



# Queenstown Lakes District Council

## Cemeteries Handbook

November 2016

**IMAGE**



## **Queenstown Lakes District Council** **Cemeteries Handbook**

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# Introduction

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The Queenstown Lakes District Cemeteries Handbook (**the Handbook**) contains the rules and conditions that apply to provision of services, operational requirements, and acceptable conduct in cemeteries owned by, or operated by the Queenstown Lakes District Council (**the Council**). The Handbook also provides information to assist the smooth running, operation, and provision of information to the public about Council cemeteries.

The rules and conditions applicable to Council cemeteries contained in the Handbook were made in accordance with the Queenstown Lakes District Council Cemeteries Bylaw 2016 (**the Bylaw**).

## Operational Cemeteries

The operational cemeteries within the Queenstown District include:

- Arrowtown Cemetery
- Cardrona Cemetery
- Frankton Cemetery
- Glenorchy Cemetery
- Kingston Cemetery
- Lower Shotover Cemetery (when open)
- Makarora Cemetery
- Queenstown Cemetery
- Skippers Cemetery
- Wanaka Cemetery

For interments in these cemeteries contact Queenstown Lakes District Council Cemeteries Administrator, phone 03 441 0499 Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm

Email: [services@qldc.govt.nz](mailto:services@qldc.govt.nz)

Web: [www.qldc.govt.nz](http://www.qldc.govt.nz)

## Other Cemeteries

Albert Town Cemetery is closed and interments are no longer allowed.

Hawea Cemetery is managed by the Hawea Cemetery Trust. All enquiries to do with this cemetery should be referred to:

Donald Urquhart

Phone: (03) 443 1426

Address: 440 Camp Hill Rd, RD2, Wanaka.

# Definitions

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**Act** means the Burial and Cremation Act 1964 or any superseding legislation.

**Burial Right** means the exclusive right to a burial in a particular plot.

**Cemetery** or **cemeteries** means any land owned or operated by the Council as a cemetery but excludes any closed cemetery.

**Cemetery administrator** means the person appointed under clause 11 of the Cemetery Bylaw.

**Cemeteries Handbook** means the document governing the operational standards for cemeteries adopted by the Council under clause 7 of the Cemetery Bylaw.

**Closed cemetery** means a cemetery that has been closed in accordance with the Act.

**Council** means the Queenstown Lakes District Council.

**Disinter** or **disinterment** means the removal of a human body or ash remains from the earth or any vault.

**Inter** or **interment** means the placement of a human body or ash remains in a grave or any vault.

**Monument** includes a headstone, plaque, panel, or other memorial to a deceased person.

**Monumental masonry work** includes the establishment, repair, or modification of a monument.

**Sexton** means any person appointed under clause 10 of the Cemetery Bylaw.

# 1.0 General Information

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## 1.1 Opening Hours

Cemeteries operated by the Council are open for public visiting seven days a week.

Cemeteries are open for interments Monday to Saturday, 9am – 4pm, and Cemeteries are closed on Sundays and public holidays.

## 1.2 Cemetery Fees and Forms

A table showing applicable Council Cemetery fees can be found at clause 12 of this handbook, followed by application forms for accessing cemetery related services, in clause 13.

The applicable fees must be paid in full prior to the event (eg. burial right, interment, disinterment, maintenance) taking place.

The person requesting an interment or disinterment will need to submit the appropriate forms to the Council's Cemetery Administrator, along with the applicable fee, prior to the interment taking place. A copy of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death or Coroner's Authorisation for Release of Body must accompany the application. Any original documents provided will be returned to the applicant.

The forms referred to in this handbook available in electronic form from the Council's website [www.qldc.govt.nz](http://www.qldc.govt.nz) or from the Cemetery Administrator are:

- Application for Burial or Interment
- Authority to Open a Plot
- Application for Adjacent Plot Purchase (Burial Right)
- Application for Monument Permit

## 1.3 Booking Procedure

The Cemetery Administrator is to be notified by telephone or email of an intended burial. The minimum notice for an Application for Burial or Interment to be processed by the Cemeteries Administrator is at least **three working days** prior to interment if proposed for Skippers Cemetery, and **two working days** prior to the time of interment for any other Council cemetery.

The funeral director, or person requesting the interment, must submit applicable forms (**attached** to this Handbook). The forms can also be requested from the Cemetery Administrator.

## 1.4 Pet Burials

No animal(s), including birds or fish, either as ashes or as a body, may be interred in a Council cemetery unless placed in a sealed casket with the deceased.

## 2.0 Interments

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### 2.1 Application for interment

The person arranging the interment must lodge the following relevant applications with the Cemeteries Administrator:

- Application for burial or ash interment (for each and every interment)
- Authority to open a plot (additional to application for interment, if an interment of a deceased person or human remains is to take place in an occupied plot)

No interments (of a deceased person or other human remains) can take place in a Council cemetery until the Cemeteries Administrator has approved the application(s) referred above, and the applicable fee(s) has been paid (refer section 12.0).

### 2.2 Allocation of plots

The Cemeteries Administrator has responsibility for allocating plots for burials. If an applicant requests that an interment occur in a particular area of a Council cemetery, the request will be considered provided there are vacant, unsold plots available in that area, and the request is consistent with any requirements in this Handbook and the effective management of the cemetery.

No burial or ash interment may take place without the approval of the person holding burial rights to that plot. If that person is deceased or debilitated, the immediate next of kin or the person acting on behalf of the deceased or the deceased's estate may give approval for a burial in the plot or placement of a monument.

### 2.3 Hours for interments

Monday to Saturday between the hours of 9am to 4pm.

The expected time of arrival in the cemetery must be specified on the application for interment or authority to open a plot form. If the expected arrival time is going to change by more than 15 minutes of the original notified time the Cemeteries Administrator or Sexton must be notified of the new time.

A Saturday fee will be charged for interments, including ash interments, taking place on a Saturday.

No interments will be scheduled on Sundays and public holidays (including Council holidays).

### 2.4 Notification of Interment

Notification of all burials shall be submitted to the Council at least **2 working days** before the proposed burial (except for Skippers Cemetery which requires **3 working days** notice).

Applications involving shorter notice may, as an exception, be considered by the Cemeteries Administrator in consultation with the Sexton and a late fee may apply. Applications must be made using the application for burial or ash interment form along with the authority to open a plot form if required (both are available in section 13.0 of this Handbook, the QLDC website [www.qldc.govt.nz](http://www.qldc.govt.nz)) or from the Cemeteries Administrator.

### 2.5 Ash interments

The bookings and forms required for ash interments are managed in the same way as a casket interment, although different fees apply (refer section 12.0).

### 2.6 Grave Preparation

Only a Sexton appointed by the Council in accordance with the Bylaw may dig and prepare the grave (for ashes or a casket) in a Council cemetery.

For burials in graves covered by a concrete cap, only the Sexton or an approved Monument Mason can break the concrete. A fee will apply (refer section 12.0). It is the responsibility of the owner of burial rights to that plot to reinstate the concrete cover after burial provided an approved monument permit is obtained. If that person is deceased or debilitated, that person's estate or the person who gave approval on their behalf is responsible for reinstating the cover after burial.

If the person who owns burial rights to the plot does not reinstate the concrete within a reasonable time, the Council may remove the concrete completely, and replace with lawn, or cover over with stones.

A request may be made to the Cemeteries Administrator for friends and family of the deceased to fill in the grave, subject to the conditions set out in section 6.3 of this Handbook.

### **2.7 Interment equipment**

Equipment for carrying out interments is supplied and removed by the Sexton, who is responsible for ensuring all safety procedures are complied with while on site.

### **2.8 Dis-interment/ Re-interment**

Any application received by Queenstown Lakes District Council shall be conducted pursuant to sections 51 and 55 of the Burial and Cremations Act 1964 (or superseding legislation), and subject to the payment of fees referred to in section 12.0 of this Handbook. This application relates to disinterment / re-interment of the deceased or ashes of the deceased.

All requests for disinterment or re-interment must be directed to the Council.

### **2.9 Poor person's burial**

The Burial and Cremation Act 1964 requires the Council to bury the bodies of poor persons, and persons from any hospital, penal institution, or other public institution free of charge upon an order from a Justice of the Peace. An application for interment form must still be completed before the burial takes place.

### **2.10 Wanaka Returned Serviceman area (in association with the RSA)**

Ex-Service Personnel who have had war service or service that is defined equivalent to war service, and their spouses or partners, may be buried in the service area.

If the interment of a deceased veteran is to be in the Service area, a standard ex-service plaque is available at a subsidized rate through Veterans' Affairs New Zealand. In the service area, only the standard ex-service memorial plaque is permitted. The plaques are of uniform style and there is no provision for personal messages or photographs.

If the interment is to be outside the Service area of the Council cemetery, the next of kin can order a standard ex-Service memorial at a subsidized rate.

Details of war service need to be supplied on the Application for Interment form. Failure to provide this information may result in the application being declined.

*Specifications for Service Person's interment:*

Only Service Personal and their spouse or partner may be interred in the Service area

Double depth interments are permitted in the Service area to allow for the spouse or partner of the deceased veteran to be interred in the same plot. A double plaque commemorating both deceased persons is provided at a subsidized rate

If the spouse or partner wishes to be interred to the side of the Service Person, they can purchase the burial right for the adjoining plot subject to the standard fee (refer section 12.0).

Children cannot be interred in a Service Person's plot unless they are eligible for interment in the Service area in their own right.

*War Service Eligibility & Contacts:*

Please refer to Veterans' Affairs New Zealand website for information regarding eligibility [www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz](http://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz)

Free phone (NZ): 0800 483 8372 (0800 4 VETERAN)

## 3.0 Pre-purchase of burial rights

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### 3.1 Pre-purchase of burial rights

The Council only permits the purchase of burial rights when burial or ash interment is imminent, unless the following conditions are satisfied:

- The purchaser is a relative of a deceased person who is being interred at a Council cemetery, and wishes to purchase a burial right to an adjacent plot.
- The adjacent plot is vacant and not subject to another burial right.
- A completed adjacent plot purchase form is submitted to the Cemeteries Administrator no later than 10 working days after the initial burial / interment.

Unless the above conditions are satisfied, there is no ability to pre-purchase a burial right.

### 3.2 Application for adjacent plot purchase

In order to pre-purchase burial rights, a person must lodge a completed application for adjacent plot purchase form with the Cemeteries Administrator in accordance with the requirements in section 3.1, and pay the applicable fee (refer section 12.0).

### 3.3 Duration of burial rights

Sometimes burial rights are never used, and thus take up valuable space in cemeteries. If no interment occurs within 60 years of the burial rights being purchased, then the Council will attempt to locate the purchaser or next of kin to confirm if the plot is still required. If the purchaser and next of kin are unable to be located, then the plot ownership reverts back to the Council in accordance with section 10 of the Burial and Cremation Act 1964.

### 3.3 Transferring burial rights

Should a plot no longer be required, the holder of the burial rights may transfer their interest in the plot to another party. The current burial right holder and purchaser must email the change of ownership details to the Council.

The Council will not re-purchase burial rights after they have been sold.

## 4.0 Burial and ash plots

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### 4.1 Size of plots

Unless otherwise specified by the Cemeteries Administrator, the standard size for all new burial plots is as follows:

- Full burial plot: 1200mm x 2700mm
- Ash plot: 600mm x 300mm

If a larger plot is required, arrangements can be made at the time of booking and confirmed with the Cemeteries Administrator.

### 4.2 Depths of interments

The standard depth of interments below the surrounding ground level shall be:

- Single interment: 1400mm
- Double interment: 1830mm
- Ash interment: 600mm

### 4.3 Burial plots

No more than two deceased persons can be interred in each burial plot.

### 4.4 Ash plots

All new ash plots can hold up to a maximum of four ash interments depending on urn size:

- Two in front of the headstone.
- Two under the headstone.

### 4.5 Locating graves

Please contact the Cemeteries Administrator or alternatively visit the Council website [www.qldc.govt.nz](http://www.qldc.govt.nz) for further information.

### 4.6 Grave testing

A testing service is available at no cost to the applicant to obtain the availability of sufficient space for a second interment in an existing grave.

## 5.0 Monuments

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### 5.1 Installation of monuments and plaques

Only monumental masons or suitably qualified trades people recognised by the Council will be permitted to erect monuments within any Council cemetery.

No monumental masonry work may commence until the Council has granted permission for the work under the Bylaw. A monument permit is required for any monumental work being undertaken in a Council cemetery, to ensure the headstone is placed on the correct plot and also to ensure adherence to specifications in this Handbook.

Owners of burial rights, or if deceased, the immediate next of kin, may give permission for a monument to be erected, or an additional inscription to be added to an existing monument. Typically, a monumental mason applies for the permit on behalf of the burial rights owner/ next of kin.

### 5.2 Specifications for monuments and plaques

All monuments including headstones and plaques are to be constructed in accordance with NZS 4242:1995 Headstones & Cemetery Monuments, sound engineering principles, and to the satisfaction of the Council.

Concrete base work for all monuments shall:

- not stand higher than 150mm above the highest point of the concrete beam or ground level, whichever is the higher.
- be laid to the satisfaction of the Council and in accordance with sound engineering principles as set out in NZS 4242:1995 Headstones and Cemetery Monuments.
- not be wider than 1 metre and stand no higher than 1.5 metres.

Plaques must have a minimum clearance of 10mm from the edge of the plaque to the edge of the plot on any ashes beam and be no more than 10mm thick. It is the responsibility of the plot owner to ensure that the plaque is of the correct dimensions for the particular plot concerned.

No person may mix cement or mortar anywhere in the cemetery otherwise than on a watertight platform.

All necessary precautions shall be taken to ensure that no damage is done to footpaths, roads, plots or grass.

### 5.3 Monument maintenance

Maintenance of monuments is the responsibility of the burial rights owner or their representative. Monuments must be kept in good repair. The Council does not take any responsibility for damage or vandalism to any monument.

The Council may remove from the cemetery any monuments that have fallen into a state of disrepair, if the Sexton or Cemeteries Administrator determines that a monument is a health and safety risk. If the risk is not significant, the Cemeteries Administrator may give the person responsible (the owner or next of kin) written notice to repair or remove the item in disrepair. Failure to comply with the notice will result in the monument being removed at the cost to the person who owns the burial rights to that plot.

If a monument poses a significant health and safety risk or there is no owner or representative available to affect repairs or permit removal, the Sexton may lay the monument flat within the grave surround or remove it from the cemetery if there is no grave surround. A photographic record of the monument will be taken and filed with the cemetery records if the monument is removed.

#### **5.4 Removal**

No person shall remove from any cemetery or grave, any headstone, monument or plaque, without permission from the Council.

If the Council is asked to remove a memorial, no responsibility will be taken for any damage done in the process of removal.

## 6.0 Health and safety

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### 6.1 Caskets

The casket size, shape, including the type and size of the handles are to be recorded on the application for interment. The Council retains discretion to determine the appropriate of a suitable casket.

### 6.2 Shoring boards

Graves must be shored up in cemeteries for safety reasons. The shoring boards will be removed at the conclusion of the burial unless the family or friends wish to hand fill the grave. A request to hand fill a grave must be made in the application for interment form.

### 6.3 Request to fill grave

Friends and family of the deceased can request that the Sexton allow them to fill in the grave. There are two options available:

- Only fill the grave to cover the casket. No heavy machinery is required to remove the shoring boards.
- Fill the complete grave by hand only. The Council must be advised of this request before the interment takes place and is to be outlined under 'special instructions' on the 'Application for interment' form. If this option is requested the Sexton will be required to remove the shoring boards with the appropriate equipment to allow the grave to be filled. Families will need to follow the directions of the Sexton during this process.

### 6.4 Site safety at gravesite

The funeral director will advise the Sexton upon arrival of the deceased person or other human remains to the gravesite, and at that time the site will be handed over to the funeral director. The funeral director is then responsible for the safety of the members of the public at the gravesite until the funeral director formally hands the site back to the Sexton and members of the public must follow the direction of the Sexton.

Any persons in attendance and/or involved in a burial or interment procedure in a Council cemetery, must adhere to all directions given by the Sexton at all times.

# 7.0 Behavior in cemeteries

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## 7.1 Vehicles in Cemeteries

Vehicles are only permitted to use designated roadways and car parks whilst in the cemetery. Vehicles may only access cemeteries from:

- 7.00 am to 8.30pm between October and March
- 8.00am to 5.00pm between April and September

The speed limit in all cemeteries shall not exceed 20km/hr unless a different speed limit is specified, and ordinary traffic rules are to be observed at all times.

The drivers of all vehicles must yield right of way to any funeral procession (cortege) in any cemetery. If the Sexton indicates that a vehicle should stop or move, the driver must respond as directed.

The Sexton or Cemeteries Administrator may temporarily close the cemetery to vehicles, provided the closure is clearly displayed using appropriate signage. No private vehicle is to be left or taken into any cemetery when the cemetery is closed.

## 7.2 Control of dogs within cemeteries

Dogs are permitted in cemeteries subject to clause 4(2) of the Council's Dog Control Bylaw 2014:

- (2) The owner of a dog must keep their dog under control on a leash in -  
(a) all cemeteries; [...]*

## 7.3 Horses and other animals

No horses or other animals are permitted in any cemeteries.

## 7.4 Promotional activities

The promotion or advertising of goods or services within a cemetery is not permitted unless in accordance with permission granted by the Council under the bylaw.

## 7.5 Photography or filming

No commercial photography, filming or recording is permitted in a Council cemetery unless it is solely for a private purpose, or it is in accordance with permission granted by the Council under the bylaw.

## 7.6 Misconduct

No one may disturb or interrupt a funeral, or cause an annoyance or nuisance within a cemetery, or cause damage to land, buildings or chattels in a cemetery.

## 7.7 Authorisation to conduct certain activities

No one other than a Sexton or person authorized by a Sexton may engage in interment or disinterment or operate any burial machinery or equipment in a cemetery.

No person may carry out monumental masonry work without permission from Council under the bylaw.

## 8.0 Tributes

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### **8.1 Wreaths and other tributes**

Wreaths, food items, and other floral tributes or ornaments not permanently fixed to the monument may be placed on the plot for a period of ten days following the interment. After ten days items must be removed or relocated to the concrete beam.

If items are not claimed after 10 days, the Council may remove and dispose of the items. The Council may also remove any neglected or broken items.

No ceremonial fires are permitted.

### **8.2 Temporary markers**

A temporary marker must be removed once a permanent monument is erected.

If the Sexton, or other person authorized by the Sexton, considers that a temporary marker has fallen into a state of disrepair, they may remove it.

## 9.0 Maintenance of plots and graves

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### 9.1 Lawn areas

The Council maintains plots and graves in lawn areas including mowing.

Any plants (including trees and shrubs) planted on a grave following an interment will be removed after ten days and the area sown with grass seed. The grave will be maintained as lawn.

### 9.2 Areas with planting

No new plants or shrubs are to be planted on graves without Council permission.

Existing plants may remain providing family or friends maintain them. If any plants are not being maintained, the Council will remove them. Any plant identified in the Council's Operational Pest Plan, and found growing on a plot or grave, will be removed.

# 10.0 Disinterment

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## **10.1 Disinterment**

Any requests to disinter either a body or ashes must be made in the first instance to a funeral director, who must apply to the Council for the disinterment.

Any application received by the Council shall be conducted pursuant to sections 51 and 55 of the Burial and Cremations Act 1964 (or superseding legislation), and subject to the payment of fees as the Council may determine from time to time. This application relates to disinterment / re-interment of the deceased or ashes of the deceased.

## 11.0 Genealogical information

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The Council is currently developing a database which will provide public access to cemetery records on the QLDC website. For updates check the Council's website: [www.qldc.govt.nz](http://www.qldc.govt.nz)

## 12.0 Cemetery Fees

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<b>Burial Rights</b>	<b>Fees</b>
Baby under 18 months	\$85.00
Single Burial plot (2.7m x 1.2m) with right to purchase next adjoining plot only at time of death	\$1200.00

### **Ashes Plot Purchase**

Bronze plaque cremation beam (60cm x 60cm)	\$250.00
Family – Lawn	\$250.00
Cremation Rock Queenstown Cemetery	\$150.00
Serviceman's section – plot purchase	No charge

### **Burials Interment Fees (Monday to Friday only)**

Child up to 10 years old, at single depth	\$85.00
Single Interment / Re-interment	\$875.50
Double depth interment (single plot)	\$978.50
Ashes / casket	\$875.50
Ashes Interment Fees	\$290.00
Double interment (Single Plot)	\$310.00
Out of district fee burial (less than 6 months in district)	\$500.00
Out of district fee Cremation (less than 6 months in district)	\$150.00
Call out fee Glenorchy, Kingston, Makarora, Skippers	\$495.00
Break concrete	\$105.00
Burial exhumation fee	\$1600.00
Ashes exhumation fee	\$200.00
Casket larger than standard (7'0" x 30" x 20")	\$100.00

### **Cemetery Maintenance Fees**

Maintenance Fee (payable for each burial interment for persons above the age of 10)	\$300.00
Maintenance Fee (payable for each ashes interment for persons above the age of 10)	\$150.00

### **Weekend Fees**

Saturday morning only extra fee (plus normal fee)	\$278.00
Saturday afternoon extra fee (plus normal fee)	\$330.00

# 13.0 Cemetery Forms

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