CEMETERY RULES AND REGULATIONS

These notes guide those purchasing or receiving the Exclusive Right of Burial in a grave. While we understand this may be a difficult time, these rules are essential for maintaining the cemetery to an acceptable standard for all visitors. We recommend keeping this information with your grave deed for future reference.

Moretonhampstead Parish Council, as the burial authority for St Andrew's Churchyard, oversees all interments, memorials, and maintenance within the cemetery.

1. NOTICE OF INTERMENT

Notice of interment must be given to the clerk during office opening hours and in the case of stillborn children a Registrar's Certificate must be delivered to the clerk.

At least 72 hours' notice (excluding Sundays) is required for an interment. In exceptional cases, the council may arrange interments at shorter notice, subject to an additional charge.

2. PAYMENT OF FEES

All burial fees are to be prepaid to the clerk. No receipts for any monies paid will be valid except those officially issued by the clerk.

3. INTERMENT

Burials must be completed by 2 PM from November to February and by 4 PM from March to October. The clerk must be notified of the time of interment on the interment application form.

No burial will be permitted on Sundays or on public holidays. Burials on Saturdays will only occur with the prior approval of the council and subject to staff availability.

Only human remains may be interred, and all burials must comply with legal and environmental guidelines.

At the time of interment, all new graves must be marked with a temporary marker provided by the funeral director to ensure proper identification.

4. CERTIFICATE OF DEATH REQUIRED

A Registrar's Certificate or Coroner's Order for burial must be provided at the time of interment. Failure to do so may result in a £200 penalty (s.1 Births and Deaths Registration Act 1926). The Certificate must be delivered to the clerk for preservation.

Moretonhampstead Parish Council
Green Hill, Fore Street
Moretonhampstead
Devon TQ13 8LL
T 01647 440041
E clerk@moretonhampstead-pc.gov.uk
W www.moretonhampstead-pc.gov.uk
Chairman: Councillor Catherine Fileman-Wright | Clerk: Mrs. Samantha Parkin

5. ADMISSION OF VEHICLES

No hearse, carriage, or other vehicle will be allowed in the cemetery without council authorization. Only tyre handcarts or trucks are permitted. Any damage to council property caused by materials, gravestones, or other reasons will be the responsibility of those responsible for the damage.

6. BY WHOM GRAVES ARE TO BE OPENED

Graves may only be opened or excavated by the council's Gravedigger, following instructions from the clerk. Undertakers will be informed of the fee upon notifying the clerk of the burial details. Fees vary depending on the grave's depth. A fee list is available on the website.

In certain cases, excavated soil may be placed on an adjacent grave temporarily. The council will ensure this is done for the shortest time possible, with the affected grave protected by boards. This will only happen if no other option is available, and the grave will be fully reinstated after the interment.

7. DEPTH OF GRAVE

No grave shall be deeper than eight feet. However, if the council deems it impracticable due to drainage or other reasons, they may specify a shallower maximum depth. No body shall be buried so that any part of the coffin is less than three feet below the surrounding ground level.

8. SITE OF GRAVES

No deviation from the Order of Burials, as shown on the plan kept by the clerk, will be allowed unless the prescribed fee is paid.

9. EXCLUSIVE RIGHT OF BURIAL

When an exclusive right of burial is required, the full name and address of the purchaser must be provided. Purchasers cannot sell or transfer their rights without the council's consent. If the rights are not exercised, the council may serve notice after 75 years, unless the owner notifies the council within six months of their intention to retain them.

Before a grave can be re-opened, the exclusive right of burial must be produced. No body shall be buried in a grave unless the coffin is separated from previous interments by a layer of earth at least six inches thick.

Transfers of ownership due to death or otherwise must be registered and the deed endorsed before the grave can be opened, re-opened, or have a monument repaired.
If the owner wants to acquire a similar right for an adjoining vacant grave, they must notify the clerk, and the council will reserve the space for three months. After that period, the space will not be reserved.

Please note: The owner is responsible for notifying the council of any change of address. Failure to do so may result in remedial actions being taken without reference to the owner.

10. INTERMENT OF CREMATED REMAINS

If a first interment is made in a cremation section, the intention to inter an additional body at a later date must be stated at the time of the first interment.

11. MEMORIALS

A memorial stone may be erected six months after the burial to allow the ground to settle.

Vertical headstones must not exceed 1 meter in height, 700mm in width, and 380mm in depth. Kerbs are not permitted. For all graves with an exclusive right, a drawing showing dimensions, proposed inscriptions, and a description of the stone must be submitted to the clerk for approval.

Headstones should be made of grey granite or slate, either polished or unpolished, and may include a vase. Vases should be placed at the head of the grave or in front of the headstone.

All headstones must align with those already erected. Cremation tablets should be flush with the surrounding soil and made of grey granite, without a vase, laid flat.

Stonemasons must give three days' notice to the clerk before erecting any monument, and work must be completed promptly. Memorial works must be carried out by stonemasons or monumental sculptors registered with NAMM or BRAMM and adhere to BS8415 standards. The grave number must be cut at the rear of all headstones.

The council retains the right to maintain the grave.

12. RE-OPENING OF GRAVES

The owner or executor is responsible for the removal of gravestones when a grave is re-opened, and for their replacement within eighteen months. The cost of removal is borne by the owner, and the council will not be liable for any damage, loss, or destruction of the monument during the work.

Families may apply to inter ashes in existing graves in the closed area of the churchyard. However, due to potential difficulties in establishing entitlement, permission is granted at the discretion of the clerk.

13. DAMAGE TO HEADSTONES

The council will not be responsible for any damage to monuments or gravestones caused by storms, wind, lightning, subsidence, or any other cause.

No flowers, shrubs, trees, wreaths, or flower receptacles may be removed from the ground without the clerk's permission. The council reserves the right to remove any shrub or tree if deemed necessary.

14. PLOT RESERVATION

Residents of Moretonhampstead can prepay for a burial plot in the cemetery. The fee for the Exclusive Rights to Burial is paid at the time of purchase, while interment and associated fees are charged when the plot is used.

Please note: Specific plots cannot be reserved. The council will allocate the plot at the time of use.

15. VISITORS AND DOGS

All persons admitted to the cemetery will be subject to the orders and control of the council. Dogs are only allowed in the cemetery on public rights of way.

Dogs must be kept on a lead and under control at all times.

16. FLOWERS AND PLANTS

The use of plastic items, such as plastic flowers, is not permitted in the cemetery. The council reserves the right to remove and dispose of any such items.

The council also reserves the right to remove and dispose of any floral tributes, plants, etc., that have withered, died, or become unsightly. Christmas wreaths will typically be removed by the beginning of February.

Plants and flowers may be planted within the grave space of a purchased grave with the owner's consent.

No trees or shrubs may be planted on or around graves or anywhere in the cemetery. The council may prune, cut down, or remove any vegetation that is deemed unsightly, overgrown, or interfering with graves.

17. REGISTER OF BURIALS

The clerk will keep a Register of Burials. Searches may be made, and certified extracts obtained. A fee will be charged for such searches.

18. REVISION OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

The council reserves the right to review and amend these rules and regulations as necessary.

These Rules and Regulations are made in accordance with the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 and any amendments thereto.

The Rules and Regulations, along with the table of fees and payments, shall apply to the cemetery in the community.