

## **BOSHAM BURIAL GROUND REGULATIONS**

### **Made pursuant to a Faculty dated 2 December 2015**

There are certain Regulations set out by the Chancellor of the Diocese of Chichester which state what is and what is not allowed in the consecrated ground of a churchyard or burial ground. Since 1902 when Bosham churchyard was closed all burials have taken place in Bosham Burial Ground in Fairfield Road which is situated half a mile to the east of the village. The Vicar of Bosham is the custodian not only of the church and churchyard but also of this burial ground, while the responsibility for its care and maintenance rests with the Parochial Church Council.

Parishioners, those named on the electoral roll, and those dying within the parish all have a legal right of burial in the parochial burial ground. This right is not restricted to the baptised or to members of the worshipping community. It is essential that the bereaved understand the meaning and consequences of burial in consecrated ground. Two particular points should be considered.

Firstly, the nature of the rite of burial is to say 'farewell' to the deceased and to commend them to the mercy and love of God in Christ to await the transformation of resurrection. There is accordingly a theological finality to the burial of all interments, including those of cremated remains, in ground consecrated according to the rites of the Church of England. The prospect of exhumation at some future date and the relocation of remains must be ruled out.

Secondly, the bereaved must understand that by seeking a burial in consecrated ground, they are submitting to the jurisdiction of the consistory court, which regulates the type of headstone or other marker, which may be erected. This jurisdiction exists for reasons that are in part theological and in part aesthetic, since what may be unobjectionable in a municipal cemetery might be considered inappropriate, or possibly offensive, in consecrated ground. The purpose of these notes is to bring these Regulations to the attention of the bereaved at the earliest opportunity, so that their decision to seek an interment in consecrated ground is fully informed.

These Regulations are designed to encourage best practice and to eliminate bad practice. It is unlawful for a monument to be introduced into a burial ground without permission. Generally, such permission derives from the chancellor in the form of a faculty. However, for administrative convenience and to minimise expense, the chancellor delegates to the vicar the authority to permit the introduction of a monument provided it is of a type that complies with the detailed provisions contained in these Regulations. The written application form that accompanies these Regulations should be used in all cases.

Applications for memorials should generally not be made until six months have passed since the interment. Not only does this allow the ground to settle, but the passage of time permits a more reflective decision to be made than is often the case in the naturally emotional state of the early stages of grief. All close family members need to be consulted and a consensus achieved. The vicar can offer help at this time in making suggestions to the bereaved of the types of memorial, which might be introduced by reference to photographs or by pointing out existing examples in the burial ground. If this conversation precedes a visit to the stonemason it should avoid the difficulty and disappointment engendered by the selection of an inappropriate design. Although the grave itself is the property of the vicar, any memorial will belong to the heir-at-law of the person commemorated and that person carries the duty to maintain it and the legal liability for its safety.

A headstone is a public statement about the person who is being commemorated. Making the right choice of stone, design and inscription is important not only to the relatives or friends who are going to provide the memorial, but also to the wider community because of the effect which the headstone may have upon the appearance of the burial ground. Attractive, well conceived designs by skilled and imaginative craftsmen should be encouraged. In the search for a wider range of designs than those usually seen, reference should be made to the *Churchyards Handbook*, the booklet *Memorials by Artists* and here the vicar will be able to give assistance.

Also to be encouraged are inscriptions which give a flavour of the life of the person commemorated rather than simply recording a name and dates. Epitaphs should honour the dead, comfort the living and inform posterity. They will be read long after the bereaved have themselves passed away. Passages of scripture, which have a timeless quality, are to be preferred.

## HEADSTONES

### (i) Size

No more than 4ft nor less than 2ft 6in high (1200mm, 750mm) from surface of the ground.

No more than 3ft nor less than 1ft 8in wide (900mm, 500mm).

No more than 6in nor less than 3in thick (150mm, 75mm), unless slate is to be used in which case a thickness of 2in (50mm) is permitted.

In the case of infant burials, headstones must be no less than 2ft x 1ft 3in x 2in (600mm x 375mm x 50mm).

A base forming an integral part of the design of a headstone may be included, provided it does not project more than 2in (50mm) beyond the headstone in any direction and provided that it is fixed on a foundation slab of an approved material which itself is fixed flush with the ground and extending 3in to 5in (75mm to 125mm) all round so that a mower may freely pass over it. If desired, the base may include the provision of an integral socket(s), in which case it may extend by up to 8in (205 mm) forward of the headstone.

### (ii) Materials.

The following stone is permitted:

|            |                      |                      |
|------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Limestone: | Portland             | Hornton              |
|            | Purbeck or Horsham   | Nabresina            |
|            | Derbyshire           | Caen/Normandy        |
|            | Hopton Wood          |                      |
| Sandstone: | York                 |                      |
| Slate:     | Blue/Black (Cornish) | Green (Westmoreland) |
|            | Grey/Blue (Welsh)    |                      |
| Granite:   | Light to medium grey |                      |

### (iii) Appearance

Polished stone or mirror finish is not permitted. Coloured lettering is not permitted except as follows:

Nabresina limestone may have the lettering picked out in contrasting matt;

Slate may have the lettering picked out in off-white matt;

Granite may have the lettering picked out in off white matt or black matt;

Or to match the colour of an existing inscription.

(iv) Inscriptions

The vicar requires an accurate design of the proposed inscription before approving an application. Photographs or representations of objects or motifs such as a child's toy are not permitted nor the use of 'pet names'. Bronze or ceramic inserts are not to be used. Badges, crests or emblems may be used provided they are seemly and appropriate for the deceased. Any representation will need to be designed so that it may be accurately cut by a skilled craftsman. Mason's names, signs or marks may be inscribed on any monument provided their position and appearance are unobtrusive having regard to the monument as a whole.

(vi) Fixture

Commissioning a qualified stone mason will ensure that the monument conforms to current industry standards for the fixing of monuments safely and securely.

#### VASES OR CONTAINERS

Integral sockets in the base of a headstone for flower vases are permitted. Freestanding stone vases may be permitted as long as the stone is the same as the rest of the memorial (it matches that of the headstone or horizontal ledger). Any other containers, preferably Aluminium, should be sunken. Glass containers of any sort are not permitted.

#### HORIZONTAL LEDGERS

Either flush with the turf or raised not more than 9in (225mm) above a base, extending not less than 3in (75mm) all round and itself flush with the turf; inclusive measurements not more than 7ft (2100 mm) by 3ft (900mm).

#### CROSSES

Crosses are not permitted for crosses have been too freely used in burial grounds in the past. Such monuments require a high standard of design. However, the vicar may authorise the temporary introduction of a simple wooden cross to mark a recent burial. A brass plaque bearing the name and dates of the deceased may be affixed to the cross. Such cross must be removed upon the erection of a stone memorial or after a period of 18 months, whichever be the sooner.

#### ADDITIONAL PROHIBITIONS

For the avoidance of doubt and disappointment, the following are not permitted:

- i. kerbs, railings, fencing or chippings;
- ii. memorials in the shape of vases, hearts, open books;
- iii. memorials incorporating photographs or portraits;
- iv. mementoes, windmills, toys or little animals;
- v. the use of 'pet names'
- vi. artificial flowers.
- vii. Use of glass containers for flowers.

#### BURIAL OF ASHES

It is permissible to bury ashes in the Bosham Burial Ground in existing graves or a new grave used for that purpose. Ashes should be poured into the ground. In exceptional cases, and with the consent of the vicar they may be interred into a full grave, in a biodegradable casket.

## NOTES

The vicar has no authority to permit the erection of a memorial which does not comply with these Regulations. Any memorial which does not comply with these Regulations (whether or not the vicar purported to give his authority) may be removed by order of the consistory court. However, in the event of the memorial not complying, a faculty may be sought through the Chancellor for its erection.

Each case will be considered on its individual merits and the views and policies of the vicar and Parochial Church Council will be taken into account. The opinion of the Diocesan Advisory Committee will also be sought.

## TENDING A GRAVE

The following notes are given as a guide to those who wish to tend a grave in the Bosham Burial Ground.

Spring bulbs and small annuals may be placed in the soil of the grave. It is regretted that trees are not permitted.

Wreaths and cut flowers placed on graves and plants and flowers in containers will be removed, when withered, by those authorised to do so.

No artificial flowers or foliage may be placed on or about graves and, if so placed, will be removed together with any containers. Exceptions are made, however, for Remembrance Day poppies & Christmas wreaths, which will only be removed after a suitable lapse of time.

Kerbs, railings, fencing or chippings are no longer permitted as these create difficulty or danger when mowing. Existing examples of such graves must be adequately maintained.

For the avoidance of doubt and disappointment we regret that the following items are not permitted: mementoes, photographs, portraits, windmills, toys or animals and, if so placed, will be removed.

**APPLICATION FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF A MEMORIAL INTO  
BOSHAM BURIAL GROUND**

**This form is to be completed in duplicate**

To the Reverend .....  
Vicar of the Parish of Holy Trinity, Bosham.

1. I/We apply to you for permission to introduce into the churchyard known as Bosham Burial Ground (churchyard extension) the monument described overleaf.
2. I/We have read the Bosham Burial Ground Churchyard Regulations issued by the Diocesan Chancellor and claim that you have power under those Regulations to permit the introduction of the proposed monument into the churchyard.
3. I/We undertake that if you grant permission the proposed monument, when erected, will conform to the description overleaf and also to indemnify you or your successors against all costs and expenses to which you or they may be put if the monument is not so erected.
4. I/We undertake for myself/ourselves and our successors to be responsible for the maintenance and stability of the monument.

Name(s) of applicant(s).....  
.....

Address(es) of applicant(s) .....  
.....

Date..... Signed.....Applicant(s)

I/We repeat paragraph 2 above and give you and your successors the same undertaking as is given by the applicant(s) in paragraph 3 above.

Date..... Signed ..... Monumental Mason

of (address) .....

For use by the Vicar

I consent / I do not consent / I consent subject to the conditions endorsed overleaf (Delete as applicable) to the introduction of the monument described overleaf into the burial ground named above.

Date..... Signature.....Vicar

Plot ..... Row..... Grave .....

Note: The Vicar should keep one copy of the form and give the other back to the Applicant.

Full sketch of memorial showing ground level and height above ground level, width, depth and all other material dimensions. The sketch should also show the method of stabilising the memorial, by a ground anchor or otherwise.

Type of Stone or other Material to be used.....

Surface finish .....

Description of any carving or decoration.....

Wording of inscription

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Style, size and colour of lettering.....