

MARKYATE PARISH COUNCIL



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Clerk to the Council: Mrs V Tilley

CEMETERY AND GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE

REGULATIONS

Throughout these regulations "The Committee" means the Markyate Parish Council Cemetery Committee acting for and on behalf of the Parish Council of Markyate. "The Clerk" means the Clerk to Markyate Parish Council.

These Regulations are made to ensure the Cemetery retains its Rural appearance and will continue to be a unique place of rest for your loved ones. The Committee wish the Cemetery to have a high standard of upkeep that is sustainable and fair to all.

1. Hours of Opening

The Committee reserves the right to exclude the public if it should be necessary at any time, for example for safety when tree works, or maintenance work are taking place.

2. Hours of Burial

Burials shall normally take place on Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays. They may not start before 9.00 am or after 4.00 pm.

Burials will only be permitted on Saturday, Sunday or bank or public holidays at the discretion of the celebrant and Committee. The certificate of a coroner or registered medical practitioner that immediate burial is necessary will be required in cases of emergency.

3. Notice of Burial

A Notice of Interment form must be sent to the Clerk at least two working days before the day of the funeral.

No second burial will be permitted in any grave unless Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased and the relevant Deed of Grant is produced for inspection.

4. Fees

All fees and charges must be paid when the Notice of Interment is sent (a minimum of two working days before burial) unless an alternative arrangement has been agreed beforehand. All the information required on the form must be provided. Plot numbers will not be issued, and grave spaces will not be marked up, before all fees have been paid.

An administration charge may be made in cases where there has been extra work needed by the Clerk and/or Caretaker, including changes to the original agreed burial details or payment delays.

5. Cremated Remains

A casket containing cremated remains may be buried in any plot in the Cemetery for which Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased. A body burial cannot then be buried later on top of cremated remains.

Caskets must be bio-degradable, and not contain any plastic, and fit within the 24" x 24" (610 x 610 mm) space allocated.

They must be buried with a minimum depth of 6 inches (153 mm) of soil covering the casket and not protrude above ground level.

There are a limited range of permitted sizes and designs for memorial stones on cremation plots, but they should not exceed 12" x 12" (305 x 305 mm), or 18" x 18" for double plots. Such memorial stones may include provision for holding cut flowers, but plants or flowers may not be grown on cremation plots.

6. Certificate of Burial

The Registrar's or Coroner's Certificate for Burial (or in the case of a still-born child, a certificate in accordance with the Births and Deaths Act, 1926) must be produced at the time of burial. A Certificate of Cremation must be produced before cremated remains can be buried.

7. Exclusive Rights of Burial

The Exclusive Right of Burial in a grave space may be purchased when a grave space is needed (not in advance) and will be conveyed by Deed of Grant to the purchaser of the grave itself. Such Deed only conveys the right to decide who shall be buried in that grave and does not give the purchaser deeds of the land.

The Exclusive Right of Burial is sold for 50 years and may be extended by a maximum of 50 years at any time during the original period by applying to the Clerk. The Clerk will allocate grave spaces according to the Cemetery's operational requirements.

8. Digging and Depth of Graves

The depth of every grave is controlled by the Committee. No grave shall be deepened after the first burial. Where more than one burial takes place in a grave there shall be a layer of earth not less than 6 inches (153 mm) in thickness, plus the thickness of the coffin board, between each coffin. No part of any coffin shall be less than 3 feet (914 mm) below the level of the ground.

No body burial can be buried on top of cremated remains.

Cremated remains can be buried in already buried plots, but no other body burial will then be allowed in this plot.

The digging of any grave or ashes plot is the responsibility of the undertaker. Any excess soil must be removed from the Cemetery grounds. No grave shall be dug in the Cemetery until it has been marked by the Caretaker.

Only authorised Grave Diggers can dig graves in the Cemetery.

9. Memorials

The right to place a memorial will only be granted in respect of graves for which an Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased.

No memorial shall be erected until at least 6 months after the burial.

No kerbs of any kind (stone, wood, plastic or otherwise) are permitted around the graves.

Temporary wooden crosses that conform to the Committee's Regulations are permitted until such time as a permanent memorial is erected.

A drawing of every proposed memorial showing its dimensions and details of the intended inscription must be submitted to the Committee for approval. No memorial shall be placed in the Cemetery until it has been approved by the Committee, the appropriate fee has been paid, the necessary permit has been issued and the Clerk notified when the stone is to be placed in the Cemetery.

Every memorial must be kept clean and in good repair by the owner.

It is the responsibility of the owner to ensure any memorial is safe and will not topple if pushed. If the owner does not comply with this requirement, the Committee reserves the right to lay flat any unsafe memorial. We will attempt to contact the owner by sending a letter to their last known address. It is important to inform the Clerk of any change of address.

Memorial stones on graves must not be more than 3 feet (914 mm) high and 2 feet 6 inches (762 mm) wide, including the base/plinth, and in keeping with other headstones in the Cemetery.

Memorial stones in the Garden of Remembrance are permitted but must be a 12" x 12" x 2" (305 x 305 x 51 mm) flat stone, or 18" x 18" (457 x 457 mm) on a double plot. A small suitable receptacle for holding cut flowers is allowed (no glass), but no plants or flowers may be grown on Cremation plots.

Memorial Stones should be native Sandstones, Limestone, Slates, Marble (dove grey), and grey Granite (no lighter than honed Cornish, no darker than honed Rustenberg Grey) to be consistent with the original cemetery.

Due to the ethical and environmental implications of imported stone, a surcharge will be applied where documents of traceability of UK origin are not available.

10. Maintenance of Graves

Cut or artificial flowers may be placed in suitable non-glass receptacles set into the memorial base. These are restricted to two receptacles. Excessive receptacles will be removed.

Artificial flowers, wreaths, cards and small ornaments, where the overall height, width and depth of the ornament does not exceed 6 inches (153 mm) may be placed and remain on graves while they are in good condition. It is understood that they will be removed by the Committee once their appearance deteriorates.

Only bedding flowers may be planted on graves.

Plant pots containing only flowers may be placed on graves. These are restricted to two pots.

No glass vases are permitted.

The decision to remove and dispose of tributes which have deteriorated or are deemed to be inappropriate will be at the absolute discretion of the Committee.

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It is recommended that in the case of ornaments, prior approval from the Committee is obtained before they are purchased. There should not be more than two of these additional tributes per grave.

It is understood that shrubs, whether planted on graves or in plant pots placed on graves, are not permitted.

Flowers and wreaths may be placed on and around the grave on the day of the funeral.

Withered flowers and wreaths must be removed by relatives, or they will be removed by the Committee.

Grave spaces must not be enlarged for any reason once burial has taken place.

11. Duration of Visits

Whilst we acknowledge that friends and families may wish to stay after a burial, or visit to pay their respects, you should be mindful of other visitors and residents close to the Cemetery.

Friends and family are welcome to stay longer after burial or to visit, but only for a reasonable time and for no longer than one and a half hours.

This allows Cemetery staff and grave diggers to complete their work around the graveside.

No music, alcohol or food is allowed, and behaviour should always be respectful.

No gazebos, awnings or shelters may be erected.

12. Prohibited Items

The following items are not allowed on graves in any circumstances and will be removed.

- Balloons (of any kind)
- Lights, whether solar or battery powered
- Mechanical devices, whether solar or battery powered
- Lit candles or similar
- Food or drink
- Planted shrubs or any rooted plants other than bedding
- Ornamental stone chippings or similar

13. Data Protection

Markyate Parish Council Cemetery Committee complies with all Data Protection legislation.

We maintain a database of the names of the deceased and plot numbers along with other necessary information, including the plot holder's names and addresses.

The details of the deceased and plot holders will be kept on the database permanently, but plot holders can request that their details be deleted on written request to the Clerk.

In this event, the Committee will administer the grave area and headstone and will act where needed to maintain health and safety in the Cemetery. This may include filling in sunken graves, grassing over the area and laying down unsafe memorials. As no grave owner's details will be available to us, relatives would not be informed prior to action being taken.

Details of our Data Protection policy and your legal rights can be found on our website: www.markyateparishcouncil.gov.uk

14. General

Dogs must be supervised and kept under control on a lead.

Please inform the Clerk of any change of address since the original information was provided, so we can contact plot owners if needed.

There is limited parking in the Cemetery which is only available for funerals or for the delivery of materials or equipment and maintaining the Cemetery grounds. Cars should be parked at the Village Halls/Recreation Ground and must not be parked in Humbers Hoe.

There are no toilet facilities at the Cemetery.

Litter must be placed in the bins provided or taken from the cemetery for proper disposal.

Any person found in the Cemetery:

A] wilfully creating any disturbance.

B] committing any nuisance.

C] verbally or physically abusing staff or contractors.

D] wilfully interfering with any burial.

E] wilfully interfering with any grave, memorial, flowers, or plants or any such matter; or

F] playing any game of sport.

Is guilty of an offence and liable to prosecution.

The registers, records, and tables of fees, etc. relating to the Cemetery are available for inspection by contacting the Clerk.

The Committee's decision on any issues raised is final.

All staff at the Cemetery are representatives of the Committee and they are tasked with enforcing the Regulations on behalf of the Committee.

The Committee reserves the right to make any amendments to the foregoing Regulations from time to time.

January 2026