

INTRODUCTION

This leaflet gives a brief overview of how we - Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council - run the Cemetery and should be read with the full Cemetery Regulations ("the Regulations"). If there is any conflict between the Regulations and what is written here, the Regulations will prevail.

The Regulations, and the current Cemetery Fees, are available at www.stratfield-mortimer.gov.uk/what-we-do/Cemetery.

The rules summarised in this leaflet are intended to ensure that the Cemetery remains a peaceful and fitting setting for those who are interred, and to provide a place where friends and relatives can properly remember them - your observance and co-operation will help to ensure that these aims are achieved.

The Cemetery is open to pedestrians only. Dogs are allowed in the Cemetery provided that they are kept on a lead.

WHO CAN BE INTERRED IN THE CEMETERY?

Only those residents living in the parishes of Stratfield Mortimer or Wokefield at the time of death, or ex-residents who lived within either parish during the 5-year period prior to death and/or for at least 20 years, have an automatic right to be interred in the Cemetery (ex-residents being subject to a higher rate of fee).

In exceptional circumstances we may consider other interments (if permission is granted a higher rate of fee will apply).

The Cemetery is open to the interment of all, regardless of religion, ethnic origin or creed.

BUYING A NEW BURIAL OR CREMATION PLOT

When you purchase a burial or cremation plot, you do not actually buy the freehold of the land that the plot occupies – that remains in our ownership. What you are purchasing is a 75-year lease of the plot with an Exclusive Right of Interment ("ERI") relating to it - all plots are for a maximum of two burials or two interments of cremated ashes.

When you lease a plot, we will issue you with a Deed of Grant for the ERI - the Deed is proof of your ownership of the ERI and is a very important document to be kept safely (since you will be asked to produce it should you ask for a second interment to take place within the plot – fees apply).

At the end of the initial lease period you (or your successors – see below) will be given the opportunity to purchase further years. If you/they choose not to, the rights to the plot will revert to us and any memorial may be removed.

CREMATION PLOTS

A part of the Cemetery is set aside for cremation interments. Different fees apply, but all other rules are the same as for full burials. Ashes may not be scattered in the Cemetery.

MEMORIALS

The ERI also means that (in due course and upon payment of an additional fee) you may place a memorial on a grave or a memorial plaque adjacent to a cremation plot (provided that it conforms to the Regulations – see further below).

CAN I SELECT A PLOT?

Plots are allocated in strict sequential order only and cannot be reserved in advance.

ADJACENT BURIAL PLOTS

Please note that it may become necessary to excavate a grave next to your burial plot.

If so, we may need to place boards over your plot to protect it and you may not be able to visit your grave for a short while. Please be assured that this will only be necessary where there is no other option, and that your plot will be cleaned, tidied and returned to its usual condition as soon as the burial has taken place.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF BURIAL PLOT HOLDERS

As the holder of a burial plot, you are responsible for the safety and condition of any memorial on the grave - although we have responsibilities under Health and Safety legislation to ensure the safety of visitors and staff in the Cemetery, the responsibility for the safety of your individual memorial rests with you. If a memorial becomes dilapidated and/or unsafe we have the right to remove it or make it safe, and to recover the cost for any such work from the plot holder.

We undertake regular safety checks on all the memorials in the Cemetery. Where possible, the plot holder will be contacted if a memorial is found to be in need of work, and given the option of having the work done themselves, using a mason of their choice (see below), or paying the Council to do the work for them. If neither option is chosen, we retain the right to remove the danger presented by the memorial.

RECORDS

In order to keep our records up to date so that we may contact you if necessary, it is important that any changes of address is notified to us as soon as possible (please see below regarding new individuals – eg if someone inherits the ERI).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COUNCIL

We will maintain the Cemetery to a decent standard by sowing grass seed, cutting the grass regularly and ensuring that the ground level it is topped up and levelled if it should sink.

We will also carry out periodic testing of the stability of any memorial on each grave, and will contact plot holders if there are any problems (but, as stated above, we are not responsible for the maintenance of individual memorials).

TRANSFER OF RIGHTS

Plot holders can choose to transfer the rights to a plot and ERI to another person, but this must be done using a form available from the Parish Clerk (and subject to an administration charge).

Where a plot holder dies their Executors or Personal Representatives will need to contact the Parish Clerk in order to effect a transfer to a new holder (so, if you are a plot holder, you should identify your chosen successors in your will).

BURIAL MEMORIALS

Memorials (headstones) on graves must be of good quality, hard-wearing materials and must be approved by us before being fixed.

Full guidance is given in the Regulations, but in brief only those memorial masons that are BRAMM (British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons)

accredited will be allowed to undertake work in the Cemetery. More information is available from the Parish Clerk.

FLOWERS AND OTHER TRIBUTES

We require cooperation in keeping the grassed area of graves and cremation plots free of pots, plants and other artefacts - so that the grass can be cut using mowers without causing damage or risking injury to the operator and visitors.

You may wish to leave tributes. Again, the Regulations give full guidance, but we allow flowers and plants to be placed at the head of the grave where they are at less risk of damage by mowing.

Vases/pots must be made from a non-breakable material such as metal or stone, and not from glass/ceramic/plastic which might shatter during freezing weather - broken shards present a danger to visitors, staff and wildlife in the Cemetery.

Please think carefully about your choice of container and seek advice from the Parish Clerk if necessary.

Please note that if you place any articles along the length of the grave we will not be able to cut the grass and the grave will look untidy compared to those around it - we reserve the right to remove such articles and dispose of them.

THE REGULATIONS

The Cemetery is a community asset, and all plot holders and other users must comply with the Regulations (for example in relation to what may or may not be placed on a grave).



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

CEMETERY INFORMATION

Parish Council Cemetery
Church Lane
Mortimer
RG7 3NX

Cemetery opening times

All day, every day*

Contact details

The Parish Clerk
Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council
27 Victoria Road
Mortimer
RG7 3SH

0118 933 1955

the.clerk@stratfield-mortimer.gov.uk

(for Parish Office opening hours see
www.stratfield-mortimer.gov.uk)

*unless closed for maintenance, health and safety reasons, etc

