

**St Mary's Church**  
**Abbotts Ann**  
**Burial Ground Regulations**

St Mary's Burial Ground provides a tranquil location for the final resting place of the Parishioners of Abbotts Ann. The Parish Council maintains the churchyard and aims to preserve a traditional location for both burials and interment after cremation. A Parishioner is someone who was resident in the civil parish of Abbotts Ann at the time of their death.

Graves and Monuments are a solace to the relatives of the people they commemorate, visitors come to look at them, and passers-by pause to read the inscriptions. They embody the social history of a community and form a tangible expression of its roots. Most importantly they express the purpose of a burial ground, as a place where the mortal remains of past generations are reverently laid and their earthly lives recorded.

**1. Grave plot and burial**

- (a)** Applications to reserve a grave plot and for burial must be made to the Parish Clerk using the form provided at the time of application or on the Parish Council section of the website.
- (b)** Parishioners may request to reserve a specific grave space, alternatively, the Parish Clerk will allocate the position of the grave.
- (c)** The right of burial is normally restricted to Parishioners and is at the discretion of the Parish Council.
- (d)** Those who have left the parish may apply for a burial plot for imminent use up to five years after moving away, if they have previously lived in the parish for at least 5 years.
- (e)** Advance purchase of plots will only be permitted for the spouse or civil partner or family of the deceased and is at the discretion of the Parish Council.
- (f)** It is the responsibility of the persons arranging the funeral to provide evidence of an advance plot purchase to the Parish Clerk.
- (g)** All applications are subject to approval by the Parish Council.

**2. Memorials in the burial ground.**

Applications for the erection of a memorial and for any inscriptions must be made using the form which may be obtained from the Parish Clerk or on the Parish Council section of the village website.

### 3. BURIAL GROUND: TABLE OF FEES

#### NOTES

- (a) All fees should be paid before the commencement of interment or other procedures.
- (b) Fees do not include digging or opening of graves or cremation plots.
- (c) Payment for interment should include **either**:
  - i. identification of previously reserved grave plot number together with approval to open the grave from the rights owner.
  - ii. Grave plot reservation fee (if a plot has not already been reserved).
- (d) Fees for non-residents are charged at double the rates for residents.
- (e) Fees are normally non-refundable. Application to consider refunds should be made in writing to the Parish Clerk who will seek the express permission of the Parish Council.

Item	Cost
Grave plot reservation (exclusively reserved for 75 years)	£350
Cremation plot reservation (exclusively reserved for 75 years)	£80
Interment of coffin (deceased over 16 years of age)	£310*
Interment of a casket of ashes	£148*
Interment of coffin or casket (deceased under 16 years of age including perinatal)	No charge
Scattering of ashes in the Garden of Remembrance	No charge
<b>Monuments and inscriptions</b>	
Installation of headstone	£120
Additional Inscription on headstone	£40
Inscription on Memorial Stone in Garden of Remembrance	£75
Other costs are set by the Parish Council and subject to confirmation. Examples are:	
Exhumation	
Commercial filming per hour	
Replacement deed document	

*\* Fees are reviewed periodically in line with the Church Of England Parochial Fees and other parish councils.*

#### **4. Funerals**

The Parish Council will not directly arrange funerals or the erection of memorials. Most people employ a funeral director or memorial mason to act on their behalf. The Parish Council will work to assist Funeral Directors, Memorial Masons and Families with their arrangements.

#### **5. Interment of ashes**

Burial plots are intended for the burial of coffins and caskets. The interment of ashes is only permitted in a grave in which a burial has already taken place and following approval of the Parish Council. The normal fee for an interment of ashes will apply.

#### **6. Memorials**

- (a)** Approval of the design and authorisation for installation must be obtained from the Parish Clerk before
- (b)** ordering a memorial
  - i. adding a new inscription to a memorial
  - ii. adding an inscription to a Garden of Remembrance memorial stone.
- (c)** Memorials should not exceed 1100 mm in height by 600 mm in width. Plinths should not exceed 610 mm in width by 305 mm depth. Statues, kerbs, railings and chippings will not be approved.
- (d)** Headstone material should be of natural stone or oak. Synthetic stone, plastics or other materials are not permitted.
- (e)** No memorial of any kind other than those described above may be erected. No additional ornamentation or sculptures may be placed on the grave or within the burial ground.
- (f)** Every memorial must be set firmly in a concrete bed the top of which shall not be higher than the surface of the ground. The memorial must be firmly anchored to the foundation so that it does not breach prevailing Health and Safety Regulations published by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and which can be found on their website ([www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)). Any joints must be reinforced with stainless steel pegs. To ensure long-term stability account should be taken of possible subsidence.
- (g)** The name or trade mark of the monumental mason may be permitted providing that it is placed on the side or back of the memorial just above ground level. The size of the lettering must not exceed 16 mm. Prior approval must be obtained from the family in writing and this letter forwarded to the Parish Council before final approval will be given.
- (h)** Use approved fixing method and secured with ground anchors which conform to the required British Standard 8415.

## **7. Decorations.**

- (a)** Only natural flowers or foliage are permitted. No artificial flowers are allowed except for traditional Christmas wreaths or Remembrance Day poppies, and these must be removed after a period of two months.
- (b)** No lights of any kind are permitted on graves or the Garden of Remembrance.
- (c)** Bulbs may be planted in any grave, but not in the Garden of Remembrance.
- (d)** Flowers may be laid, or placed in appropriate containers, on graves or cremation plots, but must be removed when withered.
- (e)** No responsibility for removal by others of flowers or containers can be accepted by the Parish Council, however the Parish Council reserves the right to remove and destroy any decorations that do not conform with these rules.

## **8. Garden of Remembrance- Interment of Ashes.**

The burial ground contains a special area (the Garden of Remembrance) for the interment of ashes. A written application, on the approved Parish Council form, must be sent to the Parish Council before the interment of ashes, or the addition of an inscription on the Garden of Remembrance memorial stone, is carried out. The application must be approved by the Parish Council, in writing, before the ashes are interred or an inscription is added to the Garden of Remembrance memorial stone.

Inscriptions may not necessarily be placed close to the cremation plot, as it is essential for spaces on the stones to be filled in sequence. Only 2 lines of lettering are normally allowed. The lettering on the first line being not more than 20mm in height and on the lower line not more than 16mm. The inscription should be centred within a space of 320mm wide and 65 mm high. For long names a third line may be permitted on application to the Clerk for approval by the Parish Council.

## **9. Cost of removal of unauthorised memorials.**

If the Parish Council as the burial authority remove from the burial ground any tombstone or other memorial placed therein - otherwise in the exercise of a right granted by, or otherwise by the approval of, the burial authority or any of its predecessors - the burial authority may recover the cost thereby incurred by the authority from the person, or the personal representative of the person, to whose order the tombstone or memorial was placed.

## **10. Repairs to memorials.**

Any works necessary for the repair of a damaged memorial or ensuring its compliance with Health and Safety regulations is the responsibility of the person, or personal representative of the person, to whose order the memorial was installed.

The Parish Council may notify burial plot owners if they believe repairs are required. This will either be by using the last registered address or by placing a sign on the grave.

The Parish Council may take action to ensure ongoing safety by either laying memorial stones down or engaging a Stonemason to effect repairs.

## **11. Undertakers, Stonemasons and other contractors**

The Parish Council is responsible for ensuring a safe environment for visitors as well as those working in the grounds. The Parish Council ensures this by working with recognised experts and expecting them to ensure they adhere to these regulations and that they acknowledge responsibility for the works they carry out.

- Everyone working in the grounds must obtain a copy of these regulations from the Clerk, sign and return them to the Clerk prior to carrying out works.
- All works carried out must not start without the express permission of the Clerk.
- The Clerk must be provided with the 'Green Form' Certificate of Burial five working days prior to the funeral.
- Undertakers and their grave diggers must ensure the safety of the ground works. They must not leave groundworks unattended without placing 1m high green barrier secured fencing mesh around all sides of the grave or alternative secure cover.
- Excess spoil from groundworks must be removed from site. Excess spoil left at the burial ground may be removed at a rate of £1 per kg, charged to the Undertaker.
- It is the Undertakers responsibility to warrant for a period of two years that burial plots are level once the ground has settled.
- Memorial stones may only be installed by National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) or British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM) registered Stonemasons.

The Parish Council and the Clerk reserves the right to refuse permission to work in the grounds if in their sole opinion the works would not be acceptable. Representations may be made to the next Parish Council meeting to resolve these decisions.

## **12. Offences in the burial ground.**

**(a)** No person shall-

- i. Create any disturbance or commit any nuisance in the burial ground.
- ii. wilfully interfere with any burial taking place in the burial ground.
- iii. wilfully interfere with any grave, memorial, or any flowers, plants or any such matter; or
- iv. play any game or sport in the burial ground.
- v. Carry out an illegal act.

**(b)** No person, not being an officer or servant of the burial authority or another person so authorised by or on behalf of the burial authority, shall enter or remain in the burial ground at any hour when it is closed to the public (sunset to sunrise).

## **13. Penalties**

The Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (as amended). Every person who contravenes this order, shall be liable on summary conviction to such penalties as are specified by law.

#### **14. Register**

The Registers of Burials, Grave Spaces and Purchased Graves are kept by the Parish Clerk and can be inspected by appointment. Certified extracts may be obtained on payment of a prescribed fee.

The Abbotts Ann Parish Council reserves the right to change or amend any, or all, of these rules at any time.

The above Regulations came into operation on 12th January 2017 – Resolved at minute item 9. These Regulations were amended by resolution at the meeting of full Council held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2017, minute item 11.

All previous Regulations are superseded.

Next review date by end **April 2018**