litter clearing, upkeep of trees, shrubs, flower beds and hedges) is carried out by the Council. The Council has the right to prune, cut down or remove any shrub(s), tree, or flowers that do become unsightly, overgrown or dangerous and to spray around graves in any area of the cemetery.

The Council reserves the right to place soil or any other material onto a grave space in the Cemetery (whether occupied or not) when carrying out maintenance works. Any soil or material placed will be removed and the area re-instated as soon as possible after the work has taken place.

The Council has the right to remove items from graves which

- have perished
- pose a hazard
- encroach on an adjacent grave space
- have not been authorised and dispose of such items without prior reference to the Deed Holder. This includes flowers, wreaths, weeds, plants, rubbish, fencing, border edging, glass objects, other decorations and unauthorised items placed on a grave (for further information see section on Memorials)

Where items are found to be in breach of this policy, they will be removed in accordance with the procedure outlined below.

The next of kin, using the contact details held on record, will be notified within five working days of the item(s) being removed from the grave space. Where the next of kin cannot be identified, a written notice will be placed on the grave for a period of six months, providing information on how the removed items can be retrieved.

All removed items will be clearly labelled and stored securely for six months, during which time they may be collected by the nominated representative by appointment.

If no contact is received from the nominated representative within six months of the removal date, the items will be respectfully disposed of.

Additional vases and other memorabilia i.e. figurines, pot plants, lights and candles may be permitted if they are contained within the grave space. Additional memorabilia to the grave space, will be sympathetically managed, however these items may prevent Melton Borough Council officers from being able to effectively maintain the grave to an acceptable standard.

Festive wreaths will be removed by Council staff after the festive period, normally in February/March.

5 Purchasing a Grave

Requests to purchase a grave must be submitted through the Relevant Council Officer at the time interment or funeral arrangements are being made.

To ensure the effective management and long-term sustainability of cemetery capacity, individuals are not permitted to select a specific grave space.

In addition, the Exclusive Right of Burial cannot be purchased in advance or reserved. It may only be purchased at the time arrangements for an interment are being made.

5.1 Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial

Upon purchase of a grave, the Council will issue a Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial (the “Deed”). This Deed is a legal document that confers the exclusive right to burial in the specified grave space for a period of 100 years. It does not constitute ownership of the land.

Rights of the Deed Holder

The Deed Holder is entitled to:

- Be interred in the grave, subject to space being available (including for cremated remains).
- Authorise further interments in the grave, where space permits.
- Erect an inscribed memorial on the grave, subject to the Council’s regulations on memorials.
- Authorise additional inscriptions on an existing memorial, subject to the Council’s regulations.

The Deed must be presented to the Council when requesting the re-opening of a grave. The Council reserves the right to refuse interment if the Deed is not produced.

Eligibility and Fees

Grave spaces may be purchased by both residents and non-residents of Melton Mowbray Town. Non-residents are subject to double fees, as set out in the Council's schedule of charges.

Transfer of Rights

The Grant Holder may transfer the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial to another individual by completing a Change of Deed Form and paying the relevant fee in accordance with the Council's published schedule of charges.

If the Grant Holder is deceased and the family wishes to arrange an interment, install a memorial, or add an inscription, the original Grant must first be transferred to the appropriate person(s) before any action can proceed. For the purposes of this section, appropriate person(s) refers to the legally appointed executor(s) of the will or an authorised administrator of the estate.

No interments, memorial installations, or memorial amendments will be authorised until the Council has approved the Change of Deed.

The Council will not intervene in personal or family disputes regarding who should be appointed, nor will it determine entitlement where parties are in disagreement.

5.2 Public Graves

A public grave is an unpurchased grave where no Exclusive Right of Burial exists. There is usually no family connection with those buried in this type of grave. No memorial rights exist for a public grave, therefore no headstone or memorial can be placed on it without the consent of the Council.

5.3 Allocation of Graves

When purchasing the Exclusive Right of Burial, grave spaces will be allocated by the Council. Allocation will be determined based on ground conditions and operational requirements at the time of interment.

In exceptional circumstances, and where there is a demonstrated religious, cultural, or other specific requirement necessitating a particular grave location, the Council will consider requests on a case-by-case basis.

Such requests must be made in advance and will be accommodated wherever reasonably practicable without compromising health and safety, operational needs, or cemetery layout standards.

5.4 Excavations

All grave spaces are excavated by trained Council Officers / appointed contractors and the method of excavation will take into account location, ground conditions,

access and safety. No grave shall be dug or excavated by anyone unless appointed by the Council.

The Council has the right, without giving notice, to place soil or other material excavated from a newly dug grave temporarily onto the grave space(s) adjoining the grave being excavated whether or not the adjoining grave space(s) are purchased and/or occupied. Adjacent graves will be fully re-instated to their original appearance once the interment has taken place and the area will be left tidy.

When a grave is re-opened for the purposes of a further burial every effort is made to ensure any existing human remains previously interred are not disturbed. Any ash caskets interred into a burial plot will be positioned in such a way and of sufficient depth to ensure they are not disturbed in any way should the grave be re-opened in future.

Where a temporary wooden cross is placed on a new grave, the Council has the right to remove the cross if it deteriorates to a poor condition or when a memorial is erected on the grave.

5.5 Grave Capacity and Dimensions

Subject to the discretion of the Council, all graves at Thorpe Road Cemetery will be prepared to a depth sufficient to accommodate the following:

- **Burial Plots:** Up to two coffins and up to six ash caskets
- **Cremated Remains Plots:** Up to six ash caskets
- **Vault Plots:** Up to two ash caskets
- **Children's Plots:** One coffin

The Council reserves the right to amend these standards as necessary.

All graves will be excavated to accommodate the coffin or casket dimensions specified on the **Notice of Interment Form** submitted by the Funeral Director or person arranging the funeral. Where an oversized grave is required, the Council reserves the right to apply an additional charge equivalent to the cost of two grave spaces.

5.6 Grave Settlement and Re-instatement

Unless written instructions are received by the Council, all graves will be backfilled following the burial and, once the ground has sufficiently settled, will be either turfed or seeded to ensure the surface is level with the surrounding area.

Soil settlement typically occurs over a period of 9 to 12 months, although this may vary depending on soil conditions.

Graves may also settle unexpectedly during periods of adverse weather. In such instances, the Council will arrange for the grave to be levelled as soon as practicable.

6 Arranging an Interment

Interments will only be allowed in designated areas laid out for burial or interment of cremated remains. These areas are identified on the Cemetery plans held by the Council. The Council reserves the right to retain any grave spaces for its own purposes.

No burial may take place or interment / scattering of cremated remains without prior permission of the Council and a **Notice of Interment Form** must be completed accompanied by the appropriate fee no less than five working days before the burial, cremation or scattering. Interments at shorter notice, will, if possible, be arranged in exceptional circumstances or for religious requirements.

The details provided on the form must be clear and complete and in the case of a second interment the **Notice of Interment Form** should be signed by the Deed Holder and the current Deed produced.

Coffin sizes should be detailed on the **Notice of Interment Form**. If these are not known at the time of giving notice they may be supplied later in writing to the Relevant Council Officer. The Council shall not accept liability for any coffin sizes given other than in writing.

6.1 Interment Arrangements

Burial Law (Local Authorities Cemetery Order 1977) states that none of the following can take place without the written permission of the Burial Authority (Council):

- Burials
- Interment of ashes
- Scattering of ashes
- Exhumations
- Installation or fixing of a memorial, kerb edges, trees, plants, seats or benches
- Adding an inscription to a memorial
- Renovation of a memorial
- Removal and /or replacement of a memorial

Melton Borough Council does not permit the construction of walled graves, underground vaults, mausoleums, or any other similar type of memorial structure within Thorpe Road Cemetery.

In addition to the **Notice of Interment Form**, interment, and the scattering of ashes can not take place without the appropriate certificate

Certificate	Issued By
Certificate for Burial (Parts B & C)	Registrar of Births, Deaths & Marriages
Certificate for Burial (Stillborn)	Registrar of Births, Deaths & Marriages
Certificate where the death is not required to be registered (Parts B & C)	Registrar of Births, Deaths & Marriages
Order for Burial (Parts B & C)	Coroner
Medical Certificate (Non viable foetus)	Medical Practitioner
Medical Certificate (body parts removed at autopsy)	Medical Practitioner
Cremated Certificate	Crematorium

Unless the interment is to take place in a grave for which an exclusive right of burial exists, the location of the burial would be determined by the Relevant Council Officer.

The excavation of all graves shall only be carried out by a designated / approved contractor or an officer of the Council.

For burial interments it may be necessary to temporarily mound soil onto the adjoining graves, which would be appropriately covered and protected.

6.2 Hours Of Interment

Type of Interment	Permitted Days	Between Times
Burial	Monday – Friday	9am – 3pm
Cremated Remains	Monday – Friday	9am – 3pm
Scattering	Monday – Friday	9am – 3pm

Interments must be carried out strictly within the Council's designated interment hours. No funerals or interments are permitted on weekends or Public Holidays. An exception may be granted where a legitimate urgent-burial request is submitted. All such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must receive approval from the Relevant Council Officer prior to any arrangements being made. Any interment authorised to occur outside standard hours will incur an additional fee.

The time stated in the **Notice of Interment Form** must be the time the funeral cortege arrives at the Cemetery.

6.3 Arrival at The Cemetery

Punctuality at the Cemetery should be observed to prevent inconvenience or one funeral running into another. Prior notice should be given to the Relevant Council Officer for any extra ordinary funeral processions, for example, the use of a horse drawn hearse or a military funeral etc.

The funeral director or person arranging the funeral is responsible for providing sufficient bearers to transfer the coffin from the hearse to the graveside.

6.4 Scattering of Ashes

The scattering of ashes is permitted within the designated garden of remembrance in the Cemetery. Ashes may also be scattered under the turf on an owner grave space. In all instances, a **Notice of Interment Form** must be completed, in line with the burial process.

6.5 Alterations to Funeral Arrangements

Once a **Notice of Interment Form** has been accepted by the Council, no alterations will be permitted, except in relation to the time of burial. In such cases, written notification of the change must be received by the Council no later than **two working days (48 hours)** prior to the scheduled interment.

The Council will not accept responsibility for any misunderstandings arising from instructions given solely by telephone. Any verbal communication must be immediately confirmed in writing to ensure accuracy and avoid delays.

Any additional costs incurred by the Council as a result of incorrect or incomplete information provided by the applicant will be charged back to the applicant accordingly.

7 Memorials

A temporary wooden cross or similar marker may be placed on a grave following an interment. Once a permanent memorial is installed, the temporary marker must be removed.

Only one headstone is permitted per grave. Additional items such as vases, figurines, potted plants, lights, and candles may be allowed, provided they are contained within the grave space. While the Council will manage such items sympathetically, it should be noted that excessive or uncontained memorabilia may hinder the effective maintenance of the grave to an acceptable standard. The Council reserves the right to remove any memorabilia placed on or around graves if such items interfere with routine scheduled maintenance or pose a risk to the safety or accessibility of the Cemetery grounds.

Where items are found to be in breach of this policy, they will be removed in accordance with the procedure outlined below.

The next of kin, using the contact details held on record, will be notified within five working days of the item(s) being removed from the grave space. Where the next of kin cannot be identified, a written notice will be placed on the grave for a period of six months, providing information on how the removed items can be retrieved.

All removed items will be clearly labelled and stored securely for six months, during which time they may be collected by the nominated representative by appointment.

If no contact is received from the nominated representative within six months of the removal date, the items will be respectfully disposed of.

All new memorials, and any memorials re-erected following an interment, must be installed by a **BRAMM** or **NAMM** accredited memorial mason, in accordance with the **NAMM Code of Working Practice**. No memorial works may proceed until a completed **Memorial Installation Application Form** has been submitted and approved by the Council.

The application must include:

- A sketch and/or design of the proposed memorial
- Exact dimensions
- Wording of any inscription
- The appropriate fee as outlined in the Cemetery Schedule of Charges

The application must be signed by the Deed Holder of the grave (refer to Section 6.1 – Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial).

Memorial masons must not commence fabrication or inscription of any memorial until written approval has been granted by the Council.

All memorials must be constructed from natural stone, marble, or granite. Memorials made from concrete, wood, plastic, metal, pottery, glass, or fibreglass are not permitted.

Memorial works may only take place between:

- **Monday to Friday:** 8:00am – 5:00pm
- **Saturday:** 8:00am – 3:00pm
- **No works are permitted on Sundays or public holidays.**

The owner of the exclusive rights is responsible for the temporary removal and safe storage of a memorial when a grave is re-opened for interment, and for its subsequent re-erection or replacement.

The Council reserves the right to remove any memorabilia placed on or around graves if such items interfere with routine scheduled maintenance or pose a risk to the safety or accessibility of the Cemetery grounds. The Council also reserves the right to remove any memorials that are neglected, damaged, decayed, or deemed unsafe.

7.1 Memorial Sizes

Memorials may be erected subject to the following conditional, and it should be noted that a fee will be payable, in line with the Council's Schedule of Charges, for the right to install approved memorials.

Traditional Sections

Description	Metric	Imperial
Height	121cm	4 foot
Width	91.44cm	3 foot
Depth	45cm	1 foot 6 inches
Kerb-sets are also allowed in designated parts of the Cemetery.		

Lawn Sections

Description	Metric	Imperial
Height	121cm	4 foot
Width	91.44cm	3 foot
Depth	45cm	1 foot 6 inches
Kerb-sets are <u>not</u> permitted within this part of the Cemetery.		

Cremation & Children's Sections

Description	Metric	Imperial
Height	76.2cm	2 foot 6 inches
Width	76.2cm	2 foot 6 inches
Depth	45cm	1 foot 6 inches
Kerb-sets are allowed in designated parts of the Cemetery.		

Memorial masons must not start work on a memorial until approval has been granted in writing by the Council.

The Council reserves the right to refuse permission for a memorial where, in its opinion, the proposed inscription could cause offence or is deemed unsuitable. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Profanity or vulgar language
- Insults or derogatory descriptions
- Hate speech or discriminatory phrases
- Threatening or aggressive wording
- Sexually explicit or suggestive wording
- Defamatory statements
- Political extremism or militant references

If your application is refused and you wish to appeal, you must do so within 14 days of the date on which the refusal letter was issued.

Appeals must be submitted in writing and must include a clear explanation of the grounds for the appeal, along with full name and contact details. Appeals may be submitted by letter or email using the contact information provided in Section 3 of this policy.

7.2 Installing a Memorial

All memorials and materials must be carried into the Cemetery in a way that does not cause damage to roads, walkways or grass areas, and takes into consideration to Cemetery users at the time.

Memorials must be installed in alignment with, and positioned back-to-back with, memorials on the adjoining row of grave spaces. All memorials must be secured using an approved ground-anchoring system that is suitable for the specific soil conditions of the cemetery.

All fixings and installation methods must comply with the current National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) Code of Working Practice or any subsequent approved standard.

All surplus materials, rubble and rubbish must be removed from the Cemetery immediately following any work and, where the removal of a memorial has been required prior to an interment, the area should be cleared in time for the arrival of the funeral cortege.

Boards or other suitable material should be used to protect the adjacent area. Any damage to adjoining graves or memorial stones must be reported to the Council immediately and made good to the satisfaction of the Council.

7.3 Memorial Removal

No memorial shall be removed from the Cemetery without the permission of the Deed Holder or their representative and without the Council being informed of the whereabouts of the memorial.

When a memorial is to be removed to allow a second burial to take place it is the responsibility of the Deed Holder or their agent to remove the memorial at their own risk and expense prior to the burial taking place.

The Council reserves the right to remove, without notice, any unauthorised monument, memorial, stone, kerb edging, tree, shrub, plant or item erected or placed in the Cemetery contravening this policy or where, in its opinion, items that could pose a risk or an obstruction. to officers and Cemetery users.

7.4 Memorial Safety

Memorials remain the property of the Deed Holder, who is responsible for ensuring that they are kept in good repair and in a safe condition.

The Council undertakes a structured programme of memorial safety inspections across all burial grounds under its management. Inspections are carried out by suitably trained personnel in accordance with guidance issued by the National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) and the Ministry of Justice.

Where a memorial is identified as unsafe, the Council has the authority to make it safe without prior notice. This may include laying the memorial flat, with the inscription facing upwards, or removing it if necessary. Following such action, the Council will make every reasonable effort to contact the Deed Holder to advise them of the steps taken and to request that appropriate repairs are arranged. Notification will be sent to the Deed Holder at their last recorded address, and a notice will also be placed at the memorial.

If a memorial is not repaired within the specified timescale following notification, the Council reserves the right to remove the memorial.

The frequency of memorial inspections is determined by the assessed level of risk, taking into account the memorial's condition, height, location, and ground stability. The following inspection cycle applies:

High-risk memorials: inspected annually

Medium-risk memorials: inspected every three years

Low-risk memorials: inspected every five years

A detailed record of all memorial inspections and their outcomes will be maintained by the Council. These records may be viewed at the Council Offices upon written request, with a minimum notice period of two weeks.

Each memorial inspected will be subject to a risk assessment. This will determine the potential severity of harm and the likelihood of an incident occurring. The combined risk rating will inform whether remedial action is required and will determine the schedule for future inspections.

7.5 Items Placed onto Graves

The Council will not be liable for any loss, damage, theft or vandalism of any item placed onto a grave.

Cemetery staff may remove memorabilia / trinkets from a grave that, in their opinion, are likely to cause risk, damage, offence or which may interfere with the Council's maintenance of the site.

The following items are not allowed to be placed onto graves and if found will be removed:

- Unauthorised memorabilia i.e. items which may pose a risk to Cemetery users
- Unauthorised benches, trees, shrubs and plants
- Unauthorised kerb edgings
- Artificial grass
- Glass items
- Stone chippings, slate or gravel (unless inside an authorised fully kerbed grave)

7.6 Memorial Benches

The Council can arrange for the installation of memorial benches. The placement of benches is restricted to certain locations within the Cemetery, upon agreement with the Relevant Council Officer.

The process for applying and the installation for a memorial bench is as follows:

- All applications to donate a memorial bench must be placed in writing, once received an officer will arrange to meet the applicant on site to agree a suitable location for installation as well as the bench style
- Melton Borough Council holds the right to identify and approve suitable locations for memorials
- Following the meeting, an approval letter will be sent, and payment is then required in full, from the applicant
- No benches will be installed, until full payment has been received
- The Council has no commitment to accept any application made. Should the application be rejected, any fee paid will be returned in full
- Benches will be purchased by the Council to ensure suitability for general public use and uniformity of design. On request, details of bench type will be provided prior to an application being made
- The Council will be responsible for the installation of the memorial
- Only sites which do not already have a sufficient number of benches will be considered. Remote locations with poor access for maintenance and users will not be considered
- The Council will limit the number of memorial benches in particular areas so that they shall not detract from the prime purpose of the site. The Council reserves the right to refuse applications on this basis
- The Council will attempt to notify the applicant in the event that the memorial bench is damaged. The applicant should ensure that the Council is in possession of current contact details
- The Council retains the right to remove any memorial benches that have been identified as either not being safe or have been damaged and are, in the view of the Council, beyond economical repair
- The Council cannot guarantee the long-term safety or security of the benches and is not responsible for the replacement of benches resulting from damage, vandalism, or deterioration with age

- In the unlikely event a bench is stolen, the Council shall not be responsible for providing a replacement
- The Council will not grant applications for memorials / benches to pets
- To ensure installation is undertaken safely, to the required standards, the Council will provide and install the memorial bench with plaque and surfacing where necessary
- Memorial plaques fitted to benches are to be a maximum size of 180mm wide x 70mm high, or shall fit in the centre of the uppermost lath of the back of the bench, whichever is the greater
- The memorial plaque inscriptions will need to be submitted to and approved by the Council
- Once installed, the bench remains the property of the donor
- The bench shall not be removed by the donor, and it may be used by any/all visitors to the recreation ground, park, garden or open space in which it is sited.
- The donor is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the bench throughout its life
- The Council undertakes regular inspections of all memorials to ensure they are safe and do not pose a risk to members of the public and visitors to the site.
- The Council accepts no replacement liability for the plaque or the bench at the end of its useful life and will dispose of any such bench. Any replacements of benches or plaques will be the responsibility of the original applicant. The Relevant Council Officer will make every effort to contact the family when the bench is no longer safe to use / is to be removed / needs repair and would retain any plaques until the family make contact, for a period of no less than 1 year after the bench/memorial removal.
- No vases or ornaments are permitted to be attached or deposited near the bench at any time.

7.7 Memorial Trees

Memorial trees, shrub(s), plants and flowers are not permitted to be planted within the Cemetery. The full-length planting of a grave is not permitted.

The Council can arrange for the purchase and installation of memorial trees. In order for Melton Borough Council to properly manage and maintain the Cemetery, church yards, parks and open spaces, they need to be able to freely access footpaths, walkways, vehicle and machinery access points around these sites including existing structures, trees and habitat including uncompromised access and egress.

The key planting sites currently identified around the borough are as follows:

1. 'Memorial Avenue' which is located at the top edge of the Country Park along the Ross Close side of the boundary;
2. The Covid Memorial Garden, Melton Country Park (near the Willow Drive Car Park);
3. A dedicated area within the Kirby Fields open space.

The process for applying and the installation for a memorial tree is as follows:

- The planting / placement of trees, shrubs and plants is at the discretion of Melton Borough Council and is restricted to certain locations within the Councils' parks and open spaces and permission from Melton Borough Council is required for any such installation
- Melton Borough Council will provide information to families regarding the chosen locations and type of tree, shrubs and plants available to plant – choices of tree type will generally be between a native or a fruit tree and advice will be given based on the chosen location (exposure, soil type, general ground conditions etc.) as to what may be the best options to choose from
- Age and size of the tree, shrub or plant to be planted will depend upon the budget available by the donor / family and suitability and appropriateness decided by Council Officers in discussion / agreement with the donor / family
- Planting will be managed by Melton Borough Council and will be scheduled at a time of the year to give the tree, shrub or plant the best possible chance to thrive. This would generally be between the months of September and November or January and March but is always environment and weather dependent. The donor / family will be kept informed so they may be present for the planting
- Initial care - Once a tree, shrub or plant is planted, its initial care including watering is the responsibility of the donor. The Council cannot be held responsible should the tree, shrub or plant fail to thrive / die.
- After care - Once the tree, shrub or plant has become established it will be added to the monitoring programme and Melton Borough Council will manage the maintenance and care as appropriate for example pruning, pollarding etc.
- The Council retains the right to remove any unauthorised planted trees, shrubs or plants
- Tributes of any description (excluding dedication plaques) must not be left around the tree, shrub or plant and the Council reserves the right to remove such items without notice
- It is seen as acceptable if the donor / family wished, to plant bulbs around the base of the tree but nothing bigger
- Dedication plaques are to be approved (size, style and wording) and are only to be purchased from the Council

7.8 Book of Remembrance

The Book of Remembrance is available to be viewed upon appointment with the Relevant Council Officer.

8 Fees and Charges

All fees and charges relating to the Cemetery are outlined in the Council's published Schedule of Charges, which is subject to annual review.

Payment of all applicable fees must be received in full by the Council prior to the commencement of any associated works or services. In the case of interments, cremations, or scatterings, both the relevant fees and a completed Notice of Interment must be submitted no later than **five working days** before the scheduled date of the service.

Accepted methods of payment are as follows:

- Bank Transfer (BACS): Details will be provided upon request or initial contact.
- Invoice Payment: Upon receipt of an official invoice.
- Cheque: Payable to Melton Borough Council.

Please note: Cash payments are not accepted under any circumstances.

Requests for refunds must be submitted in writing within 14 days of the date payment was made. Refunds will not be issued where the total value of the order is £42 or less.

9 Exhumations

Once human remains, including cremated remains, have been interred, they must not be disturbed or removed from the grave without first obtaining the appropriate permissions and licence from the Ministry of Justice. All exhumation requests must initially be directed to the Relevant Council Officer, who will provide guidance on the necessary procedures and legal requirements.

10 Cemetery Records

Following the purchase of a grave or the completion of an interment, the Council shall record all relevant details in the official burial registers as soon as is reasonably practicable. In the case of new graves, a Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial will be issued to the purchaser.

The burial registers and cemetery plans are available for public inspection by prior appointment with the Relevant Council Officer.

Searches of the registers and requests for copies of entries may be made upon payment of the applicable fee, as outlined in the Council's Schedule of Charges, and in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). We aim to respond to all requests of this nature within 10 working days.

We collect and retain personal data for the purposes of maintaining cemetery records, ensuring the accuracy of statutory registers, and delivering burial and associated services. All personal information is processed in compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

We only keep personal data for as long as is necessary to fulfil these purposes, and we ensure it is stored securely at all times. Personal data will not be shared with third parties unless required to do so by law or where it is essential for the provision of our services.

Individuals have the right to request access to their personal data, to ask for inaccuracies to be corrected, and, where applicable, to request deletion of their information, subject to the relevant legal criteria being met.

11 Policy Review, Updates and Amendments

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier if changes in legislation or regulatory requirements necessitate an interim review, to ensure it remains relevant, effective, and compliant with current operational and statutory obligations. Any amendments may be approved by the Director of Housing & Communities in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.