

## **St. Mary the Virgin Gt. Warley - Churchyard Policy**

### **1. Funerals**

1.1 For many years, St Mary's has tried to meet the spiritual needs of the parish through worship and prayer and has been a place to celebrate life and to remember before God the lives of those from the parish who have died, we want to continue this tradition.

1.2 Under Church of England policy, everyone living in the parish of Gt. Warley is entitled to a funeral service held in St. Mary's Church led by the Parish Priest / Minister, regardless of whether they have attended church or not.

### **2 Fees**

2.1 The charges for funeral services/burials/interment of ashes and for making Faculty and Form CR1 applications, will be levied at the current statutory rate set by the Church of England and any additional fees set by the PCC. (Parochial Church Council)

### **3 Burials of Bodies**

3.1 By seeking to use consecrated ground, the bereaved must be aware that they are also submitting to the jurisdiction of the Consistory Court in all matters, including the conduct of the service and the marking of the grave.

3.2 The Rector will decide where a burial will take place and will usually allocate the next available grave space in the row that is currently being used for burials.

3.3 It is possible to have a grave dug "double depth" such that a second coffin can be buried on top of the first at a later date.

3.4 Grave spaces cannot be reserved, except by Faculty application. It is the policy of the PCC not to support the reservation of grave spaces, except in exceptional circumstances.

3.5 The family of the deceased bear the cost of any memorials and of maintaining them but they do not own the grave space and the Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the task of keeping the churchyard in good order.

### **4 Right of Burial or Interment**

The churchyard is reserved for the following:

#### **4.2**

a. Persons resident in the Parish at the time of their death.

- b. Persons whose names are on the Electoral Roll of St. Mary's Church Gt. Warley at the time of their death.
- c. Persons dying in the Parish.

Further to this a person may be interred in the churchyard if:

- d. A close family member is already interred in the churchyard (parent, brother, sister or child)
- e. The deceased has lived in the Parish for a minimum of 5 years in the previous 20 years.
- f. The deceased is a relative of a person already buried in St. Mary's Churchyard, and they are to be buried/interred in an existing family grave, provided the capacity exists.
- g. The deceased had recently left permanent residence in Gt. Warley for the sole reason of needing nursing or residential care.

## **5 Headstones and Markers**

5.1 The Churchyard at St. Mary's was created with the intention of there being no headstones, instead graves were to be marked with inscribed kerbs. It is now the policy of the Chelmsford Diocese that kerbs are discouraged as they are deemed a trip hazard.

5.2 The Rector has discretion to authorise the erection of any headstone which falls within the types and classes authorised in the Churchyard Handbook. They may refuse to permit the erection of an authorised headstone if they believe it would be detrimental to the churchyard.

5.3 No application for the commissioning of a headstone will be considered until a period of six months had passed since the burial. (Not applicable to ashes burials)

5.4 If individuals wish to erect a headstone or mark an ashes plot (which falls within the Rector's discretion) they should apply on form CR1 (available from the stonemason or Rector). Permission is always required for any stonework or inscriptions (including additional inscriptions) and no work should be ordered or put in-hand until permission has been granted. If individuals wish to erect a memorial which falls outside the Rector's discretion they may apply for a Faculty giving the grounds for their request. The Rector will advise them how to approach the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) before seeking a Faculty. Applications on a CR1 form or for a Faculty will incur a Statutory Fee.

5.5 Inscriptions must be simple and reverent and appropriate to a Churchyard. The Christian and surnames of the deceased should be given, with the dates of birth and death (or age and date of death).

5.6 There are many practical reasons (e.g. maintenance, appearance) why horizontal ledgers, raised kerbs, railings and stone or other chippings are no longer

normally permitted as part of memorials. Similarly, memorials in the shape of a statue or bird bath, or including any image of the deceased or any photograph or coloured drawing are specifically excluded from the delegated authority given to the Rector.

## **6 Burial of Ashes**

6.1 Cremated remains may be interred in a family grave but otherwise will normally be buried in the lawned area around the outside of the apse of the church.

6.2 Ashes must be buried loose or in a bio-degradable container or wooden casket.

6.3 The place of interment of ashes may be marked by a small flat plaque, lying flush with the ground level, of the same size, lettering style and material as currently being used in neighbouring ashes plots, No marker may be commissioned or fitted without an application being made on a CR1 form to the Rector or Church Wardens.

Please contact Bennetts Funerals, Brentwood, to order plaques Tel: 01277 210 104

6.4 The fees for the interment of ashes are contained in the table of Parochial Fees.

6.5 Ashes interred into an existing grave cannot be marked with a separate stone, instead an inscription should be added to the existing memorial.

## **7 Flowers - Planting of Trees, bulbs and shrubs**

7.1 No tree, rose bush or other shrub may be planted in the churchyard without permission from the Vicar and the PCC.

7.2 Planting of shrubs, bushes and roses within 1 meter (3 feet 3inches) of the church walls is not permitted under any circumstances.

7.2 Artificial flowers of good quality may be placed on a grave, but both natural and artificial flowers will deteriorate after periods of time. The PCC may remove flowers of whatever kind and wreaths at their discretion if they judge them to be unsightly and all artificial flowers after two months.

## **8 Benches**

8.1 The PCC has decided that the total number of benches placed in the churchyard shall be 7. No further application for benches within the churchyard will be considered unless replacing a bench which has been damaged or deteriorated through age.

*This policy was adopted by the Church Council on 6th September 2015*