

Excavated Remains from Site of HS2's Euston Station To Be Reburied In Surrey



One of the skeletons excavated from the site of HS2's new station at London Euston.

Working with the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England, HS2 has reached an agreement with Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey for the reburial of bodies that have been exhumed as a result of excavations at St James's Gardens.

HS2 archaeologists began the excavation of one of London's 18th and 19th century burial grounds, to the west of Euston station in St James's Gardens, in October 2018. The disused cemetery, which was home to over 50,000 of London's deceased, is required for the construction of HS2's new station at Euston.



The excavations at St James's Gardens are being carried out under temporary cover.

Brookwood Cemetery was created in 1849 by the London Necropolis Company to house London's deceased at a time when the capital was unable to accommodate increasing numbers. Brookwood was connected to the capital by a special railway branch line, and the capital's dead were taken there by hearse train carriages. Initially there were two stations at the cemetery – the northern one serving the non-conformist side of the cemetery and the southern the Anglican side.

Today, Brookwood Cemetery is a Grade I listed site and the largest cemetery in the UK. Over the intervening period, Brookwood has been used for the reburial of London's deceased that have been displaced by railway works. The first major reburials took place in 1862, when the construction of Charing Cross railway station and the routes into it required the burial ground at Cures College in Southwark to be demolished.

London's Euston station was extended westwards in the 1940s and some of the occupants of St James's Gardens required reburial. Those remains were rehomed at Brookwood, so this agreement to rebury the remaining occupants of St James's Gardens there means that the buried population will remain together.

Although you can no longer arrive at Brookwood via the London Necropolis Railway, you can access the cemetery directly from Brookwood mainline train station. The 500-acre site is a Grade I listed park and the grounds are open daily to visitors who want to explore the cemetery's historic ties to London.