

BRADFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Birtin Cemetery Rules

As adopted by Council on 27th November 2013

The installation of new memorials/plaques, renovation of existing memorials/plaques and additional inscriptions to memorials/plaques is carefully controlled by the Parish Council to ensure that;

- a. Work is only carried out with the authority of the registered owners of the Rights of Burial
- b. That all memorials/plaques comply with the Parish Council's applicable regulations
- c. And that maintenance of memorials/plaques and other work is carried out in a manner that ensures all Health and Safety requirements are adhered to.

Memorials and plaques may not be erected if an exclusive Right of Burial or ownership papers have not been purchased.

1. GENERAL

- 1.1 Birtin Cemetery is normally open to the public between dawn and dusk each day.
- 1.2 Birtin Cemetery is administered by and is under the charge of the Clerk to Bradfield Parish Council whose address is Council Offices, Mill Lee Road, Low Bradfield, S6 6LB.
- 1.3 The Council will maintain Birtin Cemetery in a good and decent order. The Council reserves the right to prune, cut down or remove any shrubs or trees within the cemetery at any time in order to maintain decent order.
- 1.4 Plans of Birtin Cemetery are kept and may be seen by prior appointment with the office. A copy of the rules and regulations, table of fees etc., may also be obtained. All burial records are kept at Council Offices and will be made available to individuals with an established interest who can request information from the Clerk.
- 1.5 The allocation of all grave spaces and cremated remains plots/niches are subject to agreement and the approval of the Clerk. Allocation of grave spaces shall be subject to payment of fees applicable at the time of allocation. Further fees are payable at the prevailing rate upon an interment taking place.
- 1.6 The Council stipulates that all persons/organisations carrying out work in the cemetery must provide a copy of Public Liability Insurance and a risk assessment otherwise they will not be allowed on site.
- 1.7 Any headstones/niche plaques which need to be removed from site in order for work to be carried out must only be removed once authorisation is received and the necessary paperwork signed by the person removing the item.

2. BURIALS

- 2.1 No burial shall take place, or any memorial placed relating thereto, without the prior permission of the Clerk to the Parish Council. All excavations for the interment shall be undertaken only by persons approved by the Council.
- 2.2 A minimum of 48 hours notice shall be given at the office, confirmed in writing within 24 hours.
- 2.3 Every notice of interment shall be on the form provided or otherwise agreed by the Council and must contain a full and true statement of the particulars required and be signed by the applicant. All fees and charges shall be paid at the time of giving notice and no interment will be allowed to take place in any grave for which any fees remain unpaid unless an 'account' arrangements has been agreed by the Council.

- 2.4 Orders or instructions received by telephone shall be confirmed in writing within twenty four hours. The Council will not accept responsibility for loss of any remittances or instructions forwarded by post.
- 2.5 The Registrar's or Coroner's Certificate for the disposal shall be made available prior to the funeral taking place.

3. MEMORIALS (BURIALS)

- 3.1 Before the erection of any memorial or other work relating to a burial plot an application must be made to the Council. This application must include a drawing/sketch with measurements and nature of the proposed memorial including materials to be used, along with full details of proposed inscription. Subject to approval and on payment of the appropriate fees, authorisation will be granted. No memorial may be erected or inscription made unless approved by the Clerk to the Parish Council.
- 3.2 All memorials shall be constructed of good quality stone with all fixings made in accordance with recognised trade standards (Recommendations of National Association of Monumental Masons or equivalent) and shall be stabilised using the recommended underground fixing.
- 3.3 In the event of neglect of any memorial, after 3 months notice posted or delivered to the last known address of the owner, the Council shall have the right to remove or otherwise dispose of any such memorial as they may direct. The Council reserves the right to take any such action as may be deemed appropriate in cases or neglected or vandalised memorials which in particular, have become a danger to the public and the cost of such action may be sought from the family or legal representatives.
- 3.4 All materials must be transported to the Burial Ground by hand or on carts or trucks with wheels of not less than 100mm (four inches) in width.
- 3.5 All persons erecting headstones or memorials must use such means as to protect the grass and the walks as directed by the Clerk or a nominated representative and shall be responsible for the clearing of the site following erection of the same including surplus materials.
- 3.6 The erection (or renewal) of a wooden cross is not allowed other than for a temporary period not exceeding six months, following interment. In default of this regulation the Council reserves the right to remove any such cross.
- 3.7 Flowers and shrubs must not be planted on purchased graves. The Council will remove any shrubs, plants or flowers that have been planted in the vicinity of burial plots and the cremated remains area of the Burial Ground. This is to facilitate proper and effective maintenance of the burial ground.
- 3.8 No grave shall be raised by the use of turf, or other means, above the level of the ground in the immediate vicinity.
- 3.9 No vases (other than those incorporated within a memorial), shrubs, trees, plants, artificial wreaths, jars, toys or memorabilia, railings, fencing or other structured enclosing the grave, shall be permitted. Any breach of this condition may result in the removal of any such item by the Council. This is to facilitate the proper and effective maintenance of the burial ground.

4. INTERMENT OF CREAMED REMAINS

- 4.1 No burial of cremated remains shall take place, or any memorial placed relating thereto without the prior permission of the Clerk to the Parish Council. All excavations for the interment of cremated remains shall be undertaken only by persons approved by the Council.
- 4.2 Cremation plots shall not exceed 450mm by 300mm (18"x12").
- 4.3 Cremated remains may be interred 'loose', or in urns and caskets of a suitable design and construction which must be biodegradable.

5. MEMORIALS (CREMATED REMAINS)

- 5.1 A memorial table of good quality natural stone material not exceeding 450 mm x 300 mm (18" x 12") with an inscription previously approved by the Clerk may be placed on the plot at ground level. Nothing other than the memorial tablet may be placed on the ground in the vicinity of the plot.
- 5.2 Where no approved memorial tablet has been placed, no other type of memorial will be permitted.
- 5.3 A single vase will be permitted to be placed on or within the memorial tablet. No additional vases or glass bowls, jars or any other type of container or memorabilia will be permitted. No chippings or borders or shuttering will be permitted on the grassed area of the cremation plot. All offending containers and material will be removed and disposed of by the Council.

6. NICHES (Ashes)

- 6.1 Niches are leased for a 25 year term. The 25 year lease period commences from the date of application. A new lease can begin at the end of each 25 year term. The purchaser will be contacted by the Parish Council towards the end of the 25 year lease period and asked if they wish to renew the lease.
- 6.2 All plaques should be made from stone and handcrafted by a qualified stonemason.
- 6.3 There is a choice of plain engraving on stone, or engraving with gilding in Old English Gold.
- 6.4 The gilding can tarnish after a few years but can be re-gilded. The Stonemasons would be able to provide a quote for this work at the time.
- 6.5 There is a size restriction on the size of the containers to be utilised and some of the niches will only accommodate 2 caskets. Further information can be provided by Parish Council Staff.
- 6.6 The ashes can be removed from niches at a later date because they are buried in a container and are not in the ground.
- 6.7 The owner of the niche is responsible for the ashes. It is a condition of the lease that if the owner does not renew a niche, the owner will fill in the forms the law requires for us to remove the ashes. The owner of the niches would need to inform the Parish Council of their intentions otherwise the ashes would be scattered on the Garden of Remembrance at Birtin Cemetery. If the owner of the niche cannot be contacted at the end of the 25 year lease, the ashes will be removed and scattered on the Garden of Remembrance at Birtin Cemetery, the plaque will be retained for a further six months.
- 6.8 Availability must be checked and an application form completed before a memorial can be purchased. The form must be completed clearly. We reserve the right to refuse an inscription if it could cause offence to others. The form will contain the names of the stonemason appointed by the Parish Council to carry out works in the cemetery. The purchaser should choose from one of these names. All stone masons should be on the British Registration of Accredited Memorial Masons to ensure the installation of memorials plaques is carried out to national Standards.
- 6.9 The person who applies for the memorial will be the registered owner and instructions regarding the memorial will only be accepted from them. The Parish Council should be kept informed of changes to contact details.
- 6.10 If the ownership of the niches is to be transferred or someone is to act on behalf of the owner, this information must be passed in writing to the Parish Council.
- 6.11 The inscribed plaque will be the property of the purchaser. The purchaser may wish to have the plaque insured.
- 6.12 It can take several weeks for the plaque to be provided. The stone mason chosen by the purchaser of the niche will make direct contact with the purchaser when the plaque is ready for installation.

- 6.13 The Parish Council as part of its management scheme will routinely inspect memorials and niches to identify any maintenance work required, the owner will then be contacted.
- 6.15 If a plaque is not renewed, the Parish Council will remove the plaque and keep it for 6 months. If the purchaser wishes to collect the plaque during this time the Parish Council must be informed.
- 6.16 The purchaser must not fix, move or remove plaques themselves, nor should anything be attached to the plaque. The Parish Council may remove such items.

7. GENERAL CONDUCT

- 7.1 Persons within the burial ground shall at all times conduct themselves with proper decorum and any person found conducting himself or herself in a noisy, discourteous or disorderly manner will be expelled from the burial ground.
- 7.2 Children under the age of 12 will not be admitted except under the care of a competent person and all persons admitted to the burial ground will be subject to the directions of the Clerk or nominated representative.
- 7.3 Dogs will only be allowed in the burial ground secured on a lead and must be prevented from defecating the area.
- 7.4 Cycling within the burial ground is prohibited.

The Council reserves to itself the power to make alterations from time to time in the foregoing rules and regulations.