

Rampton Parish Council	
Burial Ground Policy	

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1. Introduction:

- The purposes of this document are:-
 - to provide guidance and regulation of the Rampton Burial Ground site to ensure that the site remains a place of peace and reflection for the relatives of the people they commemorate and to interested visitors.
 - To guide anyone requiring the services of the Parish Council to the processes involved with respect to burials and related processes.
 - To detail the conditions to be adhered to for those requesting and conducting interments, exhumations and installation of memorials.
- The Rampton Burial Ground is owned by Rampton Parish Council (RPC) and managed by the Parish Clerk under the direction of the Parish Council.
- The guidelines and regulations are in addition to the **Local Authorities Order 1977 / 204 (as amended)** and any other local regulations currently in force. Where there is any conflict between this policy and current legislation then the legislation will apply.
- This policy incorporates and supersedes the Memorials Conditions agreed by the Duly Appointed Councillors of Rampton Parish Council in May 2011.
- This Policy, relevant Documents and fees as referred to in this policy can be found on Rampton.org website or by contacting the Parish Clerk.

2. General conditions

- Funeral arrangements must be made through a recognised funeral director, as RPC does not have the resources to facilitate private burials.
- Children on the site must be supervised by a responsible adult. No games, sports or riding are permitted on the Burial Ground.
- Dogs on the Burial Ground must be kept on a lead at all times.
- The consumption of alcohol and smoking are prohibited in the Burial Ground.
- No person shall canvass or solicit business in the Burial Ground.


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3. Administration

- RPC are responsible for the administration and maintenance of the Burial Ground.
- All interment bookings and other burial ground enquiries must be made to the Parish Clerk.
- A Register of Graves, a Register of Burials and associated Plan, and a Register of Dis-interments (exhumations) must be kept by the Parish Clerk.
- On purchase of a grave the purchaser will be issued with a **Deed of Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial**. This means that this person is the **only person** that has the right to determine who is buried in the plot. Only single ownership of the Deed of Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial is permitted. If the owner of this Right is not the deceased to be buried they must agree and sign the Notice of Interment before an interment will be authorised by RPC.
- The Deed will confirm the number and type of burials permitted in the Grave. Due to the ground conditions only single full burials are permitted, however a single additional cremated remains may be permitted if records confirm there is sufficient depth above the buried full remains to meet the conditions laid out in **Sections 4 and 5**. The Deed does not mean that the grave owner owns the land, he owns the Right to Bury only for the term stated on the Deed.
- All activities subsequent to a burial must be applied for by the current registered owner of the plot. Authorisation for any activities will only be granted once ownership has been registered as detailed below:-
- **Transfer of Ownership of Exclusive Rights.**
 - A transferred Exclusive Right of Burial Plot Ownership is only valid if it has been registered and agreed by the Parish Clerk.
 - It is advisable that where the owner of the grave is interred within the Grave, arrangements be made for the transfer of ownership. No further burials, Internments of cremated remains, scattering of cremated remains, additional inscriptions on memorials or installation of new memorials will be permitted until entitled ownership has been established.
 - The new ownership, in the case where the original purchaser is deceased, **must** demonstrate ownership of the grave by producing either a Grant of Probate, a valid Will or a Letter of Administration. If all of these are absent a completed **Statutory Declaration** witnessed by a Commissioner of Oaths eg Magistrate can be made. The clerk can write a Statutory Declaration for the applicant, for which a fee will be charged.
 - This fee must be paid at the time the **Transfer of Ownership** form and accompanying proof of Transfer is presented to the clerk. This form will be retained by RPC as a permanent record of the authorisation for further activity related to the grave. A new Deed of Exclusive Rights will not be issued.
- **A table of fees** is available in the Parish Council section of the Rampton Village website (Rampton.org) The Parish Council reserve the right to make alterations to the fees.

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- **All fees** must be paid **in full** to the Parish Council **before** a plot is purchased or ownership transferred or an interment, a memorial erection, removal or amendment will be permitted to proceed.


4. Burial Plot Purchase, Ownership and Interments

- Anyone can be interred in the Rampton Burial Ground, however priority is given to residents of Rampton. This is reflected in the fees charged (see separate document: **Fees for the Rampton Burial Ground**) in recognition of payments received via precept contribution to the up keep of community facilities. The charges are reviewed annually. For the purposes of burial plot purchase and interments the following definitions apply:-
 - a “**resident**” is defined as a person who was on the electoral register in Rampton at any time during the 10 years prior to plot purchase or death. This definition includes minors whose parent or guardian satisfy this criteria and a person who has moved into a nursing home or other supervised accommodation on the grounds of ill health within this period.
 - a “**residential associate**” is defined as a person who was a former long term resident prior to 10 years before death **or** a close relative of a family member who is already interred in Rampton Burial Ground.
 - The “**general public**” is defined as anyone that does not have a clear association with the village as defined above.

The Parish Council may consider exemptions to the above categories, dependent on proof of past connection with Rampton, and the Council reserves the right for absolute discretion on applying exemptions.

- The Burial Ground has a consecrated and an unconsecrated area, so burials of all faiths can be accommodated.
- Interment of **animal remains** is **not** permitted.
- Due to ground conditions, burials in **earth graves** are restricted to a single interment **or** a single interment **plus** a single cremated remains interment. If cremated remains are to be placed in an occupied grave due regard must be taken of the policy with regard to Exhumations (**see section 5**)
- The **depth of the grave** dug must take into account the above proposed occupancy, to allow a **minimum of 3 feet of earth above the final interment**.
- **Plots for cremated remains** are available. A **maximum of two interments** in one plot is permitted. If two interments are conducted on **separate occasions**, the second will only be permitted if there are clear records of where the first interment was placed within the plot to avoid the risk of disturbing the first interment (**see section 5**)
- A **Notice of Interment** form must be fully completed and the fee payment given to the Parish Clerk before an interment will be authorised by RPC. Please note authorisation for pre-purchased graves can only be given where clear Exclusive Rights to the Grave can be shown (**see section 3**). The notice of interment requires details of the coffin size to enable the minimum depth of grave to be ascertained. This is anticipated to be between 4 feet 6 inches and 5 feet for a single interment.

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- Times of interments must be negotiated with the Parish Clerk and should take place **between 10am and 4pm**. Interments are not permitted on Sundays or public holidays.
- Arrangements for the attendance of a minister of Religion if required must be made by the relatives or the funeral director. The Parish Council accepts no responsibility in connection therewith.
- The time arranged for the interment is the time at which the cortege is to arrive at the cemetery. Notice of an interment shall be given to the Parish Clerk **at least 3 full working days before** the time of the proposed interment with the exception of death from an infectious disease which must be dealt with according to the medical or coroner's certificates.
- The Certificate of the Registrar of Deaths, or certificate of the Coroner (if an inquest has been held) or, in the case of a still born child, a certificate from a surgeon or Registered or certified Midwife must be received by the Parish Clerk prior to the interment taking place.
- The Certificate for Burial of Ashes issued by the Registrar of the Crematorium must be given to the Parish Clerk before the ashes' interment takes place.
- **Coffins and caskets:** Coffins in the following materials are allowed: Solid wood and wood veneer, bamboo and cardboard. No metal coffins are allowed. No caskets are allowed.

CONDITIONS OF USE FOR INTERMENTS

- Funeral Directors (or others responsible for the burial) herein referred to as the applicant for this section, must satisfy themselves as to adequacy of access to the burial plot.
- **The applicant shall be fully responsible for the excavation and safety of the grave**, ensuring that the burial depth meets statutory requirements and depths stated in **Section 4**. Open excavations shall not be left unprotected and must be fully covered if left unattended by a **fixed immovable cover**. The excavation must also be shored as appropriate during excavation and while open.
- The applicant shall be fully responsible for the management and safety of the committal proceedings.
- The applicant shall be fully responsible for reinstating the grave space immediately following the interment.
- The applicant will ensure that an engraved identity plaque is located on the site of the burial plot, adequately fixed to prevent displacement.
- The applicant will be responsible for maintaining the ground level of the grave for **twelve months following burial**. Visits at three and six months are the minimum acceptable to Rampton Parish Council with final reinstatement being made at not less than twelve months after the burial.
- For the whole burial ground a pile of excavated soil sufficient for top-up backfilling a **maximum of two graves** is stored in the middle of the West side of the site ready for reinstatement of soil levels in the 12 month period following an interment. **All excavated material surplus to this stored quantity after backfilling on the day of interment must be removed** from the site immediately after an interment has taken place,

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- The applicant will be responsible for removing from the burial ground all funeral floral tributes, once they are finished but not more than 21 days following the interment.
- In the event that any human remains are disturbed during excavation of a grave, all work must cease immediately and the relevant authorities, including the Parish Council must be informed (see also **section 5**).
- If the applicant fails to meet his obligations under these conditions, then the Parish Council may take all necessary action to remedy the situation and any costs incurred will be recoverable from the applicant.
- The applicant **must** sign the **Notice of Interment** to confirm that this policy has been read and the above liabilities accepted.


5. Exhumation

- Any disturbance of human remains of any kind including ashes is deemed to be an exhumation
- Once a body or ashes have been buried, they can only be removed with permission of the Parish Clerk **and** a licence granted by the Ministry of Justice. In the case of consecrated ground, consent from the Church of England will also be required.
- A fee to cover administration is applicable.

6. Memorials, Headstones and Inscriptions

- Permission **must** be obtained from the Parish Clerk **before** any new structure is put on a grave, any amendment is made to a structure or any structure is replaced.
- All memorials and inscriptions must comply with the following regulations and receive prior approval from the Parish Clerk. No memorials may be erected until approved and the appropriate fee paid. Only the legal owner of the Deed of Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial will be granted permission for memorials, alterations or removal (**see section 3**).
 - A simple **memorial headstone** of height between 750mm and 1200mm (measured from ground level), of width between 500mm and 900mm and of thickness between 75mm and 150mm (excepting slate which may be not less than 40mm thick). Small masonry vases not exceeding 305mm x 203mm x 203mm can be placed on the grave in place of a headstone, and in line with other headstones.
 - Headstones may stand on a stone base provided it is an integral part of the design and that it does not project more than 50mm beyond the headstone in any direction. It must be fixed on a foundation slab, which must be flush with ground level to allow free passage of grass-cutting machinery.
 - Any **vase** or container for flowers not used as a headstone must be integral with the memorial or level with or below ground level to allow free passage of grass-cutting machinery. Artificial flowers or wreaths may be used.
 - **No kerbs, railings or chippings** shall be incorporated in any memorial.

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- Headstones shall only be carved with an approved inscription and shall not be additionally carved, embossed or marked with any symbols in any manner whatsoever other than those approved by the Parish Council.
- Headstones shall be made of natural stone (including slate) and preferably of stone traditionally used in the neighbourhood or stone or similar appearance to that in common local useage. White marble will not be permitted. Headstones may be lightly polished on both faces.
- **Plaques for cremated remains** in the designated area should measure 450mm square. The Parish Council reserve the right, after due notification, to remove any item which does not conform to the above conditions.

● **Inscriptions: Guidance**

- Inscriptions should be of simple text, reverent and duly appropriate. Accurate date of Birth and death or date of birth and age must be included.
- Formal titles are recommended however informal terms may be included in inverted commas eg. Grandmother 'Nan'.
- Inscriptions may record what a person did eg "Farmed in the county for thirty years" or a feature of their character eg "a kind and gentle brother". Appropriate quotations from literary sources may be used.


7. Trees, Shrubs and Flowers

- Following an interment floral tributes may remain on the backfilled earth for 21 days.
- Trees and shrubs are not allowed to be planted on any plot. Wild seeded trees and shrubs will be removed as soon as they are noticed.
- Small ornaments or tributes are permitted for a period of three months following interment, however may be removed in certain conditions (**see section 9**). Any items left are at the owners risk.
- Fresh flowers, pot plants or artificial flowers are permitted but should be in good condition and not exceed 30cm in height or width. Vases must be made of non-breakable material and firmly anchored ie either fixed into the plinth or sunk completely into the ground. Old, disintegrating and faded flowers of any kind will be removed.

8. Benches

- Due to the desire to maintain the Burial Ground in the current lawned and open state **a maximum of four fixed benches** will be permitted at any one time. No movable benches will be permitted.
- An application to install a privately funded bench must include details of the design, size, commemorative plaque and proposed location and be submitted to the Parish Clerk for prior approval of the Full Council. Permitted bench installations are valid for ten years. Installation must be undertaken by a suitably skilled person in liaison with the Parish Clerk and the family will ensure all maintenance and repairs are carried out within the ten year period from erection. Subsequent to

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expiration of the ten year permit the responsibility and ownership for the bench will revert to the Parish Council.

- Should privately installed benches be deemed unsafe or unsuitable for the location the Parish Council reserves the right to repair or remove the bench at the owners' cost.
- A small **commemorative plaque** may be permitted to be placed on existing benches in the Burial Ground at the Parish Councils discretion. Plaques must be rectangular in shape and no larger than 200mm by 75mm and come with pre-drilled fixing holes. After a 10 year period from installation this plaque may be removed by RPC, however the applicant may renew the permit at this time.
- Plaques must be made of brass or aluminium and the colour of the inscription must be black.
- All proposed plaques must be submitted to the Parish Clerk for prior approval.

9. Ongoing care and maintenance of the Burial Ground, Graves and Memorials

- The Parish Council is responsible for the upkeep of the lawns, paths, hedges and trees including the turf over the graves.
- All graves must be kept in a neat and tidy condition.
- The memorial on a grave is the responsibility of the grave owner or family of the deceased during the lease period of the grave.
- The Parish Council **cannot** be held responsible for any damage caused by a memorial.
- The Parish Council reserves the right to make safe any memorial which becomes unstable or unsafe and to recover any expenses from the family of the deceased. Where practical the family will be contacted prior to action being taken.
- The Council may remove any items from a grave that are likely to cause risk, damage or offence to other visitors or which interfere with the maintenance of the site.
- Dangerous items that will be removed without notice include:-
 - Glass vases and other glass items (whether broken or not)
 - All broken containers
 - Flints used as edgings to grave spaces
 - Thin wire edgings and
 - Chippings used to cover graves that have no proper edging

10. Contact

Clerk to the Parish Council:

Mrs Moyra Mould

Lantern House Barn, The Green, Rampton, Cambs, CB24 8QB ramptonparishclerk@gmail.com

The Council reserves the right to amend this policy, regulations and conditions and to deal with any circumstances or contingency not provided for in this policy as necessary.

The decision of the Parish Council will be final in all cases.

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