

Stanwick Cemetery, Chelveston Road, Stanwick, Northamptonshire NN9 6PU

Location

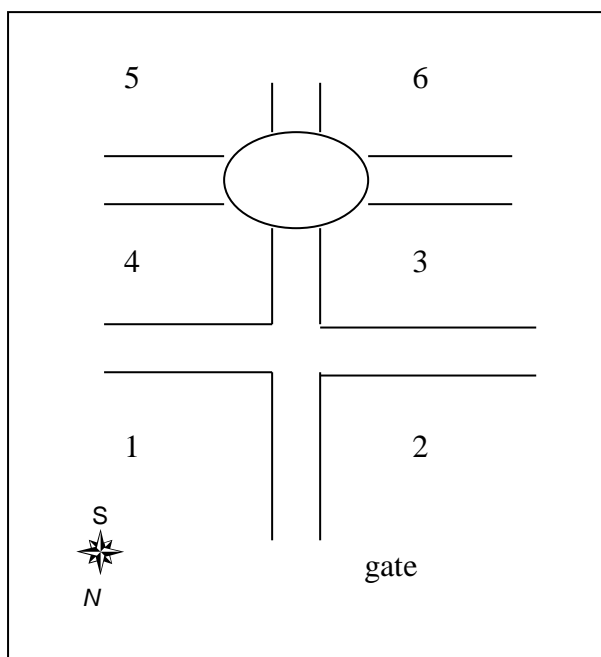
The cemetery is located on Chelveston Road, approximately 150 metres from the nearest dwelling, not including Holywell Farm. The cemetery is outside of the recognised village confines. Chelveston Road is not generally used by pedestrians. The cemetery is surrounded by farmland.

There is public foot path (PH3) that runs parallel to the cemetery's west boundary.

Description

The cemetery is 80 metres by 50 metres giving an area of 4000 square metres. It is enclosed by metal railings with hedges and trees planted around the edge.

The cemetery is divided into six distinguishable areas. There is a gravel path leading up the centre of the cemetery, approximately 2.6 metres wide with two side paths on each side. There is a flower bed either side of the gravel path in areas 1 and 2. There are number of trees planted along the gravel path.



Area 6 has purchased graves.

Areas 1 to 5 have a mixture of Common and Purchased* graves. The majority of these graves have one or more interment. A number have been 'pre-purchased' via an exclusive right of burial and are vacant at the time of writing.

Within area 5 there is a section exclusively for the interment of cremated remains.

In Area 2 there is a section for children's graves.

* An exclusive right of burial may be purchased under the terms of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (SI 1977/204). The owner of these rights may then stipulate who is buried in that grave and have the right to apply to erect a memorial. If an exclusive right of burial is not purchased, the Council may direct a burial in a Common grave. The Council may then choose at a later date to inter further burials in that grave space. The Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (SI 1977/204) stipulates that memorials cannot be placed on grave unless an exclusive right of burial has been purchased.

Facilities

There are three benches, a refuse bin and a tap for public use. Only one bench has been provided by the Council.

Outside of the cemetery gate there is a lay-by which will accommodate approximately six parked cars.

Public access to the cemetery is through the Lych gate. There is a works access gate that is kept padlocked to the right of the Lych gate.

There are no buildings on the site.

Public Safety

The cemetery is outside of the village and away from the central focal point. For this reason it is not an area that attracts children. Generally the cemetery is only visited by those tending graves.

i. Trees

The trees within the cemetery are given a visual inspection from ground level regularly. Any required remedial work is reported to Stanwick Parish Council. The Council aims to keep a 2 metre clearance under all trees for the well-being of all cemetery users and to prohibit the climbing of trees. There are no large headstones directly under any trees.

A qualified tree surgeon was commissioned in 2018 to undertake an inspection of all trees.

There are no Tree Preservation Orders at the cemetery.

ii. New graves.

The Council's contractors are responsible for all health and safety aspects of grave excavation. Their Risk Assessments and public liability insurance is inspected by East Northamptonshire Council Risk Officer.

Graves are excavated the day before the funeral. If the funeral is on a Monday this means the grave will be all or partially dug on the Friday. The open grave will be boarded over. The graves need to be excavated prior to the day of the funeral to allow sufficient time for any problems to be resolved i.e. mechanical failure, ground problems etc. Special arrangements are made over the Christmas period to ensure that graves are not left open over the public holidays.

Where there is a second interment in a plot, the grave will only be partially excavated the day before and will be finished on the morning of the burial.

Cremated remains plots are generally dug of the day of the interment.

Graves are filled once the funeral party has left the cemetery

Since 2001 only single depth graves have been permitted due to poor ground conditions. The soil type is heavy clay. However there are cases of historic exclusive rights of burial issued on the basis of a double depth grave, where the first interment has not yet occurred. In these cases double depth graves are permitted.

iii. Memorials

There are a variety of 'lawn' memorials together with a few cross memorials. There are no large monuments or tombs. The majority of headstones are below 1 metre in height.

A number of graves Areas 1, 2 and 3 have kerbstones. Areas 5 and 6 also have a number of kerbed graves, although some of these have been constructed with edging stone rather than kerbs purchased from memorial masons. It is Council policy that applications to install kerbstones will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Parish Councillors undertake a visual and manual inspection of headstones on annual basis in May.

Whilst the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (SI 1997/204) states that memorials should be placed on graves where an exclusive right of burial has been purchased, there are headstones on graves that the records show to be common graves.

Since 2000 Council rules have required all headstones should not exceed 762mm (2'6'') in height, measured from the highest point of the immediately adjacent ground level, 533mm (1'9'') in width and 76mm (3'') in thickness.

iv. Boundaries

The cemetery is enclosed by metal railings that appear to date from the inception of the cemetery in the 1920s. These are approximately 1.2 metres high. Along the inner edge of the railings there are shrubs and trees planted at intervals.

The southern boundary, adjacent to areas 5 and 6, was replaced with new bow top fencing in October 2006.

The eastern boundary has a mound of historic spoil that has grassed over.

The northern and western boundaries are reasonably clear.

v. Paths

The paths and turning circle are gravel.

vi. Machinery and tools

Equipment and tools for grounds maintenance and grave excavation are not kept on site.

| Hazard | Who | Level of risk | Action |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Trips and falls typically giving rise to minor cuts and abrasions, twisted ankles etc. | Visitors, contractors | Medium | Care to be taken by individuals; should be alert to local surface conditions, vegetation, gravel, headstones etc |
| Falling trees & branches causing injury | Visitors, contractors | Medium | Regular inspections take place. Qualified tree surgeon to inspect trees every 3-5 years or more frequently if required. |
| Scratches from low hanging branches | Visitors, contractors | Low | Branches to be lifted as required. |
| Falls into graves | Visitors, contractors | Medium | Contractors have systems in place to minimise risk |
| Falling memorials | Visitors, contractors | Medium | New inspection regimen set up. |

Note: Level risk represents both the likelihood of occurrence as well as the severity of injury.

Action taken since last report:

- Councillors have undertaken a headstone safety inspection
- The cemetery rules have a re-written to clearly set out memorial sizes and maintenance requirements

This report was offered to the Council in December 2020.

Risk Assessment to be reviewed January 2022