

St Giles Church, Codicote – Graveyard Management Plan

Churchyards are part of our Christian faith and heritage. They should be regarded as belonging to God, representing to us God's love and compassion for the whole community, and available to the whole community. In deciding to have a churchyard burial, the family is choosing to commit the remains of a loved one to the permanent care of the Church. In a churchyard, burial plots are not "owned" by the family. Parts of St.Giles' churchyard are maintained by contractors paid by the local church; other parts are maintained by volunteers. It is important that they are able to maintain the churchyard for the benefit of all visitors. This Management Plan has been issued by the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St.Giles, and is intended to encourage good practices in order to create and maintain a place of peace, dignity and respect for the departed, as well as a haven for wildlife.

1. The surface of the graveyard should be kept as far as possible level and free of gravemounds. The PCC may, at its discretion, level any mound, twelve months or more after the interment in the grave.
2. Families are welcome to plant bulbs on a grave to flower each spring, but shrubs and trees are not permitted. Annuals should not be planted as graves are generally mown across during the summer months.
3. Fresh cut flowers may be placed in any vase embedded within the footing of a memorial stone, and fresh wreaths left on graves. Withered flowers may be removed without notice. With the exception given in para 4 below, no artificial flowers should be used within the graveyard, and any that are found will be removed.
4. The PCC recognise that many families like to put flowers on graves throughout the year, and will allow artificial flowers and wreaths in the months of December and January, provided they are not placed in the sheep area and are removed at the end of January.
5. Free-standing glass, ceramic or plastic vases, bottles or planters should not be placed on graves for both aesthetic and safety reasons, and are liable to be removed when found.
6. No wooden or stone edging is permitted to a grave plot, as this impedes mowing around it. No grave may include any railing, fencing or chippings as these also make maintenance difficult. No grave may include a photograph, portrait or similar, nor sundial, bird bath, stone figure, animal, gnomes or windchimes.
7. Dogs are permitted in the churchyard on a lead, and should not be allowed to foul.
8. Cycling is not permitted in the churchyard.
9. All rubbish, including cellophane wrapping, must be removed from the churchyard or placed in the appropriate bins provided.
10. Memorials from past generations should not be taken as a guide as to what is permitted today.

For details of permitted memorial stones, please visit www.stalbans.anglican.org. This is the website of the Diocese of St.Albans which specifies the size and type of stone to be used. All stonemasons should be familiar with these specifications and can advise you accordingly. A copy of these regulations can also be obtained from the Vicar or Churchwardens of St.Giles.

If you would like to join our annual memorial service for those we have lost, usually held in November, please let us know by emailing St.Giles Church via admin@stgiles-church.org.uk