

# Goudhurst Parish Council

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## Regulations and Fees relating to the management of Goudhurst Burial Grounds

Adopted by Goudhurst Burial Authority 28 February 2023

Goudhurst Parish Council is the statutory Burial Authority for the civil Parish of Goudhurst and has adopted these Regulations in accordance with the powers given to it by the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977.

## Interments

1. *Giving Notice.* At least ten working days' notice of any proposed interment is to be given to the Clerk to Goudhurst Parish Council (The Clerk).
2. *Ownership.* A Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial must be purchased or proven before an interment will be authorised.
3. *Notice of Interment and Fees.* Before permission for interment will be granted, a fully completed Notice of Interment form and all fees and charges due to Goudhurst Parish Council must be received and accepted by the Clerk. Only the holder of a Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial may issue burial instructions by signing and returning the Notice of Interment.
4. *The Registrar's Certificate for Burial*, the Certificate of Cremation or the Coroner's Order for Burial (as applicable) must be received by the Clerk before permission for interment will be granted.
5. *Permitted times for interments.* No burial can take place before 10 am nor after sunset, nor on a Sunday, Christmas Day or Good Friday without special permission.
6. *The selection of the place of interment* is in all cases subject to the approval of the Burial Authority but the wishes of the parties will be met so far as may be deemed practicable.
7. *Burial in a grave.* Only the holder of a Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial may issue instructions relating to any interment in the relevant grave by completing and returning the Notice of Internment form to the Clerk.

Graves shall be dug to a maximum of 275 cm by 122 cm. Only wooden coffins to a maximum size of 198 cm x 66cm are permitted. Lead lined or large American style coffins are not permitted.

No grave shall be of a depth of less than 152 cm, or in the case of the interment of a child under six years, 122 cm. A maximum of two wooden coffins may be interred in a standard grave space.

8. *Earth on newly dug graves.* No raised ground will be permitted on any grave, except when settlement is taking place for up to 18 months after an interment. It is the responsibility of the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial to allow a newly closed grave to settle naturally to become level with the surrounding turf. It is also the responsibility of the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial of a grave to ensure it is neatly turfed or re-turfed as necessary. The Clerk can provide guidance.

9. *Items on Graves.* The area on the west side of the Burial Grounds (on the right-hand side of the central driveway going down the slope) is designated as a lawn cemetery. The only ornamentation permitted on these graves is a headstone. Trees, shrubs and other planted items, kerbing, wire netting, fencing, stones/gravel or kerb stones, toys, windmills, containers of drink and similar are not permitted. The Burial Authority reserves the right to remove any such items without notice.

To minimise the negative environmental impact, only fresh floral tributes may be placed, but not planted, close to the relevant memorial. Floral tributes should be placed without any plastic or cellophane wrapping.

For the safety of grounds maintenance contractors and the general public, no glass containers are allowed on graves or ashes plots.

10. *Interment of ashes:* Only the holder of a Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial may issue instructions relating to an interment in the relevant ashes plot by completing and returning the Notice of Internment form to the Clerk.

Cremated remains for interment must be placed in a wooden or biodegradable container or interred loose at a depth of not less than 60 cm. The scattering of cremated remains over the ground is not permitted. A maximum of two separate ashes interments shall be permitted in each purchased space in the ashes sections.

Ashes may be interred in an earthen grave if space permits, subject to the permission of The Burial Authority. However, the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial must indicate on the Notice of Interment form, precisely where in the grave the ashes container will be interred.

11. *Metal objects.* No metal objects of any kind are permitted below ground level in graves or ashes plots without prior permission.
12. *Grave Diggers.* Only grave diggers appointed by the Burial Authority are authorised to dig graves or ashes plots.
13. *Transfer of Ownership.* Holders of a Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial may transfer the rights to someone else by completing a form of assignment and paying the relevant fee. If the holder is deceased the right of transfer will need to be proven.

## Memorials

14. *Memorials.* Only the holder of a Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial may apply for permission to introduce a memorial or amend a memorial at the relevant grave or ashes plot.

Applications should be submitted to the Clerk on the Memorial Application form for approval by the Burial Authority. No Memorial should be introduced into the Burial Grounds without prior approval from the Burial Authority and until the relevant fee has

been paid. The Burial Authority reserves the right to remove any Memorial for which permission has not been granted or an approval fee paid.

Amendments to memorials also require prior approval.

On graves a memorial headstone, a cross or a plain wooden cross will be permitted.

A small inscription plaque may, subject to these Regulations, be attached to a wooden cross.

No headstone, cross or plain wooden cross when erected shall exceed 75 cm in height, or 60 cm in width. New or replacement memorials at graves in the lawn area may not be installed flat on the ground.

Photo plaques on Memorials are not permitted.

Memorial tablets in the ashes section shall not exceed 46cm x 23cm and must be laid in the gravel to leave the tablet proud by 3 cm all round.

The Burial Authority will not approve applications for new memorials or additional inscriptions on existing memorials unless the remains of the deceased person have been interred in the relevant grave or ashes plot.

Only Monumental Masons on the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM) or those on the Register of Qualified Memorial Fixers (RQMF) are authorised to introduce memorials at Goudhurst. The Clerk can provide guidance on registered masons.

15. ***Ongoing Responsibility.*** Owners of memorials, ashes plots and graves shall keep them in good and safe condition. Please see paragraph 9.

The Burial Authority reserves the right to carry out memorial safety testing on any memorials placed in the Burial Grounds. In the event that the Burial Authority reasonably considers that any memorial has become unsafe, it reserves the right to lay down or remove a memorial after making all reasonable efforts to contact the owner. The Burial Authority may take any action it sees fit to repair and tidy any grave that has fallen into disrepair, with the cost being charged to the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

16. ***Memorial Benches.*** There is only limited space available on Goudhurst Parish Council land for memorial benches. For further details, please contact the Clerk. To maintain standards, we only consider approval of an application for the installation of a bench made by Memorial Benches UK of Ticehurst. The owner of a new bench will be responsible for the cost of its installation to match existing benches and for the ongoing maintenance.

Goudhurst Parish Council reserves the right to remove any bench that is not maintained in good condition.

An administration fee for granting approval for the installation of a memorial bench on Parish Council land is due to the Burial Authority.

17. *Insurance.* The Burial Authority strongly recommends that grave owners take out insurance to cover damage to their memorials and benches.
18. These Regulations may be varied or waived at the sole discretion of the Burial Authority.