

## **General Policy for the Belmont Abbey Graveyard**

The graveyard is for the use of regular practising and committed Catholic parishioners of the Belmont Abbey Parish. Permission for other Catholics and those from the other Hereford RC parishes to be buried here is currently suspended due to the shortage of space. It is hoped to purchase a plot of land and seek planning permission for a graveyard extension as soon as possible.

All burials will be solely at the discretion of the Parish Priest. Permission for a non Catholic spouse to be buried with a practising Catholic will usually be given.

**Prior permission must always be sought from the Parish Priest before the erection of a memorial plaque or gravestone.**

Permanent headstone memorials should always be set by a **BRAMM registered** monumental mason following the guidelines BS8415 and utilising an approved secure foundation to the headstone.

The design of gravestones and the wording and lettering of the inscription on them must in every case be submitted in the prescribed form for prior approval to the Parish Priest, either by those wishing to introduce the memorial or by the stone mason

When a grave is purchased it is not the ownership of the land itself that is purchased, but the rights to have burials take place in that grave for fifty years. These rights are sold, or to be more correct, 'granted' together with the rights to erect a memorial on the grave in accordance with the rules and regulations of the graveyard. Grave plots are not transferable.

It is the family's responsibility to keep the grave tidy. All debris, wrappings, dead flowers and litter shall be uplifted from the grave site and placed in the bins provided. Plants in containers will be removed by cemetery staff if they are not removed by the family when they are no longer viable.

No permanent candles/lanterns shall be put on the grave. **For safety reasons, glass or ceramic vases are not permitted and will be removed.** Ornaments and artefacts left on graves may be removed at the parish's discretion.

## Policy for the New Graveyard

In addition to existing guidelines, including those above, the New Graveyard will also have the following additional policies.

The New Graveyard will be designated as a '**Lawn**' type graveyard only. Lawn type means a grave plot where only the head of the grave may be used for a memorial. **Plots shall be marked by a headstone or cross only.**

The marking of burial plots by raised curbs, railings, plain or coloured chippings or gravestones in the shape of hearts, figures or bird baths etc. are generally not permitted.

No memorial trees, bushes or shrubs shall be planted in the ground within the boundaries of the graveyard. Bulbs/flowers, though not larger shrubs or bushes, may be planted within the confines of each burial plot on the understanding that the surface growth maybe lost when the grass is routinely cut. The burial plot must not be 'cultivated' as a garden.

A flower vase may be incorporated in the base of headstones or crosses, but separate vases must not be placed elsewhere in the grave space, except where it is contemplated that no headstone or cross will be erected, in which case a fixed vase in permitted material not more than 12 inches x 8 inches or 300 mm x 200 mm with a memorial inscription may be placed in the approximate position where the headstone would have been had there been one.

Ashes plots must not be marked at ground level nor 'cultivated' as a garden. A memorial plaque may be fixed to the wall only.

Current Fees for the purchase of the exclusive right to use a grave, the re-opening of a grave or the setting of a gravestone or memorial plaque can be obtained from the Parish Office.

*This Policy may be updated from time to time, and it is required that you always check with the Parish Priest before purchasing a plot or erecting a memorial stone*