**ROPSLEY AND DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL MEMORIAL POLICY**

**Background**

Ropsley and District Parish Council is the Burial Authority for the Ropsley and District Cemetery, and the Proper Officer for the Burial Authority is the Parish Clerk.

The overall care of the burial ground is the responsibility of the Burial Authority. The Parish Council takes its duties of maintaining the burial ground very seriously and hopes that our bereaved families will co-operate with the Parish Council’s efforts to maintain a tranquil, tidy and well cared for environment. This policy applies to memorial application considered after its adoption, and not retrospectively to existing memorials.

This policy has been produced with the following guiding principles:

• To be respectful and sympathetic to those seeking to install a memorial.

• To be clear and easily understood by residents and users.

• To allow fair and consistent decisions to be made in response to requests for memorials.

Memorial Benches

1. All applications for a memorial bench should be made in writing to the to the Parish Clerk and be signed by the applicant that these conditions are agreed.
2. The council will only permit memorials to individuals who have live in or have a close family connection to the parish.
3. Seats and benches should be purchased from an approved supplier.
4. Seat designs and locations should be empathetic to the installed environment in which they are placed.
5. The council may limit the number of memorials in an area.
6. Memorial benches must have a common appearance, style size and colour specified by the Council in order to co-ordinate with other benches already situated.
7. The applicant must pay for all memorials before installation.
8. The council cannot accept responsibility if a memorial is damaged, vandalised or stolen.
9. The council reserves the right to remove a memorial bench at any time.
10. The council regrets that it is unable to accommodate memorials to deceased pets.
11. If the bench is to be placed on grass it will usually be concreted in.
12. The council will be responsible for arranging all installation work at the applicant's expense.
13. Benches situated in the cemetery must be situated so as to allow grounds maintenance and ease of access to the cemetery, footpaths and graves.
14. The placing of benches must in no way interfere with the current or future use of land for burials.
15. The location of benches must have regard to health and safety considerations, including the risk of slips, trips and falls, and the risk from falling trees and branches.
16. The council, in accordance with its current maintenance programme, will maintain any memorial bench which will include painting in finishes decided by them.
17. The parish council will place the seat on its asset register which is sent to our insurers.
18. No additional mementoes, e.g., statues, flowers, wreaths, vases, etc. will be permitted on or around the bench. The Council may remove any such mementoes without notice.
19. Scattering of cremated remains and burial of urns with cremated remains around memorial benches or elsewhere in the cemetery or pond is not permitted.
20. Only maintenance work authorised by the parish council will be permitted.
21. The wording of any memorial plaque will be subject to parish council approval.

Memorial Trees

1. All applications for a memorial tree should be made in writing to the to the Parish Clerk and be signed by the applicant that these conditions are agreed.
2. Trees are to be small, compact and of a type and variety approved in advance by the Parish Council.
3. Trees are to be suitable to the environment in which they are placed.
4. The council may limit the number of memorial trees in an area.
5. The planting location must be agreed in advance by the Clerk so as not to interfere with grounds maintenance or access to the cemetery, graves and footpaths.
6. The planting of memorial trees must in no way interfere with the current or future use of land for burials.
7. The location of memorial trees must have regard to health and safety considerations, including the risk of slips, trips and falls, and the potential risk from falling leaves and fruit, trip hazards presented by roots and potential interference with grounds maintenance.
8. The applicant must pay for all memorials before installation.
9. The council cannot accept responsibility if a memorial tree is damaged, vandalised or stolen.
10. The council reserves the right to remove a memorial tree at any time.
11. Memorial plaques on or around trees are not permitted.
12. Memorials trees will be recorded on a register kept by the clerk or some alternative measure such as graphically.
13. No additional mementoes, e.g., statues, flowers, wreaths, vases, etc. will be permitted on or around the tree. The Council may remove any such mementoes without notice.
14. Scattering of cremated remains and burial of urns with cremated remains in the vicinity of memorial trees, or elsewhere in the cemetery or pond is not permitted.
15. The council will charge for the tree or plant and labour, at cost.
16. The council will maintain the tree or plant in line with its current maintenance programme and arrange duty of care surveys as appropriate.
17. The council will not be liable for the replacement of old or diseased plants or trees.
18. Any replacements of memorial trees or plants will be the responsibility of the original applicant or successor and will follow the same process as the procedure within this Policy.
19. The council have the right to remove trees – for example disease or safety issues.
20. The Council reserves the right to determine the timing of planting of memorial trees.

The decision of the Parish Council regarding the size, design, location and authorisation of memorials will be final.