

Family History/Genealogy

Guidance notes for searching the burial records

Researching family history has become a popular pastime and, with this in mind, the Bereavement Services Team can facilitate a search of burial records for Dartford Cemeteries from 1856 to the current day.

The Burial Register from 1856 to 2006 can be downloaded using the following links.

Burials after 2006 can be searched by contacting the Watling Street Cemetery office on 01322 290059, Monday to Friday 9am – 4pm.

Tips for looking at the Records

Finding the surname in the Index

The start of each year is indicated in the surname column of most pages, however, this does not apply to the early years of East Hill Cemetery where this has been omitted.

Watling Street Cemetery opened in 1914 and its records were then included with East Hill Cemetery records and are not identified separately.

In the index books for Stone Cemetery and Swanscombe Cemetery the entries overlap.

The Index Books for Swanscombe Cemetery are listed as follows:

1887 to 1895
1895 to 1921
1911 to 1939
1939 to 1957
1958 to 1994

The index books for Stone Cemetery are Book 1, 2 and 3 covering 1887 to 1988, and one Index from 1988.

Also, in some of the Index Books the alphabet jumps out of order and there will be a clue to this on the bottom of the page saying for example “P” may be continued on “Z” or somewhere else within the index and is not always clear.

Adjacent to the name will be two numbers: burial register number and grave number but occasionally not in the correct columns. There may be a “Folio” number which refers to the page in the burial register.

The Burial Register number refers to the burial register which is in numerical order from the first date to current date. Each burial has a unique burial register number apart from Swanscombe Cemetery 1907 – 1934 where the same numbers are used in each register.

The grave number may be identified as being either: Purchased (otherwise private grave); or Un-purchased (otherwise public or common grave).

Each grave space has its own exclusive number which may be a combination of numbers and letters. For example, East Hill Cemetery has an additional section with all the same numbers but prefixed with the letter ‘A’. As the index books for East Hill Cemetery and Watling Street Cemetery are combined attention must be given to the letters written by the grave number (i.e. WS for Watling Street Cemetery or EH for East Hill Cemetery).

There may be one or more burials in each grave, but each burial has its own burial register number.

Burial Register Guidance

Number of Entry: (burial register number cross referenced in Index)

Name of Person Buried: either surname first or forename first

Description of person: in older registers this will be occupation, in more recent registers it will be the home address of the deceased

Age: recorded in years

Place where death occurred / Place from which body was brought

Date of Death

Date of Burial

By whom the Ceremony of Burial was performed

Place of Burial: will indicate the depth at which burial took place and sometimes whether the ground was consecrated or un-consecrated. Consecrated ground has been blessed by the Church of England before any burials take place. Un-consecrated ground is used by religions other than the Church of England, or who are non denominational.

Number of Grave Space: unique number for each grave space. The number will be found on most memorials either at the back of headstone or at the foot of a kerb set.

Signature of Person making the entry/Rect No: official responsible for entry in register

Location of Grave Space

Having established the cemetery and grave number, finding the location may require further assistance from the Bereavement Services Team.

Cemetery plans are held at the Watling Street Cemetery office however where there are large areas with common graves, no memorials or grave numbers that do not run in order, it will be necessary to seek guidance.

Please note that the grave owner's permission is required before placing tokens of remembrance on any grave.