

St Mary the Virgin, Silchester Graveyard Regulations

Regulations

- Visitors to the graveyard are asked to behave in a quiet orderly manner so as to preserve the peaceful atmosphere created in the graveyard
- No trees, shrubs or planting of any kind are allowed
- Dogs must be kept on leads. Dog waste must be disposed of safely.
- Archaeological remains must not be disturbed or removed from the site.
- The appropriate fee for any burial, memorial or amendment to a memorial must be paid to the Parish Church Council (PCC) of St Mary, Silchester, before any work is commenced
- Written permission from the Rector or Archdeacon is required for any burial or memorial.

Visitors should be aware there is wild animal activity in this area, causing disturbance to the ground and to floral tributes

Gravespaces

The precise dimensions and location of a grave or space for cremated remains must be agreed in writing with the Rector. Spaces will be allocated by the Rector according to PCC agreement. It is not possible to choose or reserve grave spaces, except by faculty permission.

Cremated remains

Cremated remains may be buried in an existing grave, subject to permission of the Rector. New plots for cremated remains are only available in the Garden of Remembrance. Cremated remains may be buried in caskets or straight into the ground.

Headstones

Headstones or cremation tablets and wooden crosses can be erected on the grave only with the written authority of the Rector. No other type of memorial is permitted. Application forms are available from the Rector or Churchwardens. All wording or inscription must be agreed with the Rector before being commissioned.

The overall height of headstones must not exceed 760mm, width must not exceed 760mm, thickness must not exceed 150mm (or be less than 75mm). The single sub-base/ foundation must be at or below the level of the grass and must not exceed 900mm wide by 76mm high or extending 100mm in any direction.

The headstone must be erected within the border of the plot at the head of the grave by a stonemason or funeral director to an approved standard (single anchor fitting). Erection of headstones **must not take place until 6 months after interment**, to allow settlement of the ground. The headstone/cremation tablets may not incorporate portraits or photographs.

Headstones or cremation tablets may only be made from:

Limestone – Portland, Purbeck, Derbyshire, York, Hopton, Nabresina, French, Portuguese;

Slate – Light Grey, Blue/Black, Green;

Granite – Light Grey, Blue or Rustenburg (Charcoal) (not polished)

Cremation tablets must not exceed 300mm square by 100mm in depth. They must be laid flush with the grass or existing surface. They may be laid **one month after burial of ashes** (whether contained in a casket or not) to allow for ground settlement.

Wooden crosses, as approved by the Rector, may be erected to mark the grave pending the erection of a permanent headstone.

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Tributes

The only items permitted on graves are floral tributes, to be placed in a receptacle incorporated within the headstone/cremation tablet only. No artificial flowers are allowed.

This is for Health and Safety reasons and to enable maintenance of the graveyard to a set standard. Such items must not exceed the height/width of the headstone. Care of wreaths and flowers is the responsibility of relatives. Any dead floral tributes or unsuitable containers will be removed by the PCC. The PCC regrets that no responsibility can be accepted for the removal of or damage to flowers or containers during the grass-cutting season. Christmas tributes will be removed after the 31 January.

The following are **not permitted**:

- Small items, such as ceramic ornaments or soft toys.
- Brick lined graves.
- Elevation/mounding of the surface of a grave (except the initial mounding by the gravedigger to allow for settlement)
- Wire fencing, railings, kerb or edging stones around or on top of the graves.
- The erection of any memorial, planting or placing of any item of any description without written permission from the Rector.

Prior to the erection of a headstone, floral tributes may be placed on the grave providing they are in small unbreakable containers measuring no more than 30cm high and 15cm wide. The graveyard is inspected on a regular basis. If any prohibited items are found on graves, the registered next of kin will be sent a letter, reminding them of the Graveyard Regulations and advising that if the items are not removed by the next of kin, they will be removed by the PCC after a period of 2 weeks. Thereafter prohibited items will be removed without further notice.

Next of kin: it is the responsibility of next of kin to advise the PCC secretary of any change of address or contact details.

Maintenance of the Cemetery

The overall responsibility for the maintenance of the graveyard rests with the PCC. The graveyard is a lawned area and will be cut at regular intervals during the growing season.

Rights Reserved by the PCC

The PCC reserves the right to reverse, reaffix, move, line up or place in such positions as may be required, any headstone/cremation tablet in the graveyard.

The PCC reserves the right, in the interests of public safety, without the notice of the next of kin, to lay down, remove or repair, any headstone which is deemed by the Churchwardens to be unsafe. In such cases, a notice will be placed by the headstone and the next of kin will be informed immediately.

The PCC reserves the right to pass over and temporarily cover any grave for the purpose of performing any work in connection with interments or the maintenance of graves.

The PCC reserves the right to remove diseased trees or plants donated as a memorial.

The PCC reserves the right to alter or add to these regulations.

The Rector will be pleased to render whatever help or advice is needed and can be contacted on 07759 151576 or revstevemckay@gmail.com