



The Parish of Horndon, Orsett and Bulphan

Parish Churchyard Policy

1. Funerals

- 1.1 For many years, the Parish has tried to meet the spiritual needs of the parishioners 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, and we want to continue this tradition.
- 1.2 Under Church of England policy, everyone living in the Parish is entitled to a funeral service held in an Anglican Church 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 Parochial Church Council (PCC).

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, in consultation with the churchwardens, 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 should be noted that the grave space remains the property of the Church of England.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 Grave spaces cannot be reserved, except by Faculty application. It is the policy of the PCC not to support the reservation of grave spaces.
- 3.6 A record of all burials and interment of ashes must be kept in each church and the plot marked on a grid.

4. Right of Burial or Interment

There is a legal right for anyone:

- 4.1 who was a parishioner at the time of death.
- 4.2 who died in the parish
- 4.3 whose name was, at the date of death, on the church electoral roll of the parish

to be buried or have his/her cremated remains interred in the churchyard provided that the churchyard has space available, and it has not been formally closed for burials.

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

- 4.4 A close family member is already interred in the churchyard (parent, brother, sister, child or a person recognised as being in a relationship with the deceased as acknowledged by current UK legislation).
- 4.5 The deceased has previously lived in the Parish for a minimum of 5 years in the previous 20 years.



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- 4.6 The deceased is a relative of a person already buried in St Peter and St Paul's Church, Horndon-on-the-hill, St Giles and All Saints, Orsett or St Mary the Virgin Church, Bulphan Churchyard, and they are to be buried/interred in an existing family grave, provided the capacity exists.
- 4.7 The deceased had recently left permanent residence in the Parish for the sole reason of needing nursing or residential care.
- 4.8 The deceased took an active part in service in the Church.

5. Headstones and Markers

- 5.1 Churchyard rules have changed over the years. The current Churchyard Regulations are displayed at all three churches or can be found on the Parish website (www.hobnob.org.uk). You may see memorials in the churchyard which are different from those permitted under the present rules. Regardless of what may have been allowed in the past it is present rules which apply in the churchyard. For example, it is now the policy of the Chelmsford Diocese that kerbs are not allowed as they are deemed to be a trip hazard and make cutting grass difficult.
- 5.2 The Rector can authorise the erection of any headstone which falls within the types and classes authorised in the Churchyard Handbook. They will be obliged to refuse permission of the erection of an authorised headstone if it does not comply with these regulations.
- 5.3 No application for the commissioning of a headstone will be considered until a period of six months has passed since the burial, to allow the ground time to settle.
- 5.4 If individuals wish to erect a headstone, they must apply on form CR1 (available from the stonemason). 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 regulations, they may apply for a faculty giving the grounds for their request. The information on how to approach the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) before seeking a faculty is available on the Parish website. 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 and must comply with the current Churchyard Regulations which are displayed at all three churches or can be found on the Parish website.
- 5.6 The 'owner' of a churchyard memorial is defined as the person who erected the monument in question and after his/her death the heir or heirs at law of the person or persons in whose memory the monument was erected. The primary responsibility for the upkeep falls to the owners of the memorial.
- 5.7 The placing of additional memorial artefacts or fencing on or around graves is not permitted.
- 5.8 The PCC reserves the right to remove memorials or any item for which permission has not been given.
- 5.9 The PCC reserves the right to repair, lay down or remove dangerous monuments where relations cannot be traced, or where no action has been taken after due notice has been given.



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6. Burial of Ashes

- 6.1 Cremated remains may be interred in a family grave but otherwise will be buried in the designated memorial garden in each churchyard/cemetery.
- 6.2 Ashes should be buried loose.
- 6.3 The fees for the interment of ashes are contained in the table of Parochial Fees.
- 6.4 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/plants

- 7.1 No rose bush or other shrub may be planted in the churchyard without permission from the Rector and the PCC.
- 7.2 Where a flower vase is included in the base of the headstone fresh flowers or stems cut from shrubs or bushes including holly may be placed in the vase.
- 7.3 No plastic or artificial flowers may be laid or placed in containers except Remembrance Day poppies or crosses and traditional Christmas wreaths. Remembrance poppies or crosses should be removed by Christmas and Christmas wreaths by the end of January.
- 7.4 The PCC retains the right to remove any untidy or decayed flowers or anything that is not permitted.

8. Trees

- 8.1 Maintenance of trees in the churchyard falls to the PCC and they are responsible to ensure all trees within the churchyard are safe and steps taken to remedy any unsafe tree within the churchyard.
- 8.2 The planting of trees in the churchyard is at the discretion of the Rector and PCC. The details of the type and proposed planting position of any tree must be submitted for their approval prior to any such action being undertaken.
- 8.3 Before undertaking works to any tree establish if the tree is subject to a tree preservation order (TPO) or in a conservation area.
- 8.4 All works to trees should be carried out by a qualified arboriculturist.
- 8.5 If a tree suddenly poses an immediate or substantial risk of harm to people or property it is necessary to consult with a qualified person and to do the minimum necessary to make it safe. This may include fencing off the area. The local authority should be contacted before any work is done to the tree but if an emergency precludes this it will be necessary to contact the Local Authority and DAC as soon as possible afterwards. Even when carrying out emergency work to trees, the laws protecting wildlife still apply.
- 8.6 If a tree is not protected by a TPA, is not in a conservation area and is not covered by other pertinent legislation the PCC should check to see if the works fall within List A or List B or requires a faculty.

9. Benches

- 9.1 The PCC has decided the total number of benches placed in each churchyard or cemetery shall be as listed below. No further application for benches within the churchyard will be considered unless replacing a bench which has been damaged or deteriorated through age.

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| • Horndon Churchyard | 2 benches |
| • Horndon Cemetery | 3 benches |
| • Orsett Churchyard | 6 benches |
| • Bulphan Churchyard | 2 benches |



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10. Upkeep of Churchyards and Cemetery

- 10.1 The churchyards/cemetery are owned by the Church of England, and they are maintained and financed by the churches in the Parish. No financial assistance is provided by the local council or any other agency.
- 10.2 We are dependent on the goodwill of volunteer gardeners and Community Services teams. The PCC will ensure that all churchyard volunteers are safely recruited and are aware of and have agreed to comply with safeguarding requirements.
- 10.3 In accordance with ecclesiastical law, the Rector and the PCC are responsible for the good order and maintenance of the Churchyards if the Churchyards are still open for burials. They must observe ecclesiastical and relevant civil law.
- 10.4 Consideration to the maintenance of Churchyards regarding mowing and control of pests and vermin will be at the discretion of the PCC. We are members of Eco Church, and we have a responsibility to strike a balance to keep churchyards maintained and cared for, whilst having consideration to the provision of areas for wildlife to flourish.

11. Confetti

- 11.1 The throwing of confetti made up of real flower petals is permitted anywhere outside. The throwing of flower petals inside the church is not permitted.
No paper confetti, of any kind, is permitted in the church or churchyard.

This policy was amended and agreed at a PCC meeting on 31st January 2025

This policy will be reviewed every five years or when the Diocesan Churchyard handbook is amended.

Next review date is January 2030