FERNHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Burial Ground Regulations

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out the rules which apply to the Fernhurst Parish Council Burial Ground on Church Road, Fernhurst, West Sussex, GU27 3HZ.

The Parish Council provides a place of burial, and the forms (for the reservation of plots/Exclusive Right of Burial, notice of interment, transfer of Exclusive Rights of Burial, approval of memorials) and the scale of fees make up part of these regulations.

All other services for a burial (including the preparation of the grave, officiating at the interment and the provision of a memorial) are not provided by the Parish Council and are organised by the bereaved, usually with the assistance of the Funeral Director acting on their behalf.

Should anyone have any queries in connection with the above or other parts of this document they should contact the Parish Clerk.

General

1. The Burial Ground is open daily until sunset.

2. All persons in the burial ground must take all reasonable care in order to protect their own safety.

3. Visitors must conduct themselves in a quiet and orderly manner. Visitors must keep to the pathways except when visiting graves.

4. No children under 14 years of age will be admitted, unless accompanied by a responsible adult.

5. Dogs to be kept on a lead at all times and owners to clear up after them.

6. If any damage is caused to the burial ground by any cause whatsoever, the person or persons committing such damage will be held responsible by the Council.

7. The Council can accept no responsibility for damage to memorials unless caused by a person employed by the Council during the maintenance of the burial ground.

8. The Council keeps and maintains plans showing all used grave spaces and those graves or grave spaces to which special rights appertain (ie an Exclusive Right of Burial). Such plans are kept at the Council Office and are available for inspection by appointment.

9. All burials are recorded in a Register of Burial. The Register of Burials is kept in the Council Office and is available for inspection by appointment.

10. Please advise any change of address or other contact details. This is most important to enable records to be kept up to date.

Arranging a Burial

11. Interments will be permitted on Monday to Friday between the hours of 9.30am to 2.30pm.

12. Except in special circumstances to be agreed beforehand, at least 7 days notice (using the Council's Notice of Interment Form) of every intended interment (full burial or ashes) must be given to the Parish Clerk. Saturdays, Sundays or Public Holidays are excluded from the period of notice.

13. Where no Exclusive Right of Burial is already in place, the selection of the burial plot will be made by the Parish Clerk acting for the Council.

14. The Council will determine the number of burials (this includes cremated remains) permitted in the burial plot.

15. On receipt of a notice of interment, the Parish Clerk will raise an invoice for the appropriate fees and charges against the person submitting the notice. All fees and charges arising from the notice of interment must be paid before the interment takes place.

16. Prior to the burial being undertaken, the Registrar's Certificate for Disposal or Coroner's Order for Burial must also be provided to the Parish Clerk.

Exclusive Right of Burial

17. The Council will grant an Exclusive Right of Burial to a specified grave space for fifty years on application and payment of the current fee. An Exclusive Right of Burial does not constitute any ownership of land. It is purely the right to have a burial in a selected grave.

18. A certificate of the grant of Exclusive Right of Burial will be issued to the grave owner. The certificate should be kept in a safe place as it will be required should there be a burial in the grave in the future.

19. No burials or changes to memorials can be authorised without the permission of the holder of the exclusive right of burial.

20. The grave owner may apply to the Council to extend those rights or to transfer the Exclusive Rights of Burial to another person. The Exclusive Rights of Burial may also be transferred when the owner has died. See separate guide for information to be supplied.

Form of Burial

21. There shall be no scattering of ashes in the Burial Ground.

22. Ashes burials may be made in plots in the Garden of Remembrance. There shall be a maximum of two burials per Garden of Remembrance ashes plot. Cremated remains may also be interred in any other full size grave where an Exclusive Rights of Burial has been granted provided that the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial has given the necessary permission to inter in that grave.

23. All ashes interments must be made using caskets and shall involve the lifting of turf and interment of the casket below the soil.

24. In all unbricked graves, and where the exclusive right of burial is not purchased, coffins of wood only shall be allowed. No coffin shall be buried in any unwalled grave within 4 feet of the ordinary level of the ground, unless it contains the body of a child aged under 12 years, when it shall not be less than 3 feet below that level.

25. No unwalled grave shall be re-opened within 14 years after the burial of a person above 12 years of age, or within 8 years after the burial of a child under 12 years of age, unless to bury another member of the same family, in which case a layer of earth not less than one foot thick shall be left undisturbed above the previously buried coffin, but if, on re-opening any grave, the soil be found to be offensive, such soil shall not be disturbed and in no case shall human remains be removed from the grave.

26. It shall be the responsibility of the Funeral Director or other person carrying out the burial to dig and fill all graves to the reasonable satisfaction of the Council and to ensure the health and safety of their employees and other users of the burial ground.

27. No wheeled/tracked excavators are permitted in the burial ground

28. All graves are to be dug and filled in at an interment, so that no mound remains after due allowance for sinking, the disturbed area is turfed and the finished result is a level lawned burial ground.

29. The Funeral Director or other person carrying out a burial shall be responsible, at their own cost, for the removal of all excess soil following the re-instatement of the grave in question.

Memorials

30. No monument or gravestone can be admitted without written Parish Council approval of a completed memorial application form. The number of the grave, corresponding with the interment book must also be placed on the monument or gravestone.

31. No memorial for a full burial other than an upright headstone, not to exceed 3 feet in height above ground level, fixed to a concrete shoe below ground level, shall be permitted.

32. No memorial in the Garden of Remembrance shall exceed 18 inches by 14 inches and shall be flat and sited with or without a plinth at ground level except that, where an integral flower holder is included, the panel containing the holder may be marginally above ground level when that part of the tablet inscribed with commemorative wording is of angled design rather than being flat.

33. No trees or shrubs to be planted on any grave, nor any garden or flower bed created.

34. It is not permitted to set ornaments on graves.

35. Any items contravening the above may be removed and disposed of without notice.

36. The upkeep and maintenance of any Memorial within the burial ground remains the responsibility of the person to whom a permit to place the Memorial was given or his or her heir. Any intended work on a memorial and/or removal from the burial ground must have written authorisation beforehand by the Council.

37. All memorials will be subject to periodic inspection. Any memorial failing the inspection will be made safe by the Council. This may include the memorial being laid flat or cordoned off.

38. Any monument or gravestone considered to be of danger to any person will be removed by the Council without prior notice and stored.

Flowers

39. Wreaths and cut flowers may be placed on graves or put in containers which are on, or set into, the foot of the headstone. In no circumstances will glass containers be permitted. All wreaths and flowers must be removed when withered and disposed of in the bin at the Church Road entrance to the burial ground, unless removed from the burial ground.

40. No vase or flower/plant container shall be placed on the lawned area of any grave.

41. Excepting for Remembrance Day poppies on the graves of those who served in our Armed Forces, no plastic or other artificial flowers are permitted.

42. Withered flowers and any items contravening the above may be removed and disposed of without notice.

Maintenance of the Burial Ground

43. All kerbed graves and vaults, with the monuments and gravestones, to be kept in repair by the owners; in default of which the same will be liable to be forfeited to the Council, who shall be entitled to repair or remove as they shall deem expedient.

44. The Council will manage the aftercare and maintenance of the lawned areas of the graves and the wider burial ground as it sees fit.

Fernhurst Parish Council reserves the right to make any alterations in the foregoing Regulations without notice.

By Order of Fernhurst Parish Council

Adopted at Full Council Meeting 18th November 2026