

HERMITAGE BURIAL GROUND

This document aims to clarify rules and regulations for Hermitage burial ground particularly in respect of the erection of memorials in the burial ground.

RIGHTS OF BURIAL

Parishioners and other persons who die in the parish have the right of burial in the burial ground provided that it has not been closed by the Parish Council and there is sufficient space.

The place of burial is at the discretion of the Council unless a particular grave space has already been reserved by arrangement with the Council.

The Council may, at its discretion and if there is sufficient room, permit a burial in the burial ground of persons other than parishioners or those who die in the parish.

These rights of burial extend also to the interment of ashes after cremation except where the burial ground has been closed for burials by Order in Council. This can take place only if permission is obtained from Parish Council specifically for this purpose.

All graves should be in order 24 hours before a burial takes place. No vehicles are permitted on the burial ground site.

ERECTION OF MEMORIALS IN PARISH BURIAL GROUND

The erection of any memorial in the burial ground, or the alteration of any existing memorial, or the introduction of any other object in the burial ground, is a privilege and not a right. Bereaved people are frequently under the impression that they have purchased the plot of land in which their loved one is buried. This is not so; they have simply funded a small part of the cost of the general maintenance of the burial ground. The whole burial ground remains in Council ownership and the Council is responsible for its upkeep.

For this reason, permission must always be gained for the erection of (or alteration to) any memorial in the burial ground

All memorials are subject to the jurisdiction of the Council and all work must meet BS8415 and the NAMM code of practice.

The Council will sympathetically consider any application for an appropriately and harmoniously designed memorial.

It is important to note that the existence of a similar memorial or memorials to the one for which permission is being sought will not usually be a reason for the Council to give such permission. To illustrate the point: the existence of older kerbs will not in itself be a reason for granting permission for another kerb. If or when relatives of the deceased leave the area or themselves die, tending a grave becomes the responsibility of the Council which prefers no kerbs to make this task more straightforward.

If a memorial or other object is introduced into the burial ground without authority, the Council has power to remove it and to order the person who introduced it to pay the expenses of removal and the costs of any proceedings.

PROCEDURE FOR THE ERECTION OF MEMORIALS

Anyone wishing to erect a memorial or make any alteration to an existing one, should consult the Council as early as possible, and certainly before making any choice of design or material. A minimum of two months must elapse between the interment of a person to be commemorated and the approval of a memorial by the Council.

On application, the Council will supply a scale of fees payable for the erection of memorials.

Once the memorial is agreed in principle, the individual should make a formal application to the Council on its standard form. This must include the **full** particulars of the design of the proposed memorial or alteration, including a description of the materials to be used, its measurements, shape, base, colour, and decoration plus the style, layout and lettering of the proposed inscription.

The Council will consider any application at a regular council meeting and, if approved, will give that consent in writing. This permission must be obtained before placing an order with a stonemason.

REGULATIONS RESPECTING MEMORIALS

1. Dimensions of headstone

Headstones shall be no larger than 760 mm (2ft 6in) high, measured from the surface of the ground, 460mm (1ft 6in) wide and 50mm (2in) thick. They shall be no less than 500mm (1ft 5in) high, 300mm (1ft) wide, and 50mm (2in) thick- except in the case of slate memorials, which may be thinner but not less than 35mm (1/2in) thick. These measurements are not intended to define standard proportions of memorials, and memorials may be of any dimensions within the given maximum and minimum.

Crosses shall not exceed 760mm (2ft 6in) in height, measured from the surface of the ground, and shall be set in a sufficient stone or concrete plate, the surface of which is below ground enabling a mower to pass freely over it.

Memorials of smaller dimensions may be allowed to mark the graves of children under 12 years old.

The grave number given by the Parish Clerk should be marked on the back face of the headstone or memorial.

2. Base and foundation slab

A headstone may stand on a stone base, provided that the base is an integral part of the design. The top of such a base should, for preference, be flush with the ground; if it is not, it is essential that its foundation slab must be flush with the ground to allow a mower to pass freely over it. A recess for

flowers may be incorporated in the base. The width of the base should not exceed 50mm (2in) beyond the headstone in any direction.

Other methods of fixing the memorial in the ground may be considered; the base of the memorial may be so shaped that it can be inserted directly into the ground at sufficient depth to ensure stability.

3. Ledgers

As an alternative to a headstone (but not in addition to it), a memorial ledger may be laid flat on the ground. Such ledgers shall be laid slightly below ground level. The dimensions should not exceed 1,000mm (4ft) by 460mm (1ft 6in).

4. Flowers

Any separate container for flowers must be level with, or below, the surface of the ground so that it will not obstruct the passage of a mower. Wreaths and cut flowers must be removed as soon as they appear to be withered.

No artificial flowers may be placed in the burial ground except for Remembrance Day poppies and traditional Christmas wreaths, and these shall be removed within two months. The PC has authority to remove any artificial flowers which do not comply with these regulations.

5. Materials

Headstones and crosses shall be made of teak or oak, or cast or wrought iron, or natural stone and shall have no polished or reflecting finish. Traditional stones are normally to be used; recommended are Forest of Dean, Homton Blue, Ketton, Nabrasina, Portland, and York (limestones), Northumberland (sandstone), and Welsh Black and Westmoreland Green slates. No coloured or mottled granites are permitted under these regulations, nor any granite darker than Karin grey, nor marble, synthetic stone, nor plastics. Although the stone may not be polished nor finished in any way to give the effect of polished stone, the surface may be suitably prepared for an inscription.

6. Sculpture

Figure sculpture and other statuary are not discouraged but must be authorised by the Council.

7. Designs

Headstones need not be restricted to a rectangular shape; curved tops are preferable to straight-edged ones.

Memorials in the shape of a heart or book are not normally permitted, nor are photographs, portraits, kerbs, railings, chippings or glass shades. Motifs and pictures are not normally allowed on headstones.

8. Epitaphs

Inscriptions must be simple and reverent.

Inscriptions should be incised or in relief and may be painted. Plastic or other inserted lettering is not permitted.

Additions may be made to an inscription at a later date following a subsequent interment in the same grave or for some other suitable reason. However, any such alteration must be separately approved. The lettering, layout and wording must be consistent with the original inscription.

9. Trademarks

No advertisement or trademark shall be inscribed on a headstone. The mason's name may be inscribed at the side or on the reverse in unlead letters no larger than 13mm (½in) in height.

10. Commemoration after cremation

Ashes after cremation may be interred in a plot size 600mm x 600mm site designated by the Parish Council. A memorial stone can be up to 600mm x 600mm with a plot number but must be placed level with the ground; no headstone will be allowed. Ashes must not be scattered in the burial ground. The Parish Council has set aside area in the burial ground for this purpose. If the ashes are interred in a container, the container must be of perishable material.