


# Congresbury Parish Council

## BURIAL GROUND POLICY

Date of adoption by Parish Council	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	Next review date	May 2023
Signature of Chairman of Parish Council		Policy reference	POL- 011

### 1. Notice of interments and cremations and exhumations

- (i) Two clear days' notice in writing excluding weekends and bank holidays must be given to the Council for an interment.
- (ii) Notice of interment must be given on the printed form supplied by the Council (Annex A) on which the particulars required must be clearly and completely stated. Responsibility for any error rests with the person who signs the form.
- (iii) After notice of interment has been given, any alteration required in the arrangements will be subject to the consent of the Clerk. An additional charge may be imposed.
- (iv) Cremated remains may only be interred in a purchased grave or in a purchased cremation plot.
- (v) The Council must be notified of an exhumation.

### 2. Certificates

The appropriate certificate for burial issued by the Register of Births and Deaths or a coroner's burial order must be provided to the Council or their representative, at the time of the interment. A certificate issued by the Cremation Authority will be required for the disposal of the cremated remains.

### 3. Deeds of exclusive rights

#### a) General

Due to limitations on space for burials purchase of Deeds of Exclusive Rights of burial for earthen graves are restricted to deceased parishioners and prior residents of the Parish of Congresbury only. Fees are doubled for those who were residents of Congresbury for less than 10 years during their lifetime.

No burial plots can be reserved. It is possible in certain circumstances to reserve a cremation plot. An application should be made to the Parish Clerk siting the plot required and outlining the reason for the request. This will then be considered by at least 2 Councillors.

A maximum of two interments of ashes will be permitted in full graves.

Purchased deeds of exclusive rights of burial are valid for a term of 90 years. At the expiry of the term the registered owner will be given the option of renewal for a further term upon payment of the appropriate fee. In the event of non-renewal any memorial must be removed at the expense of the registered owner and the rights of burial in any unused capacity in the plot may be resold.

To enable the above option to be exercised it is essential that any change of address of the Deed holder be notified to the Parish Council.

#### **b) Transfer of Ownership**

Whilst the registered owner has the right of burial in a purchased plot, the installation of a memorial or subsequent burial requires ownership to be transferred at an appropriate time and manner. There will be a charge for this service. This can be done in 3 ways:

- (i) Assignment of Right of Burial – Completion of form at Annex B by the registered owner.
- (ii) Assent of Executor/Administrator – Completion of form at Annex C by the Executor or Administrator of the estate of the registered owner once probate has been granted.
- (iii) Statutory Declaration – Completion of form at Annex D in all other circumstances.

#### **4. Interments**

Coffins and caskets should be biodegradable where at all possible, and must be clearly identified with the FULL name of the deceased

#### **5. Main burial section**

- (i) The Council will provide and maintain a grassed area covering the grave space, with a separate area at the head of the grave for the installation of a memorial.
- (ii) No kerbing or other surround will be permitted in the main burial section. Written permission must be sought for a flat full cover slab of width not exceeding 3ft (0.91m) (single plot) or 6ft (1.83m) (double plot).
- (iii) Small decorative stones or additional surrounds are not allowed and must not be added around cover slabs or memorials.
- (iv) Memorials may be erected at the head of the grave once the required written permission has been obtained from the Council (see Section 9). No cremation tablets may be laid on graves.
- (v) Vases may be attached/set in to the memorial. Free standing vases must be placed at the head of the grave, except on full cover flat slabs.
- (vi) Solar lights and other adornments (e.g. soft toys, candle holders, figurines etc.) on graves or cover slabs are not permitted.

#### **6. Memorials**

##### **a) General**

- (i) A memorial may be placed on a grave/cremation plot subject to payment of fee where the exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased. The approval for the memorial is issued for the term of the Purchased deeds of exclusive rights of burial.
- (ii) Memorials should only be erected by an approved memorial mason.
- (iii) All applications for permission to erect memorials, cut inscriptions, or carry out work on existing memorials must be made in writing together with drawings showing full dimensions

and method of fixing accompanied by a specification and details of every inscription and materials to be used, all vases etc. The Council reserves the right to refuse any memorial or inscription that it considers to be inappropriate for any reason. Applications must be signed by the registered holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

- (iv) A memorial may be placed on the wall of remembrance subject to payment of a fee and approval of the application.
- (v) All memorials and vases of 'stone' must have clearly engraved the number of the grave. Monumental Masons must display their name in letters not exceeding half an inch in a position approved by the Council.
- (vi) Any person wishing to carry out work to any memorial should notify the Council of the time and date that the work is to be carried out. Identification and the required written permission should be available for inspection at all times.
- (vii) The Council has the power to remove at the expense of the owner any memorial which has been placed within the burial ground without the necessary written consent.

## **b) Dimensions**

### *Cremation tablets*

- (i) Tablets should not exceed 18" x 18" in size (460mm x 460mm)
- (ii) Recumbent tablets and flat stones must not exceed 10" (250mm) in height.
- (iii) Vases must be contained within the memorial.

### *Graves*

- (i) Headstones must not exceed 3ft 2" in height (970mm)
- (ii) Single width memorials must rest on a foundation slab not exceeding 3ft x 1ft 6" (920mm x 460mm) and not less than 3" or 75mm thick. The foundation slab can either be of natural stone or pre-cast reinforced concrete.
- (iii) Double width memorials must rest on a foundation slab not exceeding 6ft x 1ft 6" (1830mm x 460mm) and not less than 3" or 75mm thick. The foundation slab can either be of natural stone or pre-cast reinforced concrete.
- (iv) Ceramic portraits, no larger than 10cm by 8cm may be affixed to a memorial with prior consent and payment of the appropriate fee.

### *Memorial wall*

- (i) Memorials should not exceed 16" (width) x 9" (height) x 2" (thick) (400 x 230 x 50 mm).

## **c) Erection/removal of memorials**

- (i) All memorials should be erected or re-erected to a minimum National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) standard.
- (ii) The installation or removal of memorials should not cause any nuisance or damage to the burial paths or ground. All refuse and materials must be removed upon leaving the site.
- (iii) Memorials should be erected in line with the neighbouring memorials. Failure to do so may result in the Council requesting the memorial is re-laid. The Council shall have the power to move an incorrectly positioned memorial at the expense of the owner.

## **d) Condition**

- (i) The responsibility of maintaining a memorial is with the owner.
- (ii) The Council is empowered to prevent a memorial from becoming or continuing to be a hazard to public safety.
- (iii) The Council may authorise removal of memorials from private graves where the period of Exclusive Right of Burial has expired.

#### **7. Burial ground maintenance**

- (i) All grave spaces should be kept in a neat and orderly condition.
- (ii) Planting of any kind on a plot is not permitted
- (iii) Dead flowers, wreaths, weeds and other matter taken off grave spaces must be put in the refuse containers provided. All items must be removed at least by 4 weeks after an occasion such as Christmas and Mother's Day. Any items not removed within this time will be removed and disposed of by the Parish Council.
- (iv) The Council reserves the right to carry out any work deemed necessary.

#### **8. Conduct**

- (i) Visitors should conduct themselves in a quiet and orderly manner.
- (ii) Dogs (except Assistance Dogs) must not be brought into the Burial Ground.
- (iii) No arrangement may be made with, or fees paid to any employee of the Council or their contractors working for the Council for any private service or work in the Burial Ground.

#### **9. Remedial actions**

- (iv) If Congresbury Parish Council believes that these rules have been contravened, remedial action will be taken. The Parish Council will aim to do this by working with the registered owner. If this is not possible the Parish Council reserves the right to take any appropriate action after providing 4 weeks' notice in writing. Remedial actions will apply from January 2015.