

## **Burham and Wouldham Churchyard Guidelines**

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Burham and Wouldham endeavour to keep the churchyards at All Saints Wouldham and St Mary's Old Church Burham in a tidy and safe state out of respect for those buried and their families who visit and tend their graves. To enable us to carry out this very important task we ask help in observing **The Rochester Diocesan Churchyard Regulations, 1981**, these give us guidance on what can and cannot be introduced into the churchyard. There are a number of regulations which are to the benefit of all, bearing in mind that the churchyard has existed for many years and will continue to do so long into the future.

When a person signs an application to place a memorial in the churchyard they sign an agreement to keep these rules.

These are some frequently asked questions

**Do the relatives own the grave?** No, the grave remains under the ownership of the church. The fee paid for burial /ashes interment goes towards churchyard maintenance

**What headstone/memorial can be introduced into the churchyard?**

The stonemason you approach to make the stone will inform you of the regulations and be able to help you fill in the application form for the memorial stone. Any headstone cannot be erected without gaining permission.

You can choose to have a vase incorporated in the stone at this time where only fresh flowers can be placed..

The headstone is owned by the person who paid for it, following their death it becomes the property of the family who is buried in the grave. The owner of the gravestone is responsible for maintaining it in a safe condition. Any headstone which is in danger of falling will be laid flat by the PCC.

**Can artificial flowers/decorative items be placed on the grave?**

No, however it is permissible to plant bulbs and small plants next to the headstone. Wreaths and cut flowers may be laid on a grave and in a vase if permission was sought and agreed under the regulations. No artificial flowers or other items should be placed on the grave and if not removed on request will be removed upon instruction from The Parochial Church Council. Lights, chippings, gravel, paving, kerbs or wooden surrounds are also not permitted.

The area around all graves will be grassed so that it can be maintained in a tidy and neat manner as befits this country churchyard.

Jan 2015.