

Ash Parish Council — Cemetery Rules and Regulations

Ash Parish Council owns and manages Ash Cemetery which is situated off Main Street adjacent to the Churchyard. These Rules and Regulations will apply to both the New Cemetery extension and the original (old) Cemetery. The Council reserves the right to make alterations, additions, or amendments from time to time to these Rules and Regulations specified herein. Ash Parish Council assumes the role of the "Burial Authority".

Section 1: General Opening Times:

The Cemetery is open daily to visitors; from 7am and the later of sunset or 7pm. No visits are permitted outside of these times.

Please note there is no lighting at the cemetery, therefore additional care should be taken when natural light is poor. Access to the Cemetery is at your own risk.

Access to the Cemetery is by pedestrian access only, through the gate at the rear of the Church Graveyard.

Vehicle access is limited to vehicles used for disabled individuals (to include but not be limited to individuals using mobility scooters or wheelchairs) or vehicles being used maintenance purposes on the Property and at the Cemetery, hearses and gravedigger machinery being used for interment and funeral purposes at the Cemetery.

Only two vehicles may be parked at a time; outside of the Cemetery. They must not obstruct any gate, and must be promptly moved should access to any other property be required.

Interments take place on weekdays between 10am and 4pm from the 1 April until the 31 September and between 10am and 3pm from the 1 October until 31 March.

Interments at other times are permitted at the discretion of the Burial Authority.

Interments are not held on Good Friday, Christmas Day and other National Holidays.

Section 2: Conduct:

The Parish Council welcomes all visitors to the Cemetery, for the purposes of visiting graves or to attend a funeral only.

Please respect the peace and dignity of the facility. Children should be kept under supervision and dogs are allowed on a short lead; owners must clear up any dog fouling and remove to the nearest dog bin.

Visitors must refrain from smoking, eating, and drinking on the site.

No wheeled vehicle should be taken into the Cemetery unless approved by the Burial Authority. This regulation does not prohibit the use of mobility aids

Please ensure that the pedestrian access gate to the Cemetery is closed when leaving the site.

Section 3: Notice of interments:

Written applications for an interment must be made with four working days' notice to the Clerk of Ash Parish Council, who can be contacted on clerk@ash-somerset-pc.gov.uk

An exception will be made on production of a medical certificate stating that early interment is necessary; or for cultural or religious reasons.

Cremated remains may be interred via the same process; it is prohibited for cremated remains to be scattered within the Cemetery grounds.

Plans showing the graves are kept by the Clerk and maybe inspected free of charge by appointment, by all parties making applications for grave spaces.

Please note that in the new Cemetery burial sites are allocated on a sequential basis; there is no option for applicants to select a specific grave site from the Cemetery plans.

The appropriate certificate issued by the Registrar of Deaths, or a Coroner's order for Burial must be provided to the Clerk on behalf of the Burial Authority before the interment can take place. A certificate issued by the Cremation Authority will be required for interment of ashes.

Section 4: Exclusive Right of Burial

This must be purchased at the time of interment for 99 years. As previously noted, new graves are allocated in strict rotation.

The Exclusive Right of Burial will only be sold at the time of interment and are not purchasable in advance, except when an Exclusive Right of Burial is purchased for immediate use, no more than two further adjacent spaces may be purchased, subject to full fees being paid. Any exceptions to this rule will require the consent of the Burial Authority.

The owner becomes the deed holder and is entitled to decide who is buried in the grave —the depth of which is subject to the regulations of the Burial Authority (See section 6 below).

At the expiration of the 99 year period of the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial, the purchaser, or her/his heir or successors, will have the option of renewing the Right, subject to such restrictions and regulations as may be in force at that time.

Application for renewal of the Right should be made within twelve months of the expiry of the previous grant. Where the 99 year period has elapsed, and no notification of the intention to renew has been received from the person who held the Right of Burial, the ownership reverts to the Parish Council, who may grant a renewed Right of Burial to another person, but before doing so will, where possible, notify the previous owner of the Right, or personal representative, and give the option of renewal.

Section 5: Fees and payments

The current list of fees and payments is found in a separate document. All fees must be paid to the Burial Authority. Please note that the charges relate to the person being interred and whether that person is a parishioner of Ash Parish, they do not relate to the person who is paying the fee.

The exceptions to the above are:

If the person being interred dies whilst serving in the Armed Forces out of area but was resident immediately prior to enlisting.

A former parishioner whose death occurred whilst outside the area but had been a resident in the parish for 5 years or longer, or whom had been resident in that area within 12 months of death.

Any other person, who at the discretion of the Burial Authority has made a significant contribution to the Parish.

Cremated remains may be interred in a purchased grave.

No animals, or the ashes of animals may be interred in the Cemetery.

Fees for all Cemetery Services will be reviewed by the Council annually and may be subject to inflationary changes.

Section 6: Regulations for Graves

No body shall be buried in a grave so that any part of the coffin is at a depth of less than three feet below the level of the ground adjoining the grave nor shall the cremated remains of a body be interred in a grave so that any part of the casket is at a depth of less than one foot below the level of the ground adjoining the grave.

No body shall be buried in a grave unless the coffin is effectually separated from any other coffin already in the grave by means of a layer of earth not less than six inches in thickness.

Only coffins made of wood or wood products (including willow) will be allowed, except with the express permission of the Burial Authority.

Whenever an interment has taken place the surface of the grave must be covered with natural turf to the reasonable satisfaction of the Burial Authority as soon as possible after the natural subsidence of the earth has taken place. No mounds will be allowed on any graves. Once a grave has been levelled the Burial Authority requires access at all times for maintenance purposes.

The applicant or their approved agent shall be responsible for the excavation or reopening of any grave and for removing surplus soil from the Cemetery.

Where any grave in which an interment has previously taken place is re-opened for the purpose of making another interment, no person shall disturb any human remains interred therein.

Section 7: Regulations for Memorials

Memorials are only allowed to be erected upon the grave for which Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased.

Applications for memorials including dimensions, cut inscriptions and alterations to existing memorials, must be submitted to and approved by the Burial Authority before they are installed.

In the interests of tidiness and good maintenance, all headstones shall be aligned.

Memorials remain the property and responsibility of the owners who purchased them. All private graves are to be kept in good repair by the owners.

Memorials will be inspected periodically by the Burial Authority. Notice will be sent to the owners or representatives in the case of repairs being required, and if not actioned within 3 months, the Burial Authority has the right to have the memorial removed at the expense of the responsible person.

If, in the opinion of the Burial Authority, a monument presents an immediate risk of falling, then it will be laid flat immediately pending repairs.

If a memorial is erected without the necessary consent or does not comply with Cemetery or Health and Safety Rules and Regulations, the Burial Authority has the power to remove the memorial at the expense of the owners.

The Burial Authority assumes no responsibility for any damage or breakage to the erected memorials.

Section 8: Erection of memorials

No hewing or dressing of stone will be permitted within the Cemetery and all materials must be conveyed in manner that will not cause a nuisance or damage the grounds of paths. All refuse, soil and materials must be removed in a like manner, to the satisfaction of the Burial Authority

The following memorials will be permitted; all memorials must be constructed of stone:

A simple headstone not exceeding 4' in height above ground level and 3' 4" in width and having no base, step, built-in vase or other projection raised above the level of the surrounding ground

A simple cross not exceeding 4' in height above ground level and standing on a base which is either flush with the surrounding ground, or, if above the ground level, not larger than 4' by 2' 6" and not consisting of more than two steps

A flat stone laid flush with the surrounding ground so that a mower may readily pass over it (maximum size 6' 6" in length and 3' in width)

On a cremation plot, a flat tablet or desk type tablet no more than 18" x 12". The tablet may be laid on a sub base provided this is installed flush with the surrounding ground.

The grave number must be permanently engraved on all memorials erected in the burial ground.

Every memorial shall be firmly fixed in the ground on a concrete bed, the top of which shall be at least 15cm below the surface of the ground.

No memorial shall be removed from the burial ground except with the consent of the Burial Authority.

Section 9: Flowers and ornaments

Once a grave is levelled, not more than two flower vases may be placed on a grave. They shall be placed at the head of the grave space and inserted there so that the tops of the vases are at ground level. No ceramic or glass containers are to be used and no other objects shall be placed on a grave except with the express permission of the Burial Authority.

Natural wreaths and unwrapped flowers may be placed on the graves. Dead and withered flowers must be removed. If they are not removed promptly they will be removed by the Burial Authority. Artificial wreaths and other decorative items will be at the discretion of the Burial Authority. No plastic wrappings are allowed with any flowers.

Borders, shrubs and small trees are not permitted to be planted around or on the graves. Any plantings will be removed by the Burial Authority.

Items that may break or cause injury such as glass, pottery, tins are forbidden, and will be removed by the Burial Authority.

Kerbstones are only permitted in the Kerb section of the Old Cemetery.

Section 10: Complaints

Members of the public who wish to raise any point/s regarding the running or condition of the Cemetery should contact the Clerk of the Parish Council either in person or writing. The complainant should receive an initial response within five working days.

Section 11: Green Burials

There is no facility for green burials at the Cemetery, but potential alternative sites can be suggested via Ash Parish Council.

Appendix 1. Fees

Burial plots:

Fee for residents - £700 – Payable in full on purchase/reservation.

This includes:

99 year lease on the full sized burial plot - £300

Interment (first ashes interment or burial in burial plot) - £300

Mandatory marking of plot with gravestone - £100

Second interment (burial) - £350

This includes:

Interment (second burial in burial plot) - £300

Mandatory amendment of gravestone - £50

Second or subsequent interment of ashes - £200

This includes mandatory amendment of grave marker.

Pre-purchased burial plots in existing cemetery:

First interment in pre-purchased burial plot in existing cemetery - £400

This includes:

Interment (first ashes interment or burial in burial plot) - £300

Mandatory marking of plot with gravestone - £100

Ashes plots:

Fee for residents - £400 – Payable in full on purchase/reservation.

This includes:

99 year lease on ashes plot - £150

Interment (first ashes interment in ashes plot) - £150

Mandatory marking of plot with stone - £100

Second and subsequent interment of ashes - £200

This includes mandatory amendment of grave marker.

All admin fees included.

Non-resident prices are double that of the resident prices.