



Stockbridge Parish Council

Cemetery Policy and Regulations

February 2025

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Throughout these Regulations: -

"The Council" means Stockbridge Parish Council.

"The Parish Clerk" means the person for the time being holding the office by that designation under the Parish Council, hereinafter known as the Clerk with respect to the Cemetery, and any person who shall be acting for him at the Cemetery in his absence.

"Cemetery" means any Cemetery provided and maintained by Stockbridge Parish Council.

"Grave" means a burial place formed in the ground by excavation and without any internal walls of brickwork or stonework or any other artificial lining. All graves shall be allocated a number according to the Cemetery plan.

"Cremation Plot" means a place formed in the ground by excavation for the purpose of interring ashes or their containers. All plots shall be allocated a number according to the Cemetery plan.

"Purchased Grave or Cremation Plot" means any grave or cremation plot, where the Exclusive Right of Burial (subject to these Regulations) has been granted by the Council.

"Un-purchased Grave or Cremation Plot" means any grave or cremation plot, where the Council has not granted the Exclusive Right of Burial.

"Memorials" means all memorials that are authorised to be permitted within the Cemetery.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CEMETERIES

Stockbridge Parish Council is responsible for two Cemeteries within Stockbridge:

Stockbridge Burial Ground
Romsey Road
Stockbridge

And

Winton Hill
Cemetery
Winton Hill
Stockbridge

All queries or comments regarding the cemeteries should be sent to:
Stockbridge Parish Council,
Church View,
Palace Close
Kings Somborne
Stockbridge
Hants, SO20 6PS

Email: Clerk@Stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk

These regulations are in addition to the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977. All burials and interments must comply with the above legislation and / or any successive legislation.

Stockbridge Parish Council reserve the right to make alterations or additions to these Rules and Regulations at any time and to deal with any circumstances or contingencies not provided for in the regulations where necessary.

The Council respects the rights and needs of the individual and these Regulations have been prepared to achieve a balance that will enable us to manage the Cemeteries effectively and maintain the highest possible standards.

Stockbridge Parish Council aims to maintain an environment where the bereaved can pay their respects and remember their loved ones.

Opening hours of cemeteries

Cemeteries can be accessed by visitors 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

Management of the cemeteries

Conduct of Visitors

Visitors are welcome to visit our Cemeteries.

All visitors are requested to treat the Cemetery with respect and should conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner and are reminded of Article 18(1) of The Local Authorities' Cemeteries order 1977 whereby no person shall:

- Create any disturbance in a Cemetery
- Commit any nuisance in a Cemetery
- Interfere with any burial taking place in a Cemetery.
- Interfere with any grave or vault, any tombstone or other memorial, or any flowers or plants or any such matter.
- Play any game or sport in a Cemetery.
- Consume alcoholic drinks in any Cemetery.
- The Council will not tolerate any insulting, threatening, abusive or anti-social behaviour.
- No person shall wilfully damage or sit, stand or climb upon or over any gate, wall, fence or building, or any gravestone / tablet or other property.
- Skateboards, roller blades or similar pursuits are not permitted.
- No person shall sell or offer or expose for sale any article, commodity or thing of any kind whatsoever or solicit orders for the same or take commercial photographs or film within the Cemetery without the express permission of the Council in writing.
- The Parish Council may, at any time, remove or exclude any person from the Cemetery who is considered in breach of the regulations being in force at that time.
- No private work shall be undertaken by Visitors to the Cemetery other than general grave or plot tidying.
- Visitors to the Cemetery shall not engage any employee of the Parish Council to execute any private work in the Cemetery nor may they unreasonably interrupt the Council's employees at their duties nor extend to them any gratuity.
- All persons entering either Cemetery must exercise proper care and attention for their own safety and the safety of others. Visitors should note that the ground can be uneven in places and care should be taken.

Admissions to the Cemetery

Vehicles must be driven with due consideration for other Cemetery users and must not exceed 5 mph.

Other access vehicles may, with permission, be driven within the cemeteries should the need arise.

All vehicles must be neatly parked to allow access for other vehicles.

The Council shall not accept liability for loss or damage to any vehicle, property or injury to persons. Any property brought into any Cemetery is done so at your own risk.

Dogs

Dogs must be kept on leads. Dog waste needs to be picked up and taken away.

Complaints and Requests

Complaints and requests by members of the public must be made to the parish clerk and not to any personnel working at the cemetery.

Funeral arrangements

Interments are permitted Monday to Friday between the hours of 0900 and 1530 and on Saturday between the hours of 0900 and 1200, excluding Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Good Friday, Bank and Public Holidays or any other day when the Council Offices are closed.

The time of any proposed interment shall be arranged by the Funeral Director, the Parish Clerk or the Councillor with the responsibility of the cemetery.

Interments outside these times will be exceptional, at the discretion of the Council, and special charges may apply in order to recover any additional administration or labour costs. This regulation shall not apply upon production of a medical certificate stating that an early interment is necessary.

A minimum of two hours is required between funerals.

The time appointed for an interment will be that at which the funeral cortege is set to arrive at the Cemetery.

Notice required for interment bookings

Notice of interment shall be given to the Parish Clerk at least 4 clear working days in advance of the day of interment, excluding weekends, Good Friday, Christmas Day and public holidays. This regulation shall not apply upon production of a medical certificate stating that an early interment is necessary.

The Council will accept no responsibility whatsoever where verbal arrangements have not been confirmed in writing.

The submitted Notice of Interment must include full details of the deceased, the proposed interment, the grave number to be used, exact exterior dimensions of the coffin, casket or container and depth of the grave to be prepared.

The following Certificates must be delivered to the Council 48 hours prior to the interment:

- Certificate for Burial from the Registrar of Deaths
- Coroner's Certificate
- Cremation Certificate (where possible)

- In the case of a burial of a still-born child, the Certificate of the Registrar of Deaths or of a medical practitioner who was present at the birth.

Fees and charges

The fees and charges payable to the Parish Council in respect of interments in the Cemetery, or grave spaces or memorials or otherwise in connection with the Cemetery, shall be those detailed in the Table of Fees and Charges, published on the Council's website and which shall be subject to review on 1 May each year, or at any other time at the discretion of the Parish Council. The Table of Fees applies to all residents of the Parish or those who have been resident within the previous 10 years. If a personal representative from outside the Parish applies to bury a resident of the Parish, the fee payable shall be the same as an application from a local representative. Residents of the Parish of St Peters, Stockbridge, are required to pay 50% extra. Double fees and charges are payable where persons are using a burial plot where an EROB has been obtained and they were not recently resident. All fees and charges shall be paid in advance to the Clerk.

Ministers and clergy

It is the responsibility of the funeral director or person arranging the burial to organise a Minister or a non faith officiant if required.

Maintenance of graves and cremated remains plots

All graves and plots shall be dug and reinstated under arrangements made by the undertakers. Surplus spoil is to be removed from the Cemetery by the grave digger and no spoil is to be deposited on an adjacent grave or plot at any time. Graves are to be re-turfed and left tidy at the conclusion of the interment.

The grave space allocated for each interment shall not exceed 2.74m long by 1.21m wide (9 ft x 4 ft).

Approximately 2 to 3 weeks after the interment all flowers and wreaths shall be removed from the grave space. The soil within the grave space shall naturally settle over time. The person arranging the burial shall inspect for settlement and top up if necessary prior to turfing.

After the grave space has been levelled and turfed it will be mown by the Council.

Wreaths and floral arrangements may not be placed on other grave spaces.

Christmas wreaths and other seasonal tributes are to be removed by the last day of January the following year. Glassware is an unacceptable hazard and shall be removed

The Council will maintain all graves and cremated remains spaces as part of its

general management of the Cemeteries.

Types of grave space and cremated remains plots

Purchased grave space or cremated remains plot

The Council may grant to any person the Exclusive Right of Burial. This may only take place upon the payment of the relevant fee and at the time of the first burial or interment of ashes.

The holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial has the right to decide who shall be interred in the grave space allocated at that time. The tenure is for a period of 50 years and after such time the Council reserves the right to re-use the space. One further interment in the same grave space may be made provided the depth of the first interment was sufficiently deep.

The grantee is not purchasing the grave space freehold, but only the right to determine whose remains may be interred in the grave space.

Pre-selection of specific graves or plots is not permitted. Graves and plots will be allocated in sequence unless exceptional circumstances apply when the decision of the Clerk on behalf of the Council shall be final.

The Exclusive Right of Burial in any grave or cremation plot shall be entered in the Register of Grants of Right kept by the Parish Clerk or Cllr with cemetery responsibilities. After the interment of the owner of the grave or plot, the personal representative shall produce to the Parish Clerk the Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration so that proof of change in ownership may be duly registered. Until satisfactory proof of ownership is given, the grave or plot cannot be opened or interfered with and no memorial or tablet may be installed or work carried out on an existing memorial, including additional subscriptions. The Exclusive Right shall last for a period of 50 years, at the expiry of which time it shall either be renewed at the appropriate fee or ownership shall revert to the Parish Council.

If the proof of Exclusive Right of Burial has been lost by both parties the personal representative will be asked to sign a letter acknowledging that the ownership documentation has been lost and that should any dispute be raised at a future date with someone who claims, and can prove, ownership then the personal representative will agree to pay the full cost of returning the grave to the condition of the grave was before the subsequent burial or interment of ashes.

These rights are subject to the Council's regulations

Purchased grave space or cremated remains plot

The Council retains the right to decide who may be interred in the grave space or cremated remains plot.

Memorials are not permitted in un-purchased graves.

Grave space depth

A full grave space may be purchased at Single or Double Depth.

Single Depth One full interment

In addition to one full burial, up to five interments of cremated remains may also take place subject to approval by the Council and with the permission of the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

Double Depth Two full interments

In addition to two full burials, up to five interments of cremated remains may also take place subject to approval by the Council and with the permission of the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

Cremated remains plot depth

A cremated remains plot may be purchased at Single or Double Depth

Single depth = one interment of cremated remains only

Double depth = two interments of cremated remains only

Single depth full grave space purchased solely for the interment of cremated remains = five interments of cremated remains only.

Exclusive right of burial

The Exclusive Right of Burial entitles the registered holder:

- To be interred in a grave space subject to space being available in the grave;
- To determine who is buried in the grave;
- To apply for the Right to erect a memorial on the grave, in accordance with the Regulations and subject to the approval of the Council

It does not extend to possession of the land, which remains in the ownership of the Council.

The grant for the Exclusive Right of Burial may be purchased at the time of interment for a period of 50 years. It is subject to the availability of grave space. The Exclusive Right of Burial may only be purchased in advance of an interment taking place and the location will be decided by the Council.

The Council will provide the purchaser with documentation of the plot, in which the exclusive right of burial has been purchased, and will record in its Cemetery Registers the name and

address of the person who is purchaser. It is the responsibility of the owner or successor of the Exclusive Right of Burial to advise the Council of any change of address

The holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial shall fully comply with the Cemetery Regulations ensuring that the grave is maintained in a safe condition.

Transfer of ownership of exclusive right of burial

All requests for the transfer of "Exclusive Right" must be made in writing. This right may be transferred at the request of the registered owner or on the death of the registered owner to the next of kin or an appointed person.

It will be necessary to make a statutory declaration when the exclusive right has not been re-assigned and a burial or interment of ashes is required.

No grave in which the Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased shall be opened or no memorial will be erected or amended without the written authorisation of the current owner and with the approval of the Council.

The Council will record in its Registers any Transfer of Ownership of Exclusive Right of Burial. Please see page 8 if this documentation has been lost.

Burial details

All graves and plots shall be dug and reinstated under arrangements made by the undertakers. Topsoil only should be used to infill the grave and surplus spoil is to be removed from the Cemetery by the grave digger within two working days and no spoil is to be deposited on an adjacent grave or plot at any time. Graves are to be re-turfed at the conclusion of the interment.

Interment in Graves

In all graves there shall be at least 3 feet of earth between the surface of the ground and the top of the coffin and no coffin shall be buried in a grave in which an interment has already taken place unless the coffin containing the body is effectively separated from any coffin already placed and remaining in the grave by a layer of earth not less than 6 inches in thickness and no human remains interred therein shall be disturbed nor shall any soil which is offensive be removed. The minimum depth for plots shall be 5 feet for single depth and 6ft 6ins for double depth. Coffins shall be made of suitable biodegradable materials and no metal or other non-biodegradable coffins, caskets or containers will be allowed.

Interment of ashes

In all cremation plots there shall be at least one foot of earth between the surface of the ground and the ashes or top of the container and each plot shall be of a depth suitable for the interment of two sets of ashes.

Death from infectious diseases

In all cases of death from infectious diseases the body shall be taken directly from

the hearse to the grave.

Memorial masons

All memorials installed on a grave space within the Council's cemeteries must comply with BS 8415. Any memorials that do not conform to this standard at installation will be removed.

All memorial work carried out in any Stockbridge Parish Council Cemetery must conform with The British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM).

Qualified Memorial Masons erecting a memorial within any of the Council's cemeteries must have public liability insurance (minimum amount ten million pounds).

All memorials must conform to the standard sizes as set out in the Council's Fees and Charges for Cemeteries.

Cremation tablets must remain laid flat flush with the surface of the adjacent soil.

No memorial may be established, altered or removed from any cemetery without the prior written permission of the Council.

Memorials shall be installed and repaired during normal working hours, Monday to Friday 0900 to 1700 by a registered Memorial Mason.

A memorial tablet must be removed by the appointed Memorial Mason before any further interments.

Memorial application guidance

A memorial of any type may only be placed on a grave that is subject to an Exclusive Right of Burial and is the sole responsibility of the holder of the Exclusive Right.

An application for permission to carry out any type of work shall be made on the Council's Application form and shall contain full and accurate details of the proposed work by a registered Memorial Mason, including the appropriate fee, at least one calendar month prior to the intended date of the completion of the work.

Memorial documents to be submitted

New Memorial or Replacement Memorial: Two copies of a completed Stockbridge Parish Council Memorial Application Form signed by the registered owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

Two copies of a drawing of the proposed Memorial which shall include the dimensions, materials colour and the exact wording of any inscription.

Additional Inscription: Two copies of a completed Stockbridge Parish Council Memorial Application Form signed by the registered owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

The exact wording of the proposed inscription must be agreed by the Clerk or the Councillor responsible for the cemetery.

The Council reserves the right to refuse permission for a memorial to be placed in any Cemetery when the inscription is deemed inappropriate by the Council.

The Cemetery Section and Plot Number must be engraved on the reverse of all memorials.

Trade names of monumental masons or funeral directors will only be permitted on the rear of the memorial in letters no greater than 1.5 cm in height.

No other picture, poem or inscription will be allowed on the back of any memorial. Only one memorial is allowed per grave space or cremated remains.

Memorials can only be erected once the approval of the Council has been received in writing.

Memorial Masons shall inform the Council of the date when a memorial is due to be erected by completing and returning the appropriate section on the Memorial Approval Notification issued by the Council.

The Council will not be responsible for any damage to memorials or headstones by storm, wind, lightning, subsidence, acts of third parties or any other cause other than as a direct result of negligence of their employees.

Management of memorials

The surface of every grave will be maintained at ground level after settlement in order to achieve the Council's aim to keep the Cemetery in an attractive, tidy and safe condition.

New kerb sets are not permitted.

Cremation Area — A flat tablet may be permitted subject to the approval of the Council

Memorial regulations

No memorial may be erected without the prior consent of the Council.

All memorials are to be of natural or reconstituted stone and no Bath, Caen, or other soft stone or wood, shall be allowed in the construction of any memorial. All monumental work shall be finished prior to the erection of any memorial, excepting the execution of a second inscription for which permission must be obtained. Masons and others employed on any kind of work in connection with memorials in the Cemetery must remove all spare soil and leave the ground clean after completing their work. They will be held responsible for any damage caused by them either on the ground or to the memorials erected thereon.

All memorials and any parts or part thereof which have to rest in or upon the ground, or upon any brick, stone or other foundations, must be fairly squared and bedded off. The Parish Council reserves the right to reject applications for memorials with stones of uneven thickness or with corners knocked.

The top surface of every foundation stone must be at least 5cms (2ins) below the level of the highest point of the surrounding turf.

All work on memorials shall be completed during the hours of 9.00 am and 5.00pm on weekdays only.

The erection of memorials will not be allowed during unsuitable weather or whilst the ground is in an unfit state.

Copper, or other approved non-rusting material, cramps or dowels of approved thickness, must be used in putting together memorials, the holes of the dowels to be not less than one inch deep; dowels to be of sufficient length to fit the holes properly.

All memorials and any parts or part thereof which have to rest in or upon the ground, or upon any brick, stone or other foundations, must be fairly squared and bedded off. The Parish Council reserves the right to reject applications for memorials with stones of uneven thickness or with corners knocked.

The top surface of every foundation stone must be at least 5cms (2ins) below the level of the highest point of the surrounding turf.

All work on memorials shall be completed during the hours of 9.00 am and 5.00pm on weekdays only.

All headstones of 15cms (6ins) or more in thickness are to be attached to the base by a tongue, not less than 50cms(20ins) long.

All monuments and headstones with bases are required to be supported with brick, stone or other foundations as the Parish Council may deem necessary, and set:

- a. with good mortar, compound of lime and clean sharp sand or other suitable materials or
- b. with good cement or
- c. with good cement mixed with clean sharp sand

For graves, a foundation of good approved stone, slate or concrete one metre by at least one third of the height of the memorial and a minimum 8cms thick is to be used for the bottom base for any memorial. No memorial is to exceed 2.5 feet in height.

Second bases must be securely fastened to the bottom by dowels or other approved methods.

Any memorial temporarily removed when a grave is opened for an interment shall be placed and fixed within twelve months from the date of re-opening of the grave.

The purchaser of any grave or cremation plot shall, when erecting a memorial, place such memorial in the position determined by the Parish Council.

Memorial safety

Memorials are the private property of the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial and should be maintained in good and safe condition. The Council as Burial Authority has the authority to remove or alter them in any way they deem necessary or desirable.

All memorials will be subject to ongoing stability testing in accordance with the Council's policy and the Council reserves the right to remove any memorial which has become or is likely to become dangerous or which is in a derelict or unsightly condition

Memorial benches

The installation of memorial benches is accepted in council cemeteries subject to written approval. The location and seat design (which must be chosen from an approved suppliers list), must be approved by the Council.

The ordering of a memorial bench will be completed by the Council upon receipt of full payment for the bench.

The Council will not be held responsible for the maintenance of, or damage to any memorial bench caused by a third party or for the replacement of any bench which has failed.

A commemorative plaque is acceptable on the back rest of a memorial bench subject to size and content which must be approved in writing by the Council prior to ordering.

State of Repair

Every grave, plot and memorial shall be kept in good repair by the owner. On default by the said owner after 14 days notice in writing has been sent by registered post to the registered owner at his registered address, the Council reserves the right to take over the maintenance of the grave or plot and have it and any memorial on it put in good and safe order at the expense of the grave owner. If payment for work is not forthcoming, the debt will be attached to the grave or plot and no further burials or works will be allowed until the debt is cleared. Memorial maintenance work may only be undertaken by qualified masons and to the satisfaction of the Parish Council.

General

The Council may from time to time hold update meetings with Funeral directors and / or Stone Masons to discuss any issues or changes or new developments.

These Regulations may be subject to change resulting from government legislation or alterations in Council Policy or changes to working practice.

