**Templeton Churchyard Policy**

**Right to burial**

The following people have a right under common law to be buried in Templeton parish, provided there is space available and provided the churchyard has not been closed for burials by Order in Council:

* Every resident in Templeton parish
* Those whose names are on Templeton’s church electoral roll
* Those dying in Templeton parish.

Any other request for burial in Templeton’s churchyard requires the specific consent of Templeton Parochial Church Council (PCC). If the parish priest declines to allow the burial of a person who has no right of burial, his or her decision shall be final.

There is no right of burial in any particular part of the churchyard**.**

**Reservation of grave spaces.**

Graves will only be issued on the occasion of death. The Templeton churchyard policy does not allow the reserving of grave spaces for burial in the churchyard or for interment of ashes in areas for cremated remains. A single grave space can usually accommodate up to three interments. Exceptions include where a grave space has been designated by the Templeton PCC as a burial plot for multiple burials, i.e. a double or triple grave, or if a faculty\* has been granted by the Chancellor reserving a grave space in the churchyard.

The charge for a single grave will be £…

All headstones all should be made of limestone or granite, or should be a temporary wooden cross, and should be in keeping with the simple headstones already in the churchyard. The headstone must no more than 4 ft. (1228 mm) high, 3 ft. (915 mm) and 6” (150 mm) thick. Slate memorials must be no less than 1½” (38 mm) thick. They should also comply with the Church of England burial regulations (website address included).

Grave surrounds are not permitted to ensure that maintenance of the churchyard is more easily managed. Excess soil must be removed following the burial and the grave re-sown with grass seed. A minimum of six months should elapse between the burial and the erection of a headstone to allow the ground to settle**.**

No plants, shrubs, flowers or trees may be planted on the grave. Bulbs can be planted in the soil adjacent to the headstone. Cut flowers may be placed in a solid unbreakable receptacle, or in a removable container which is sunk into the ground, close to the headstone. Flowers must be removed as soon as they have withered.

\*A **faculty** is a permissive right, under Ecclesiastical law, to undertake works to a church building or its contents. This would include the churchyard memorials headstones. It is the duty of the minister and churchwardens to obtain a grant of faculty before carrying out any alterations subject to a list provided by each diocese.

**Ownership of the churchyard**

The ‘ownership’ of the churchyard is conferred on the parish priest for the use of the parishioners. The burial, interment of cremated remains, and the erection of a headstone do not confer any rights of ownership upon the relatives of the deceased person or upon any other persons in respect of the churchyard itself.

**Ownership of headstones**

The ‘owner’ of a churchyard memorial is the person who erected the headstone. After his or her death the ownership falls on the heir of the person in whose memory the memorial was erected, and they are responsible for its upkeep. However, when the heirs cannot be traced, the PCC is responsible for any potentially dangerous monuments within the churchyard, and keeping the churchyard in a safe state.

Cremated remains should be poured into a specially prepared hole in the ground between 18 and 24 inches deep. If the cremated remains are to be interred in a container, it must be of perishable material, preferably wood.

 Memorial plaques must be of a uniform size 12 x 12 x 2 inches, located at the site of the interment. Plaques shall be of natural stone / slate in harmony with the church building itself.  The inscription on the plaque should be approved by the parish priest and Templeton PCC. If cremated remains are interred within an existing grave, an inscription may be added to the headstone.

**Maintenance of the churchyard**

Templeton PCC must ensure that all trees within the churchyard are safe, and that steps are taken to remedy any unsafe trees within the churchyard. Mowing the grass and maintaining the churchyard will be at the discretion of Templeton PCC, which aims to strike a balance to keep churchyards maintained and cared for, whilst having consideration to the provision of areas for wildlife to flourish in suitable areas within the churchyard.

More in-depth information and guidance regarding the Church of England Burial Regulations and the maintenance of wildlife with the churchyard as “Living Churchyards”, can be found at the following websites:

<https://www.exeter.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Churchyard-regulations-2013.pdf>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/new-burials-and-memorials>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-11/CCB_Memorials-in-churchyards_Sep-2016.pdf>

<https://ecochurchsouthwest.org.uk/actions/living-churchyards/>