Battle Town Council

Cemetery Regulations & Funerary Monuments Policy

Burials, monuments and exhumations are regulated by law. The design of memorials is controlled to make sure that burial grounds remain special places that everyone can appreciate.
This policy sets out the rules and practices of Battle's cemetery for those wishing to arrange an interment or install a memorial.
Regulations for the cemetery are set and should be sufficiently flexible to meet most people's requirements, but also preserve the dignity of the cemetery and ensure that health and safety rules are satisfied. These regulations are reviewed periodically.

- The interment of human remains is final. Exhumation only happens in exceptional circumstances.
- Any person visiting must follow the burial ground regulations.
- Memorials can only be introduced in line with the regulations. That means that the size, materials and wording of any memorial must be within the parameters of the regulations and must be considered by the Proper Officer to retain the dignity of the Cemetery.
- There is no automatic right to a memorial. Permission must be given before it is put in place.
- Additional items are not always permitted.

1. DEFINITIONS

- The term 'Council' means the Chairman and Councillors of Battle Town Council acting by the Council.
- The term 'Proper Officer' means the Town Clerk of the said Council or her/his Deputy.
- The term 'cemetery' means the cemetery owned and managed by the Council, situated off Marley Lane.
- 'Parishioner' means a resident of the area for which the Council is responsible.
- 'Council office' means The Almonry, High Street, Battle, TN33 0EA.

2. OFFICE TIMES

With the exception of statutory holidays, the Council office (01424 772210) will normally be open Mondays to Fridays inclusive between the hours of 9.00am and 2.00pm when a Cemetery plan will be open to inspection and notices of interment may be given.

3. RIGHT OF INTERMENT

The right of interment is not restricted to those who were parishioners at the time of death. However, non-parishioners may normally only be interred on payment of double the standard fees.

4. EXCLUSIVE RIGHT OF BURIAL

The exclusive right of burial is available for purchase by parishioners both in advance and during the period of arranging an interment whereby the date and time for interment has been supplied to the Council office.

The exclusive right of burial in a grave space may be purchased for a period of 100 years. Purchase of an exclusive right of burial in advance by non-parishioners is at the discretion of the Council. In such circumstances the standard fees will normally be doubled. The responsibility remains with the purchaser to prove ownership before burial or interment can take place. It is therefore recommended that, unless held in joint names, the names of those to be buried or interred are registered at the time of purchase. Personal information will be retained for the period of the Deed of Grant.

Purchasers or owners of exclusive right of burial cannot in any circumstances dispose of their rights to non-parishioners nor to parishioners without the consent of the Council. Any transfer of ownership of the exclusive right of burial will be subject to the production of satisfactory evidence of title and the approval of the Council. Such transfer must be registered in the records of the Council and may be subject to a transfer fee. Where a transfer is to a non-parishioner standard fees will normally be doubled.

5. TIMES OF BURIAL

On Mondays and Tuesdays, the interment of coffins and cremated remains shall only take place between the hours of 9.00am and 3.00pm (2.30pm December to February).

On Wednesday to Friday inclusive, the interment of coffins and cremated remains shall only take place between the hours of 9.00am and 2.00pm.

No interment shall take place on Saturdays, except in case of urgency. In such circumstances the standard fees will be doubled.

No interment shall take place on any Sunday or Christmas Day, Good Friday or Bank Holidays.

6. NOTICE PERIODS

Notices of interment, accompanied by notification of burial, Coroner's order or certificates of cremation, shall be delivered to the Council Office at least three full working days previous to any interment, provided that in reckoning such period of notice, Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays shall be excluded.

This rule does not apply to interments required to take place immediately under medical certificate or Coroner's order, or in case of urgency.

If a completed notice of interment form is not delivered by the required time the Proper Officer reserves the right to postpone the interment.

7. NOTICE CONDITIONS

Every notice of interment shall be given on the Council's standard form which shall be properly completed and contain the following information:

a) The full names, age, date of birth and usual residence of the deceased;
b) The date of death;
c) The address at which death occurred;
d) The measurements of the coffin, casket or urn including fixed handles;
e) The day and hour at which it is requested that the burial shall take place;
f) The name of the Minister, Celebrant or other Officiant proposing to officiate;
g) The area of the Cemetery required (and, if significant, whether consecrated, unconsecrated or Roman Catholic);
h) The depth of the grave;
i) Identifying number of the grave;
j) The full name and address of either the original purchaser or the person purchasing the grave space, for the purposes of issuing the Deed of Grant.

On application being made for the re-opening of a grave for interment, the grant of exclusive right of burial must be produced with the application. If for any reason the grant cannot be produced, the applicant shall provide the Proper Officer with such information and such evidence of his or her authority as the Proper

Officer shall demand and shall indemnify the Council, its servants and agents, against any claim which may arise from the acceptance of such application by the Proper Officer.

8. PAYMENTS OF FEES

All fees and charges must be paid to the Proper Officer on notice being given of an interment and before the interment is undertaken.

9. GRAVE SELECTION

All grave spaces will be allocated by the Proper Officer and will normally be in the next available plot.

10. GRAVE SPACES

The maximum size permitted for a coffin/casket in burial areas (except private plots) is 1.98m long x 60.9cm wide. Applications for burial of coffins/caskets above this size can be considered by the Proper Officer. However, purchase of an adjacent grave space may be required.

11. CONDITIONS OF BURIAL

Only one interment may take place at any appointed time. Priority shall be determined by receipt of a properly completed notice of interment. No interment shall take place in a grave otherwise than in a wooden (or other suitable organic material) coffin, or casket without the written permission of the Proper Officer.

Where it is intended that a second and subsequent burial shall take place the soil shall be excavated an additional depth of 0.60m beyond the ordinary depth of 1.52m at the time of the initial interment.

No coffin shall be buried in a grave unless separated from any other coffin already placed therein by means of a layer of earth of 0.60m in thickness. The burial of cremated remains within a grave space may only take place after the interment of a coffin.

Once cremated remains have been interred within the area normally reckoned to be required for a coffin interment, no such coffin interment will be permitted except with permission of the Proper Officer.

12. CHAPEL

Interments shall not be allowed in the Chapel. The Proper Officer shall have power to exclude from the Chapel the body of any person who shall have died from an infectious disease or a corpse that is in her/his opinion in an offensive condition.

13. GENERAL CONDITIONS

Ashes may only be scattered within designated areas of the Cemetery. No flowers, vases, materials or objects other than an approved vase or memorial may be permanently placed on any grave where an interment (body or cremated remains) has taken place. For a period of 6 months following interment temporary appropriate items will be permitted. Appropriate items may also be placed on the grave for one month to recognise a specific occasion with permission of the Proper Officer.

Care of wreaths and flowers is the responsibility of the relatives, but any dead flowers, artificial flowers or unsuitable or damaged containers may be removed by the Council.

GLASS CONTAINERS OR SOLAR LIGHTS ARE NOT PERMITTED as they pose a danger to Cemetery staff and visitors. Artificial or plastic flowers are not permitted.

Miniature shrubs, plants and flowers (but not trees) may be planted on graves in the old Cemetery. The Council reserves the right to prune, cut down, dig up, and remove any of the shrubs, plants or flowers where, in their opinion, they have become unsightly or overgrown, or when necessary for the purpose of allowing the grave to be re-opened.

Shrubs, plants and flowers may not be planted on graves in the new Cemetery. Trees may only be planted in the Cemetery with the written permission of the Proper Officer. The Council does not accept responsibility for any memorial tree which is purchased and/or planted on behalf of a parishioner or family member although provision will be made for appropriate tree care to be undertaken.

No permanent mounds will be permitted on any grave. Every memorial and every grave space shall be kept clean and in good repair, order and condition by the owner or owners thereof; and on default by the owners then after 14 days' notice in writing has been sent by recorded delivery post to the registered owner or owners at his or their registered address, any such additional mounds will be removed.

It is required that owners of memorials and their heirs and successors keep the Council informed of any change in contact details.

Any memorial of unauthorised material, any planted tree or shrub, plants or any memorial or object placed without permission of the Proper Officer and contrary to these regulations will be removed at the owner's expense (and heirs and successors) from the grave space by the Council after 14 days' notice in writing has been sent by recorded delivery post to the registered owner (and heirs and successors) at the last registered address.

No vehicle shall be allowed to remain within the Cemetery longer than is reasonably necessary and in no circumstances shall any vehicle be driven off the roads.

Nothing offensive to public decorum shall be permitted within the Cemetery, as determined by the Proper Officer.

Children under 10 years of age will not be admitted except when accompanied by a responsible person.

All visitors are requested to keep to the roads or footpaths except whilst visiting a grave and to observe proper decorum in all respects.

Dogs on short leads are allowed in the Cemetery.

Smoking is not allowed in the Cemetery or the Chapel buildings.

No musical instruments, audio equipment, flags or banners shall be allowed or taken inside the Cemetery without the written permission of the Proper Officer.

All visitors to the Cemetery shall respect the solemnity and dignity of all ceremonies conducted in the Cemetery. Vehicles shall not be parked so as to interfere with or impede such ceremonies and all work on 5 adjacent graves shall cease during the period of any ceremony. Visitors are requested to remain a respectful distance from any ceremonies in which they are not participating.

All instructions for the Cemetery staff are normally given by the Proper Officer. However, if any orders or instructions consistent with these regulations are otherwise given to Council staff they are executed at the sole risk of the person giving such orders or instructions, and neither the Council nor its staff will be responsible for any misunderstanding that may arise with regard to such orders or instructions.

14. MEMORIALS

Memorials and vases are only allowed on graves where an interment (body or cremated remains) has taken place. The permission of the Proper Officer shall be obtained before any vase is placed or any memorial is erected or any inscription or ornamentation is incorporated on a proposed or existing memorial. Such consent will only be given if the proposed memorial complies with the requirements of these regulations. Memorials shall be constructed of good quality materials (plastic is not permitted) and shall be fixed to the minimum standard of the National Association of Memorial Masons. Clear, written details of the form, material, dimensions and foundation of every memorial proposed, and the wording of all inscriptions, must be received with applications for approval. The Proper Officer or such person or persons as she/he may delegate for the purpose shall have power to reject any work, materials or inscriptions under this regulation.

As a matter of consideration to all those commemorated within the cemetery, the Proper Office may decline highly elaborate memorials which may be considered distracting to adjacent graves or potentially cause refusal of adjacent plots. The nature of being elaborate may include bright colours of paint or stone detailing, photographic/porcelain elements, or the design of the stonework itself. Permission for any monument will only be given if the proposed memorial is considered to be in keeping with the dignity of the Cemetery.

No brick graves or vaults shall be allowed. Any person erecting or replacing a memorial or kerb in the Cemetery shall site it to the satisfaction of the Proper Officer and shall cause to be engraved upon it previous to erection, the letter and number of the grave over which it is to be erected or placed, in letters and figures of not less than one centimetre in height, properly leaded or blacked.

No enclosure shall be placed around any grave in the Cemetery, except designated family area plots, where planting is provided by the Council. The Council will carry out an annual memorial inspection, in accordance with the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management guidelines, to ensure memorials are suitably stable and do not present any safety risk to visitors, staff or contractors. Where a memorial is found to be unstable this will be laid down and, where possible, the grave space owner or family will be notified.

Any memorial can only be reinstated by an approved memorial mason. Every memorial within the Deed of Grant for 100 years remains the responsibility of the owner and must be kept in good repair at all times.

The Council reserves the right to repair at the owner's cost or remove any stone, monument or memorial where the owners fail to comply with this regulation.

Any monument, stone or kerb erected or placed on a grave required to be reopened for an interment therein shall be removed and replaced by and at the expense and risk of the owner or person arranging the interment.

No memorial shall be removed from the Cemetery except with the permission of the Proper Officer.

Memorial definitions are as follows:

All burial graves must be marked by an upright headstone of no more than the size stipulated in these regulations. Examples of acceptable headstones are shown below. This may be square arched or curved, with a base but may not include angels/putti cupids or other ornamental figures that resemble garden statues.

Permitted types providing these are within the height, width and depth regulations, examples below:







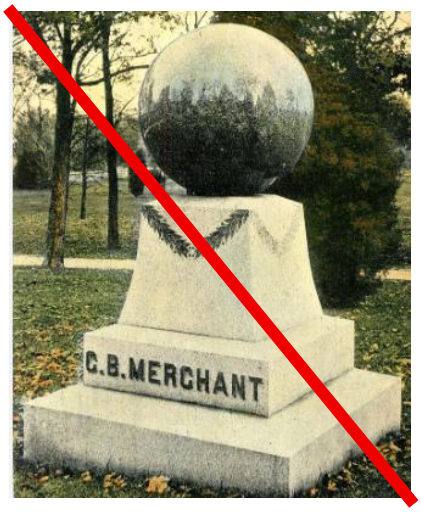






Example of types not permitted, examples below:





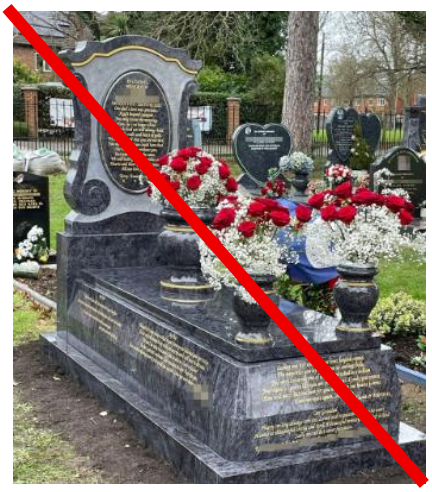
Where a kerb set is permitted, in the old cemetery, an example of a kerb set with a headstone is shown below. As stipulated, putti cupids, angels or other statues are not permitted. An integrated vase would be acceptable

Full memorial example with kerb set, example below:



Very ornate or raised type tombs are not permitted, examples below:

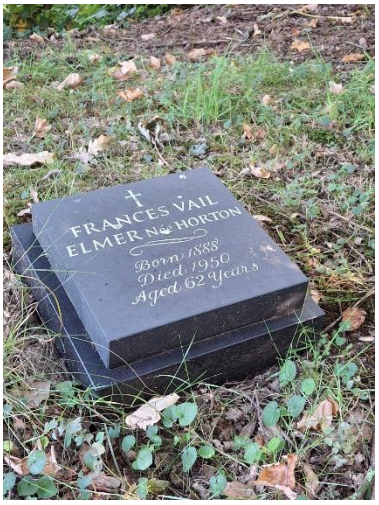








Flat memorials for interred ashes are called tablets. An example is shown below. As a flat tablet may be at grass level, we recommend to avoid damage that these are in a hard stone e.g. granite rather than limestone, without easy-to-damage edges and placed on a plinth. For interments of cremated remains, only square. No round, cross-shaped, heart-shaped or other shapes will be acceptable.



Flat memorial tablets are not permitted in Maplewood

Desk or book style memorials are permitted on burial graves in the old cemetery, but not ashes plots. Examples below:





No glass, stone or other materials may be laid around cremation tablets

15. REGULATIONS RELATING TO BURIAL PLOTS IN THE OLD CEMETERY

No more than two bodies may be interred in a grave and a single headstone must commemorate both interments.

Where it is intended that a second interment shall take place, the soil shall be excavated to an additional depth of 0.60m beyond the ordinary depth at the time of the initial interment.

Headstones on graves where an interment of a body has taken place, must not exceed 90cm, nor be less than 45cm in height; must not exceed 15cm, nor be less than 7.5cm in thickness, except on private plots.

The base of a memorial must not exceed 8cm in height, nor exceed 30cm in depth, nor 75cm in width.

Kerb sets are permitted. The overall maximum size is 198cm in length x 75cm in width.

In any grave it may be possible to inter cremated remains either in a casket providing that this shall not exceed 48cm in height x 23cm in width x 30cm deep or loose ashes may be interred at the discretion of the Proper Officer. An additional inscription may be added, or a flat tablet, 30cm in height x 30cm in width x 5cm deep may be added over the interred urn or casket with the permission of the Proper Officer.

No more than 2 ashes caskets may be interred in a funeral plot with existing interred bodies.

No more than one upright headstone may be included on any burial plot. Vases, of a suitable material, may be added providing they are no larger than 15cm x 15cm x 15cm. No more than 2 vases or spaces for flowers may be added to any grave plot, even where there are 2 bodies and up to 2 interred remains present.

16. REGULATIONS APPLYING TO THE ROSE GARDEN

For ashes interments - No casket or urn, to be interred, shall exceed 48cm in height x 23cm in width x 30cm deep. Up to 2 casket interments are permitted within an ashes plot at the discretion of the Proper Officer. A single headstone or tablet must commemorate both interments.

The outer edge of the Rose Garden is dedicated to ashes interments and here a tablet, as shown in Section 14, is permitted as an alternative to a headstone. Please refer to the accompanying map of the Rose Garden area.

Headstones on graves where an interment of cremated remains has taken place, must not exceed 60cm, nor be less than 30cm in height; must not exceed 15cm, nor be less than 8cm in thickness.

The base of a memorial can incorporate an inset memorial vase but must not exceed 8cm in height, nor exceed 25cm in depth, nor 40cm in width.

Memorial tablets on graves where an interment of cremated remains has taken place, must not exceed 30cm x 30cm x 5cm and must be laid on a base plinth not exceeding 36cm x 36cm x 10cm deep.

No planting of any description is permitted. Memorial headstones should be set with vases for flowers to be left as tributes. No artificial flowers are permitted.

Where it is intended that a second interment shall take place, the soil shall be excavated to an additional depth beyond the ordinary depth at the time of the initial interment.

For burials - No more than two bodies may be interred in a grave and a single headstone must commemorate both interments.

Headstones on graves where an interment of a body has taken place, must not exceed 90cm, nor be less than 45cm in height; must not exceed 15cm, nor be less than 7.5cm in thickness.

The base of a memorial must not exceed 8cm in height, nor exceed 30cm in depth, nor 75cm in width.

No kerb stones are permitted.

No planting of any description is permitted. Memorial headstones should be set with vases for flowers to be left as tributes.

Within the Rose Garden burial plots spaces, a burial plot may be purchased for the interment of up to two burials and two ashes caskets, or four ashes caskets, at the discretion of the Proper Officer. A single headstone must commemorate all interments, no memorial tablets will be permitted. Please refer to the accompanying map of the Rose Garden area.

Where it is intended that a second interment shall take place, the soil shall be excavated to an additional depth beyond the ordinary depth at the time of the initial interment.

17. **REGULATIONS APPLYING TO THE GARDENS OF REMEMBRANCE**.
No casket or urn to be interred shall exceed 48cm in height x 23cm in width x 30cm deep. A second interment within a plot shall be at the discretion of the Proper Officer.

Memorials placed in the Garden of Remembrance shall be a flat tablet, must be 30cm in height x 30cm in width x 5cm deep and made of an appropriate, traditional material. The planting of trees or shrubs is not permitted.

Where it is intended that a second interment shall take place, the soil shall be excavated to an additional depth beyond the ordinary depth at the time of the initial interment.

18. REGULATIONS APPLYING TO THE NATURAL BURIAL AREA
For ashes interments - Interments will only be permitted around the pre-planted allotted trees. Only loose ashes or caskets of a fully biogradable material may be interred.

No ashes casket to be interred shall exceed 48cm in height x 23cm in width x 30cm deep. Up to two interments are allowed within a plot at the discretion of the Proper Officer.

Where it is intended that a second interment shall take place, the soil shall be excavated to an additional depth beyond the ordinary depth at the time of the initial interment.

Only wooden memorials, supplied by the Council, shall be allowed in the Natural Burial Area.

For burials – Interments will only be permitted around the pre-designated trees.

No interment shall take place in a grave in the Natural Burial Area otherwise than in a fully biodegradable coffin, casket or shroud. The body must be prepared for burial without the use of chemicals, unless in exceptional circumstances for a second burial at the discretion of the Proper Officer. Where it is intended that a second and subsequent burial shall take place the soil shall be excavated an additional depth of 0.60m beyond the ordinary depth of 1.52m at the time of the initial interment.

19. **REGULATIONS APPLYING TO THE MAPLEWOOD SECTION**

For ashes interment - No casket or urn to be interred shall exceed 48cm in height x 23cm in depth x 30cm deep. Up to three casket interments are permitted within an ashes plot at the discretion of the Proper Officer. A single headstone must commemorate all interments.

Headstones on graves where an interment of cremated remains has taken place must not exceed 60cm, nor be less than 30cm in height; must not exceed 15cm, nor be less than 8cm in thickness.

The base of a memorial can incorporate an inset memorial vase but must not exceed 8cm in height, nor exceed 25cm in depth, nor 40cm in width. The planting of trees or shrubs is not permitted.

For burials - No more than two bodies may be interred in a grave and a single headstone must commemorate both interments.

Headstones on graves where an interment of a body has taken place, must not exceed 90cm, nor be less than 45cm in height; must not exceed 15cm, nor be less than 7.5cm in thickness.

The base of a memorial must not exceed 8cm in height, nor exceed 30cm in depth, nor 75cm in width.

The planting of trees of shrubs is not permitted.

No kerb sets are permitted.

Where it is intended that a second interment shall take place, the soil shall be excavated to an additional depth of 0.6m beyond the ordinary depth at the time of the initial interment.

20. REGULATIONS APPLYING TO THE OAKWOOD SECTION

No casket or urn to be interred shall exceed 48cm in height x 23cm in width x 30cm deep. Up to two casket interments are permitted within an ashes plot at the discretion of the Proper Officer. A single memorial tablet must commemorate both interments.

Memorials placed on graves where an interment of cremated remains has taken place, must be 30cm in height x 30cm in width x 5cm deep, plus plinth and made of an appropriate, traditional material. As this area will remain grass laid the Council will not accept responsibility for maintenance of the direct surrounding area.

Where it is intended that a second interment shall take place, the soil shall be excavated to an additional depth beyond the ordinary depth of 1.52m at the time of the initial interment.

21. **REGULATIONS APPLYING TO THE CHILDREN'S CEMETERY**

Memorials must not exceed 60cm, nor be less than 20cm in height.

The base of a memorial must not exceed 8cm in height, nor exceed 15cm in depth, nor exceed 40cm in width. The planting of trees or shrubs is not permitted.

A maximum of ten small toys or similar item may be placed on a grave. No vases, materials or additional objects other than an approved vase or memorial may be placed on the plots.

No kerb sets are permitted.

22. REGULATIONS APPLYING TO PRIVATE PLOTS

Each private plot will provide the area of two burial plots. No more than two bodies or three ashes caskets will be permitted in each sub-plot. A single headstone must commemorate all interments in each plot

The Council will plant and maintain a low decorative hedging to delineate the edge of the plot.

Memorials may exceed the standard dimensions above, but the written permission of the Proper Officer shall be obtained before any memorial is erected or any inscription or ornamentation is incorporated on a proposed or existing memorial. Such permission will only be given if the proposed memorial is considered to be in keeping with the dignity of the Cemetery.

No kerb sets are permitted.

Where it is intended that a second interment shall take place, the soil shall be excavated to an additional depth of 0.6m beyond the ordinary depth of 1.52m at the time of the initial interment.

23. REGULATIONS APPLYING TO ASHES INTERMENTS ON THE LOWER CEMETERY EMBANKMENT

No casket or urn to be interred shall exceed 48cm in height x 23cm width x 30cm deep. A second interment within a plot shall be at the discretion of the Proper Officer.

A tree, purchased via the Town Council, will be planted at the ashes plot and a small memorial plaque may be installed, with the permission of the Proper Officer, following an interment of ashes.

The Council does not accept responsibility for any memorial tree which is purchased and/or planted on behalf of a parishioner or family member although provision will be made for appropriate tree care to be undertaken.

24. These regulations may be changed from time to time at the discretion of the Council.