

FERRYHILL TOWN COUNCIL



POLICY

CEMETERY

DOCUMENT CONTROL	
Version number:	V 1.0
Adopted on:	2015
To be reviewed by:	December 2018

Ferryhill Town Council is the Burial Authority in charge of Duncombe Cemetery. Throughout this policy the word Council refers to Ferryhill Town Council.

Burial plans and registers are kept in Ferryhill Town Hall and searches can be carried out, there is a charge per search, cost will be provided on application.

Enquiries regarding burials can be made at the Town Hall during the following hours:-

Monday - Thursday	9.00am - 12noon & 1.00pm - 4.30pm
Friday	9.00am - 12noon & 1.00pm - 4.00pm

Tel.01740 652157 (An answerphone service is available out of office hours)

Fax 01740 657905

Email: enquiries@ferryhill.gov.uk

1 LOCATION/OPENING TIMES

Duncombe Cemetery is situated in Cleves Avenue, Ferryhill, DL17 0DT

The nearest bus stop is in Linden Road, Ferryhill approximately 15 metres from the main gates of the cemetery.

The summer opening times, April to September, are 8.00am till 9.00pm weekdays and 9.00am till 9.00pm weekends and winter, October to March, from 8am till dusk weekdays and 9am till dusk on weekends.

The main gates and the pedestrian gate will be open during these hours to enable access; both gates will be locked when the cemetery is closed.

2 CAR PARKING

The car park is on the left at the bottom of the driveway.

All cars must park in the car park and all vehicles are left at the owner's risk.

There is a maximum speed limit of 5 miles per hour in operation.

3 FEES

ALL fees will be doubled for residents outside of the parish boundary of Ferryhill. FEES PAYMENTS AND SUMS fixed under section 214 and schedule 26 of the Local Government Act 1972.

ALL fees will be doubled for residents outside of the parish boundary of Ferryhill and for a burial the day after a statutory holiday.

All payments of fees and charges shall be invoiced immediately after the burial and must be paid within 28 days

4 ARRANGEMENTS FOR BURIALS

In most cases burial arrangements will be made by the nominated Funeral Director who will advise on cemetery protocol. Burial instructions shall only be given on the official forms supplied by the Council for that purpose. The particulars required must be fully and distinctly completed.

The Sexton will select the next appropriate plot for burial. Interments will normally take place;

10.00am - 3.00pm	Monday to Thursday
10.00am - 2.00pm	Friday.

5 CREMATED REMAINS

Cremated remains can either be buried in a casket or they can be scattered on a grave, the top layer of the grave must be removed by the Sexton before the scattering takes place, cost on application. This can be arranged through a Funeral Director or directly through the Town Council.

6 PURCHASE OF GRANT OF GRAVE SPACE

It is the policy of the Council to sell grave spaces, of either single or double depth, guaranteeing the purchaser exclusive rights for a period of 100 years from the date of interment, (this date being calculated from the date of final interment in the case of a double depth grave space).

A grant of exclusive right will be confirmed by the issue of a deed of grant.

The exclusive right of burial is the right to inter into a grave space, not the purchase of the land. No one, other than the purchaser/s is permitted to inter into the grave space, or erect a memorial.

A grant of exclusive right of burial confers no right other than of burial but the privileges of erecting a memorial on a burial place are granted only in respect of burial places in which exclusive rights exist.

No burial may take place without the purchase of exclusive rights

The grave number must be indicated on the rear of headstone

The purchase of exclusive rights for a child up to 5 years guaranteeing the purchaser exclusive rights for a period of 100 years from the date of interment, (this date being calculated from the date of final interment in the case of a double depth grave space).

Purchase of Grant of Grave Space is necessary should you wish to reserve the right to FUTURE BURIALS (6(a)) in the grave plot or should you wish to install any form of MEMORIAL (6(b)).

Completion of the application to purchase the Grant of Grave Space is usually dealt with by the Funeral Director and the Town Hall staff at the time of initial arrangements for the funeral.

Confirmation of purchase of Grant of Grave Space will be required by your chosen stonemason before he can proceed with his application to install any memorial.

A purchase of grant of grave space does not transfer ownership of the land to the purchasers this remains at all time with the Town Council, accordingly the Town Council reserve the right to remove any items or alterations undertaken without permission.

6(a) RIGHT OF BURIAL

The purchaser of the exclusive right of burial in a grave space shall be given a certificate in respect of the same, and the particulars thereof shall be entered in a register to be kept for that purpose. It is important that you notify us of any change of address immediately if you purchase a right of burial.

In all cases of burials in purchased ground, the notice of interment shall be signed by the purchaser or owner thereof for the time being, or a person authorised to exercise the right, usually the funeral director signifying consent to such burial.

The grant of exclusive right shall be for a period not exceeding 100 years from the date of the grant. This is an exclusive right to burial only.

6(b) MEMORIALS

Headstones for burials shall be of a standard shape with maximum dimensions of 763mm x 610mm x 75mm (2ft 6in high x 2ft wide x 3in) to 100mm (4in) thick.

The dimension of a matching base must be no more than 763mm x 305mm (2ft 6in wide x 12in) back to front x 100mm (4in) thick.

Headstones will be sited central to the head of the grave space, but in the event of adjoining spaces being occupied by one family, headstones may be sited adjacent to each other, subject to the over-riding consideration of convenience of ground maintenance. Requests for such adjacent headstones must be referred to the Works Manager to the Council who will decide on the application of this policy in consultation with the Town Clerk.

Until it is deemed suitable for the siting of a headstone after settlement of a new grave, a temporary wooden cross (or appropriate non-Christian alternative) may be placed at the head of the grave. This item must be removed upon the installation of a permanent headstone. If a temporary marker is not replaced by a headstone after the sexton considers settlement is complete, the Council reserves the right to remove the temporary marker, although reference will be made to the appropriate officiating funeral director before such action is taken.

Memorials shall not include any of the following, in any sections, made up borders or surrounds, pebbles, chippings, glass, china, plastic, jars, grave ornaments, bird tables, wind chimes, lanterns. The planting of graves with shrubs and plants in any section is not permitted. These rules have been devised for the Health & Safety of the public and cemetery staff.

All permanent memorials must be durable natural stone, marble or granite. The full name of the deceased must be inscribed on the memorial and the grave reference number must be inscribed on the back of the headstone.

In the interests of safety and to ensure as far as possible a satisfactory standard of installation all memorials must meet standards and specifications as recognised by the 'Association of Burial Authorities'. To avoid disappointment please ensure that your nominated stonemason can demonstrate his ability to satisfy the above criteria.

Applications for the erection of a headstone/vase must be submitted in writing to the Town Hall for approval by the authorised officer, payment will be made prior to the headstone being erected, fee on application.

The Stone Mason must contact the Town Hall prior to the headstone being erected at the Cemetery to enable the sexton to mark the correct grave space.

Permanent memorials may be placed only on graves to which the burial rights have been purchased. Where the burial rights have not been purchased a wooden marker or cross (the cross not to exceed 30" x 24" overall) showing the name, age and date of death of the deceased may be permitted, subject to the Council's approval or concrete numbers into ground level. Such a marker shall be removed by the Council on the expiry of the time after which the grave may legally be re-used. The Council reserves the right to remove permanent memorials erected where the burial rights have not been purchased.

Flat stones, kerbstones, fencing, or any other form of enclosure or border is not permitted. Trenches or any other type of boundary marking are not allowed.

Potted or planted trees or shrubs are not allowed on or near graves. Only cut flowers are allowed.

Memorials, trees and shrubs which are not allowed will be removed immediately without further notice.

The cemetery staff will - as part of their routine maintenance - top up graves, remove any object or debris, or disallowed objects from the rear of the memorial.

The stonemason is responsible for removing any rubbish when erecting a monument.

The Town Council reserves the right to prescribe a specific type of headstone in the interests of cemetery safety.

6(c) MAINTAINING MEMORIALS/INSURANCE

It is the responsibility of the grave owner to maintain and repair any damage sustained to memorials.

It is strongly advised that the family/person who purchases the headstone takes out the necessary insurance cover against accidental damage or vandalism. Please contact a Stonemason who should be able to advise you about this matter.

The Town Council are not responsible for any damage to the headstone unless this is witnessed at the time of happening. Hearsay cannot be accepted.

6(d) MEMORIAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Whilst purchasers of headstones hold some responsibility for the safety of headstones the Town Council takes seriously its responsibility to keep the cemetery a safe place for all visitors.

Accordingly memorials within the Cemetery are constantly monitored for safety reasons and a headstone safety test is undertaken every six months. If **a memorial** is found to be in a dangerous condition the Council may take the following action.

- i Remove and store the memorial on site or,
- ii Dismantle the memorial and lay the headstone flush with the ground or,
- iii Repair the memorial to make it safe if this is practical, the costs for this may be recovered from the grant of grave space.

Whilst the Town Council will take the utmost care when undertaking the above tasks it will not be responsible for any alleged damage caused whilst doing so without specific proof that the damage was caused by Council staff and was avoidable. The costs for undertaking the work may be recovered from the grave owner. If the owner of the grave space cannot be traced, further interments may not be permitted until the cost of carrying out the work has been settled.

7 LENGTH OF NOTICE PREVIOUS TO INTERMENT

Notice of interment must be given at least 2 days prior to the time for interment. No application for burial can be received on Saturdays or Sundays, or outside the office hours stated.

No interments will take place on weekends or statutory public holidays. For any interment arranged for the day following a public holiday fees will be doubled.

Whenever it is found necessary to postpone or change the time of a funeral from that for which notice has been given, written notification of the postponement must be received at the Town Hall office giving at least 4 working hours notice of the change.

8 CERTIFICATE FOR BURIAL OR CREMATION

The Certificate of Registration of Death for Burial or Cremation, issued by the Registrar of Births and Deaths, must be given to the Sexton at the time of interment. No funeral will take place without production of a disposal certificate.

9 MEETING AT THE CEMETERY

When arrangements are made for mourners to meet at the cemetery, persons intending to arrive before the funeral cortege should be advised to park in the main car park and wait on foot at the cemetery gates for the arrival of the cortege.

The time announced for the burial to take place will normally mean the time that the funeral is due to arrive at the cemetery gates.

10 BURIALS

Cars arriving in procession with the funeral cortege should follow the Funeral Director into the cemetery through the main gates and park in the car park.

11 FOLLOWING BURIAL

Backfilling of graves will not normally begin until mourners are making their way out of the cemetery. Graves are left slightly mounded to allow for settlement, flowers delivered at the time of the burial will be carefully placed on the grave by cemetery staff upon completion of backfilling.

12 GRAVE AFTERCARE

Turfing over of the grave plot will be carried out by cemetery staff following a period of settlement of up to six weeks during which time the grave will be topped up with soil as necessary. Settling of graves may take longer than twelve weeks depending on weather and ground conditions. Any plants or items found on the area to be turfed will be carefully relocated to the memorial area to the head of the plot to allow turfing to take place.

Mourners are respectfully advised not to place ornaments or plants on the grave during this settlement time as weather and ground conditions can result in rapid overnight settlement.

13 MAINTENANCE OF GRAVES

Maintenance and upkeep of these areas is the responsibility of the Town Council. The planting of trees, plants or conifers is not permitted. The Town Council reserve the right to clear such planted areas without further notice should the plot become neglected or weedy or where plants overgrow into adjacent plots or where grass cutting procedures are hindered.

14 SALE OF GRAVE SPACES

It is the policy of the Council to sell grave spaces, of either single or double depth, guaranteeing the purchaser exclusive rights for a period of 100 years from the date of interment, (this date being calculated from the date of final interment in the case of a double depth grave space).

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15 MEMORIAL GARDEN

A memorial garden was created within Duncombe Cemetery in 2008. Within the memorial garden there is a memorial wall for remembrance plaques to be mounted.

Artificial flowers or pot plants are not allowed to be placed within the memorial garden. Any dead or dying flowers will be removed from the garden at the discretion of the Sexton.

16 MEMORIAL GARDEN PLAQUES

Plaques are available to purchase from the Council, cost on application. The purchase of the plaque includes fitting and an inscription of up to 80 characters, including spaces. Plaques will not be engraved and mounted until payment has been received.

Any memorial plaque space will be leased for a period of fifty years from the date the plaque is fixed.

Ferryhill Town Council will maintain and periodically clean the plaque.

Memorial plaque application forms are available from Ferryhill Town Hall.

17 ASHES GARDEN

An Ashes garden is also at the rear of the memorial garden and plaques may be purchased and placed in the appropriate place.

18 MEMORIAL PLAQUES

The council have created a dedicated area within the cemetery where memorial plaques can be placed in memory of people whose remains are interred elsewhere. Application should be made to the Council Office in the first instance where more details will be available.

Commemorative plaques shall be provided and sited by such Memorial Companies as approved by Ferryhill Town Council.

19 COMMEMORATIVE BENCHES

The Council will consider the installation of a commemorative bench in specified areas only. Applicants must write to the Council in the first instance, stating their request. The Council reserves the right to dictate design and composition, positioning and fixing of the bench and the right of removal if it is deemed a danger to the public.

20 FLORAL DECORATIONS

Floral decorations are to be fresh, cut flowers.

Artificial flowers are not permitted.

Floral tributes will be removed when, in the opinion of the sexton, they become unsightly

No separate flower containers are to be placed on grave space

No planting is permitted on the grave space

21 CHILDREN UNDER 16 YEARS OLD

Children under 16 years of age are usually expected to be accompanied by an adult when visiting the cemetery, any children unaccompanied may be asked to leave the cemetery.

22 DOGS AND OTHER ANIMALS

Dogs are allowed in the cemetery, but must be kept on a short leash. Dog owners are required to clean up dog litter and remove it from site, failure to do this could result in the owner being fined and dogs being banned from the cemetery. No other animal is to be taken into the cemetery without the express permission in writing of Ferryhill Town Council

23 WATER POINTS

Water points are provided for use, visitors are requested to remove all water containers from site.

The Burial Authority, Ferryhill Town Council, reserves the right to amend the details and contents of this policy and to deal with any circumstances or contingency not provided for in the contents as necessary.