

**Wilshamstead Parish Council maintains the Parish Burial Ground next to the churchyard. You can buy plots to accommodate burials and cremated remains, and the Parish Council has developed a set of general rules that we ask you to read carefully before deciding which option you think is suitable for you.**

## **IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING A BURIAL**

The plot size is 2100mm by 700mm (82.7in x 27.6 in). Graves are arranged in rows running parallel with the Churchyard boundary. The plot is allocated by the Parish Council. When buying a burial plot you should decide if you will need a double-depth plot, as it is not possible to increase the grave depth at a later date. All burial plots are currently situated in consecrated land but a burial in unconsecrated land can be accommodated.

Only at the time of burial or the interment of cremated remains can you reserve one adjoining plot. A “reserved” stone will mark these plots.

### **Headstones for Burial plots**

- You may place a temporary monument of a small wooden cross on the plot for up to 14 months from the date of burial.
- Headstones may not be erected until at least 12 months have passed from the date of burial. This is to allow the ground to fully settle.
- Only headstones are allowed. Decoration of the grave including kerbing, fencing, edging, chippings, plants and ornaments is discouraged and, after a reasonable period from the burial, not permitted, as these hinder the grass cutting process and may damage the mowers. A flower holder may be included in the base stone of the headstone, but no other ornament can be built-in.
- A headstone may not be more than 900 mm (35.4 in) high, 760mm (29.9 in) wide and 100mm (3.9 in) thick.
- Stone crosses may not be more than the dimensions of headstones above, including any steps.
- Inscriptions on headstones must be appropriate. You should submit proposed wording to the Parish Council a minimum of two weeks in advance for approval.

### **Maintenance**

- The Parish Council will arrange for turf to be laid over the grave as soon after the funeral as is practicable.
- Spring bulbs and small annual flowers may be planted within 300mm (11.8 in) of the headstone.

- **No trees, bushes artificial flowers, toys or other ornaments are allowed on the plot after the erection of a headstone.**
- The Parish council reserves the right to remove faded flowers, plants or other objects that are considered inappropriate.

## **IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING CREMATION**

There are special areas in the Burial Ground for cremated remains to be interred. Alternatively, ashes may be scattered by families in the flower beds, free of charge. Caskets are preferred to be made from biodegradable materials. Should you require the interment of cremated remains to be in consecrated ground you need to specify this before a plot is allocated.

### **There are three options:**

- A. You may choose a plot 300mm x 300mm (11.8 in x 11.8 in) that can be covered by a memorial stone placed flat and flush with the surrounding grass. The stone may incorporate a small flower vase only. The plot can be to a depth to allow the interment of a second set of remains at a later date.
- B. You may choose a plot 650mm x 650 mm (25.6 in x 25.6 in). This can accommodate a headstone placed upright and up to 600mm (23.6 in) (**h**) x 500mm (19.7 in) (**w**) x 75mm (3 in) (**d**). A flower vase may be incorporated into the base of the stone but no other ornament can be built-in. Up to three sets of cremated remains may be placed in this plot.
- C. You may purchase a full-size burial plot (2100mm by 700mm (82.7in x 27.6 in)) in which up to eight cremated remains caskets can be placed. One headstone can be placed, and when full, flat name stones must be used.

Headstones for options B & C may not be erected until at least 6 months have passed from the date of interment.

### **Maintenance**

- Spring bulbs may be planted within 300mm (11.8 in) of the memorial stone, to come up through the grass
- **No temporary crosses, markers, plantings, chippings, artificial flowers, toys, or other ornaments are allowed on the plot after a reasonable period from the cremation**
- The Parish Council reserves the right to remove faded flowers, plants or other objects that are considered inappropriate.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY RULES**

1. Residents of the Parish of Wilshamstead have a right to be buried or have their cremated remains interred in the Burial Ground. This includes former residents who moved out of Wilshamstead five years or less before the date of death. It also includes residents living west of the A6 trunk road, whose properties are considered to be part of the Wixams development but are, or were previously, within the parish of Wilshamstead and fall within the MK45 postcode.
2. Burial of non-residents is allowed but different costs apply.
3. Pre-paid funerals will be allowed at the current fees.
4. Specific plots cannot be reserved.
5. The majority of the Burial Ground has been consecrated. A small section remains unconsecrated.
6. Neither the reservation nor payment for a plot, nor the erection of a monument confers any right of ownership upon relatives of a deceased person in any respect of any part of the Burial Ground. The whole Burial Ground is the property of the Parish Council, and the erection of a monument is a concession, not a right.
7. Plots may be bought for 100 years; reserved plots will be reallocated after 50 years unless the Parish Council is advised that they are still required.
8. No exhumation is to take place without the proper authority, including that of the Parish Council.
9. Rules for re-opening existing graves can be found in the ‘Information for Funeral Directors’.
10. **No monument may be erected, altered or removed without the prior agreement of the Parish Council. Details of the monument, including the wording of an inscription must be submitted in writing to the Clerk of the Parish Council and no further action taken until written authorisation is given. Rules for monuments are included in the Information for Funeral Directors.**
11. Although owners are responsible for the maintenance of memorials the Parish Council reserves the right to take necessary action should a memorial stone or grave become a danger.
12. The Parish Council shall not be responsible in any way for damage or loss of memorials or any resulting third party liability.
13. Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times, keeping to the footpath. Any fouling must be removed.
14. The Parish Council reserves the right to amend these rules and fees at any time.

**FEES (All amounts in Pounds Sterling)**

The fees shown below are for guidance. The Parish Council may reduce these in certain circumstances on a case-by-case basis

	residents	non-residents
Burials	£	£
Purchase of grave		
– single depth	200	800
– double depth	300	900
Child under 3 or stillborn (Residents only)	No charge	
Permit for:		
- temporary cross	10	10
- headstone	75	75
- re-opening of grave	60	60
- additional words on stone	10	10
Reservation of plot		
- single depth	200	800
- double depth	300	900
<b>Cremated Remains</b>		
<b>A.</b> Purchase of 300mm plot, includes permit for stone		
- single depth	75	300
- double depth	100	300
<b>B</b> Purchase of 650mm plot	100	425
Permit for headstone	75	75
Advance reservation <b>A</b>	75	300
<b>B</b>	100	425
Re-opening of plot	30	30

**Information for Funeral Directors**

- Contractors working in the burial ground must receive permission from the Parish Council before starting and perform the work as quickly as possible, removing all tools and equipment and making the plot safe before dark. **Spoil must be removed and any damage caused must be made good by the contractor.**

- Whenever an existing grave needs to be reopened for further burial, the Parish Council reserves the right for removed earth to be temporarily placed on an adjacent plot.
- All burials and cremations must be recorded by the Clerk to the Parish Council in the Register of Graves and the Register of Burials.

**Burials**

- A headstone may not be more than 900 mm (35.4 in) high, 760mm (29.9 in) wide and 100mm (3.9 in) thick.
- Stone crosses may not be more than the dimensions of headstones above, including any steps.
- Memorial stones must not be made of Bath, Caen or other soft materials. Cramps and dowels used in the construction must be made of non-ferrous metal. The materials, workmanship and installation must be to the satisfaction of the Parish Council.
- Foundation bases must be level or slightly below the surface of the ground. If any such base includes a vase, this must be arranged so that it is level or just below the surface of the base itself. No other ornaments may be built into a headstone.
- The memorial stone should be inscribed with the plot number (only) on the left side face.

**Cremated remains**

- Memorial plaques must be placed flush with the surrounding ground and measure 300mm by 300mm (11.8 in x 11.8 in)
- Double depth plots are allowed.
- Ashes must be interred in a small (preferably degradable) casket and then covered by a memorial plaque.
- The memorial plaque must be inscribed with the plot number on the bottom left-hand corner.
- For aesthetic reasons, memorial plaques must not be constructed of soft stone. (see Burials Item 3)
- Headstones must not exceed 600mm (23.6 in) (**h**) x 500mm (19.7 in) (**w**) x 75mm (3 in) (**d**). Construction, materials and other information is the same as that for burials (above).

## WILSHAMSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

### Burial Ground Rules & Fees

**JANUARY 2023**

**Clerk to Wilshamstead Parish Council**  
**PO Box 1548**  
**Bedford**  
**MK44 5AX**  
[burials@wilsteadparishcouncil.org](mailto:burials@wilsteadparishcouncil.org)  
**Tel: 01234 743152**

Bank details:

Wilshamstead Parish Council  
 Barclays Bank Plc  
 Sort Code: 20-05-74  
 A/c No: 70719382