

## Guidance on submitting your petition

You may also wish to read the following guidance before drafting or submitting your petition:

- [Guidance on the right to be heard](#)
- [Guidance for people interested in newly deposited private bills](#)

All guidance documents not linked to above can be found on the Bill's webpage, as can the petition template to be used when drafting your petition.

### What is the General Cemetery Bill?

The General Cemetery Bill is a Bill promoted by the General Cemetery Company, to make new provision for the regulation and management of the General Cemetery Company upon its registration under the Companies Act 2006; to permit the transfer of the ownership and management of Kensal Green Cemetery and West London Crematorium to a charity; and to confer powers upon the General Cemetery Company to extinguish rights of burial and disturb human remains in Kensal Green Cemetery for the purpose of increasing the space for interments; and for connected purposes.

### What is a private bill?

A private bill is a bill which seeks to confer benefits on particular individuals, institutions or localities, over and above the provisions of the general law of the land. It is different from a public bill, which relates to the public general law affecting everybody. Private bills are introduced not by members of the House of Lords or the House of Commons but by an outside body such as a company or a local authority, who are known as the Promoters of the bill. The Promoters are represented by a firm of specialist solicitors known as Parliamentary Agents.

Private bills, like public bills, cannot become law until they have passed through both Houses of Parliament. They may begin in either the House of Commons or the House of Lords.

Proceedings relating to private bills are governed by Standing Orders relating to Private Business (PrBSOs). The link to House of Lords PrBSOs is given at the end of this Guidance.

### Who is involved in the process?

The promoter of the General Cemetery Bill is the General Cemetery Company. It is represented by Broadfield Law LLP, who are specialist solicitors known as Parliamentary Agents.

The Private Bill Office in the House of Lords is responsible for overseeing the petitioning process and the Select Committee's work.

## What is a petition?

A petition against the General Cemetery Bill is a document outlining how the Bill affects an individual, group of individuals, organisation or business and how they believe it should be altered. (Petitioning against a Bill is a different process from other Parliamentary petitions you might know about (including public petitions or e-petitions).)

## Who may petition?

Any individual, group of individuals, organisation or business which is "directly and specially affected" by the Bill can petition against it. More information about who may have the right to be heard before the Select Committee appointed to consider petitions can be found in the guidance listed above.

## What should I put in my petition?

Your petition should:

- Explain who you (the petitioner(s)) are and where you live (or what your business is and where its premises are if it is your business which is affected);
- Describe why your property or other interests are directly and specially affected, and explain how the Bill will adversely affect you;
- State what you think should be done to reduce the adverse effects the Bill has on you or your interests and, if possible, how the Bill should be amended to achieve this.

Your petition will form the basis of your case to the Select Committee on the Bill so it must include all the objections which you wish to raise. You will not be able to raise matters before the Committee if they are not referred to in your petition.

A petition template is available at the end of this guidance.

## Can I include pictures and photos in my petition?

No, your petition should only include text. You will be able to share any photos, maps or other illustrations in your evidence to the Select Committee, should you be scheduled to appear.

## When can I submit my petition?

The petitioning period for petitions against the Bill will start the day after the introduction of the bill in the House of Lords, which is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 22 January 2025. The petitioning period will run from the day after introduction until 5pm on Thursday 6 February 2025. The exact dates and times will be available on the bill page.

## How do I submit my petition?

Once the relevant petitioning period begins, you will be able to submit your petition via an online portal on the Committee's webpage, the link to which will be available on the [Bill's webpage](#).

If you prefer, you can also submit your petition by email, post or in person. Email submissions should be sent to [HLPrivateBills@parliament.uk](mailto:HLPrivateBills@parliament.uk). Postal submissions should be sent to the Private Bill Office, House of Lords, SW1A 0AA. If you post your petition, please allow time for it to arrive before the end of the petitioning period.

### Is there a charge for petitioning?

Yes. There is an administration fee of £20 per petition.

When you submit your petition you will be asked to confirm that you have paid the fee, whether by bank transfer (sort code 30-99-50, account number: 00345391), cheque (payable to "The House of Lords") or in cash.

A petition will not be considered by the Select Committee if the fee has not been received.

### Do I have to petition in an individual capacity, or can group submissions be accepted?

Petitions can have multiple signatories and can be submitted on behalf of groups of individuals (or organisations). In many cases, where several individuals wish to make the same point before a Select Committee, it is beneficial to all parties, and in the interests of time and avoiding repetition, to submit a joint or group petition.

The fee of £20 is payable per petition rather than by signatory, so a petition signed by multiple people only requires one £20 payment.

### Can you check my petition for me?

Yes. If you send a draft of your petition to the House of Lords Private Bill Office in advance of submitting it, we will check it to ensure that the form of your petition is correct. We will not comment on the arguments contained within the petition as those are a matter for your own judgment.

Please ensure you send your petition for checking well in advance of the end of the petitioning period. If you wait until the end of the petitioning period, we may not have chance to look at it for you before the submission deadline.

### Can I withdraw my petition after submitting it?

Yes. You may withdraw your petition at any time by emailing or writing to us. Your fee will not be refunded.

If you are not the only petitioner on your petition, you may withdraw your name from the petition in the same way, but you cannot withdraw the petition itself unless all the petitioners wish to do so.

### What happens after I submit my petition?

After you submit your petition, it will be published on Parliament's webpage. This will include your name and part of your address. Your petition (including, in this case, your address and contact details) will also be sent to the Bill's promoter who will send you an acknowledgement

and may contact you to discuss your petition.

The promoter may challenge your right to be heard. See the guidance listed above for more information about right to be heard challenges. The Bill's promoter will be in contact if it plans to challenge your right to be heard and the Private Bill Office will arrange a date for the Select Committee to hear the right to be heard challenge.

Once the Select Committee has heard any right to be heard challenges, it will hear the remaining petitioners' cases. If this includes you, the Private Bill Office will be in touch with you to schedule your hearing. Every effort will be taken to accommodate reasonable needs but petitioners will need to be flexible in their availability.

### Can someone else represent me in front of the Select Committee?

Many petitioners decide to represent themselves and there will be no disadvantage to you doing so. The Select Committee will expect to hear from people with no legal training.

However, you may feel more comfortable (or feel that you may be better represented by) asking someone to act on your behalf. This could be a friend, relative or colleague, or it could be someone you pay (for example, a solicitor or land agent). There are professional Parliamentary Agents (solicitors accredited by Parliament who specialise in promoting and opposing hybrid and private bills), known as "Roll A" Agents, who you could ask to act on your behalf. You can find a list of Roll A Agents on the Parliamentary website [here](#).

You can change your representative at any time. You need to let the Private Bill Office know when that happens, so we know who to contact about your petition.

### Who will appear before the Select Committee if a group of individuals has petitioned?

One of the petitioners may act on behalf of their co-petitioners, as their representative, provided all of the co-petitioners consent. Other signatories could be called as witnesses, if desired. Alternatively, the group could ask someone else to represent them.

### Who should represent a business/organisation before the Select Committee?

Any business or organisation must have a representative who will represent the petition in front of the Select Committee. This could be someone from the business or organisation, or someone else hired to represent the business or organisation. Your organisation should hold a properly constituted meeting and pass resolutions authorising the submission of the petition and for the named person to act as a representative.

### How should a local authority be represented?

If a local authority wishes to petition against the Bill it must be represented by an individual. This could be a councillor or someone else.

If you are a councillor you may petition as an individual if the Bill specially and directly affects you individually, but you cannot use that petition to give evidence on behalf of your local authority. Such a petition must be presented in the name of the local authority.

## Further information and resources

Any questions about petitioning or the work of the Select Committee on the Bill should be directed to the Private Bill Office at [HLPrivateBills@parliament.uk](mailto:HLPrivateBills@parliament.uk) or 020 7219 6061.

The General Cemetery Bill, and associated publications, can be found on the Parliamentary website: <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3894>

# Petition

**House of Lords  
Session 2024-25  
General Cemetery Bill**

Please do not include any images or graphics in your petition. There will be an opportunity to present these later if you give evidence to the committee.  
Your bill petition does not need to be signed.

Expand the size of the text boxes as you need.

## **1. Petitioner information**

In the box below, give the name and address of each individual, business or organisation submitting the petition.

In the box below, give a description of the petitioners. For example, “we are the owners/tenants of the addresses above”; “my company has offices at the address above”; “our organisation represents the interests of...”; “we are the parish council of...”.

## **2. Objections to the Bill**

In the box below, write your objections to the Bill and why your property or other interests are directly and specially affected. Please number each paragraph.

Only objections outlined in this petition can be presented when giving evidence to the Committee. You will not be entitled to be heard on new matters not included in your written petition.

### 3. What do you want to be done in response?

In the box below, tell us what you think should be done in response to your objections. You do not have to complete this box if you do not want to.

You can include this information in your response to section 2 'Objections to the Bill' if you prefer. Please number each paragraph.

### Next steps

Once you have completed your petition template, save it and upload it to the portal, email it to [hlprivatebills@parliament.uk](mailto:hlprivatebills@parliament.uk), post to the Private Bill Office, House of Lords, London, SW1A 0PW or call 020 7219 8261 to arrange a time to deliver it in person.

## Petitioner's details

Organisation/group name (if relevant)

First name(s)

Last name

Address line 1

Address line 2

Post code

County

Email

Phone

Who should be contacted about this petition?

Individual above

Another contact (for example, Roll A Agent or other representative)

If another contact, complete the 'main contact's details' section.

## Main contact's details

First name(s)

Last name

Address line 1

Address line 2

Post Code

County

Email



Phone

## Terms and conditions

### **Personal information**

A copy of this petition and information provided in the online form will be:

- kept in the Private Bill Office and as a record in the Parliamentary Archives, and
- sent to the Bill's promoter after the petition has been received by the Private Bill Office.

We will publish your petition on UK Parliament's website. This will include your name and part of your address. The personal information you have provided may be kept in a database by both Private Bill Offices. For more information on how we handle your data, please see our [privacy notice](#).

### **Communications**

Private Bill Office staff may call or email any of the people named in the petition to verify the information provided. Communications may be stored in databases to keep track of information you have given or received. This information may be shared between the Private Bill Offices.

### **Consent and confirmation**

The information you have provided in the petition and online form is accurate. If you have completed the form on behalf of an individual, a group of individuals, an organisation, or a group of organisations, you have been authorised to do so.

**Check this box if you agree to the terms and conditions**