

Sibford Burial Ground REGULATIONS

Adopted: **April 2022**

1. Background

When the **Sibford Burial Ground** was created in 2011 anticipating the closure of the Holy Trinity Churchyard, the eligibility criteria were extended to enable both church parishioners and other residents of Sibford Gower, Burdrop and Sibford Ferris to **exercise their Common Law right to a burial in the parish in which they reside.**

The Sibford Burial Ground is therefore non-consecrated and non-denominational, but each grave plot may be blessed individually if a minister of religion conducts the burial service.

The Sibford Burial Ground is owned and managed by the Sibford Gower Parish Council, with maintenance costs shared equally between the Sibford Gower Parish Council and the Sibford Ferris Parish Council.

The Regulations set out below are specific to the Sibfords Burial Ground, but it is the Council's policy that they are consistent where possible with the current [Churchyard Regulations of the Diocese of Oxford](#) which apply to the adjacent Holy Trinity Churchyard. In case of any ambiguity, our specific Regulations for the Sibford Burial Ground take precedence.

2. Eligibility

The eligibility for a burial or interment of cremated remains in the Sibford Burial Ground **applies only to a deceased person:**

- whose **permanent residential address was within the official Parish boundary** of either Sibford Gower & Burdrop or Sibford Ferris at the date of their death, or
- who **died within the official Parish** boundary of either Sibford Gower & Burdrop or Sibford Ferris, or
- who was **included on the electoral roll of the Holy Trinity Church**, Sibford and had been included for at least 5 years, at the date of their death.

At the sole discretion of the Council, this eligibility **may** be extended to include a deceased person whose **last residential address** was within the Sibfords parish boundaries and **had no other permanent residence:**

- due to temporarily residing away from the family home for education, training or employment purposes
- due to moving in with family or into other non-independent living arrangements
- due to moving into assisted living accommodation or other long term residential or nursing care
- due to being admitted to a hospital, a hospice or other end of life care.

Application for a new burial or cremated remains plot can only be made after the date of death, as **advanced reservation of grave plots is not permitted** in the Sibford Burial Ground.

However, if a double depth plot was approved at the time of application for a first deceased, the right to a second burial or cremated remains interment in an existing fee-paid plot will be reserved for the original approved rights holder.

A **cremated remains plot** can only be used for the interment of the cremated remains of one or two deceased persons.

A **burial plot** can only be used for the burial of one or two deceased persons, or for the burial of one person and the interment of the cremated remains of one person – it cannot be used for the interment of the cremated remains of two persons.

The rights to a burial or cremated remains plot in the Sibford Burial Ground will be subject to payment in full of all due fees, and to the ongoing compliance with the whole of these Regulations, and will expire 50 years after the date of burial or interment of the first deceased.

3. Fees

It is the Council’s policy that our scale of fees for the Sibford Burial Ground remain consistent with the [Table of Parochial Fees for the Diocese of Oxford](#), which are revised annually on 1st January.

The following table summarises our current scale of fees:

Fees payable to Sibford Gower Parish Council	Burial plot	Cremated Remains plot	Payment due
Burial or interment of 1st Deceased	£360	£172	Date of burial or interment of 1 st Deceased
Introduction of a new Monument or Ledger Stone	£150	£79	Date of burial or interment of 1 st Deceased
Burial or interment of 2nd Deceased	£360	£172	Date of burial or interment of 2 nd Deceased
Additional inscription on or modification to an existing Monument or Ledger Stone	£31	£31	Date of burial or interment of 2 nd Deceased

The Council reserves the right to charge additional fees at their sole discretion for services not covered by the above fee table.

Non-payment of due fees in full will result in termination of all current and future rights in the Sibford Burial Ground.

4. Monuments

A Monument is the name given to a headstone or vertical memorial stone placed to mark a burial plot in the Sibfords Burial Ground, and must comply with the following:

- [A monument may be introduced only at the place where the body of the person to be commemorated by the monument is buried.](#)
- [Six months must have elapsed since the date of burial before a monument may be introduced.](#)
- [The maximum permitted height for a monument is 915mm \(36”\) and the maximum permitted width is 760mm \(30”\).](#)

- The maximum permitted thickness for a monument is 100mm (4”) and the minimum permitted thickness is 75mm (3”) (except for slate monuments, for which the minimum permitted thickness is 40mm (1.5”).
- Unless the monument is to be supported by a pre-cast concrete shoe situated below the ground, the Council must be satisfied that the monument will be inserted sufficiently deeply into the ground to ensure its stability, having regard to the nature of the ground and any likely settlement.
- A monument may have a visible stone or concrete base only if:
 - the base is an integral part of the design of the monument,
 - it does not project from the monument by more than 50mm (2”) away from the place of burial and 205mm (8”) towards the place of burial, and
 - the monument is connected to the base by non-ferrous dowels.
- The base may make provision for not more than two vases that are to be fitted into it.
- Any foundation slab for a monument must not be visible after the work of introducing the monument has been completed.
- A monument can only be made and introduced into the Sibford Burial Ground by a qualified monumental stonemason, and **must meet the requirements** for Design, Materials and Inscriptions set out in Sections 6,7 & 8 of these Regulations.

5. Ledger Stones

A Ledger Stone is the name given to a horizontal memorial stone placed to mark a cremated remains or ashes plot in the Sibfords Burial Ground, and must comply with the following:

- A ledger stone may be introduced only at the place where the cremated remains of the person to be commemorated by the ledger stone are interred.
- The maximum permitted dimensions for a ledger stone are 460mm (18”) in length and 460mm (18”) in width.
- A ledger stone must be laid so that its upper surface is flush with the ground.
- A ledger stone can only be made and introduced into the Sibford Burial Ground by a qualified monumental stonemason, and **must meet the requirements** for Design, Materials and Inscriptions set out in Sections 6,7 & 8 of these Regulations.

6. Design

The design of all Monuments and Ledger Stones in the Sibfords Burial Ground must comply with the following:

- A ledger stone must be rectangular or square (but a monument need not be).
- A monument or ledger stone must not take the form of a statue or of a particular object such as a heart, a person, animal or other figure; but a monument (though not a ledger stone) may take the form of a representation of a book.

- A monument or ledger stone must not include any lighting, whether electric or otherwise or any glass shades.
- A monument or ledger stone must not include:
 - a portrait, photograph or other image of an individual (whether of the person commemorated or any other person)
 - any other pictures or imagery except as permitted for an etching as described below
 - any moulding
 - any video or sound recording
 - a QR code or other machine-readable label
 - plinths, kerbs or other fencing, railings or other demarcation
 - stone or glass chippings.
- A black, white or uncoloured etching or carving may be permitted provided that it:
 - is reverent and respectful to common religious beliefs
 - does not depict an individual, and
 - covers no more than one-fifth of the surface of the monument or ledger stone.
- A monument may be inscribed with a stonemason's mark provided that the mark is not in a prominent position.

7. Materials

The materials of all Monuments and Ledger Stones in the Sibfords Burial Ground must comply with the following:

- A monument or ledger stone must be made of natural stone or of hardwood.
- The surface of the stone must not be made reflective by being polished or finely honed.
- A monument or ledger stone is not permitted if it:
 - is black, blue, red or green (or appears to be any of those colours) or is otherwise brightly coloured,
 - is made of marble, synthetic stone or plastic, or
 - is painted.

8. Inscriptions

The inscriptions on all Monuments and Ledger Stones in the Sibfords Burial Ground must comply with the following:

- A monument or ledger stone may include an inscription provided it is simple, reverent and respectful to common religious beliefs
- In addition to the formal names of the person commemorated, nicknames or other names by which the person was familiarly known may be included as part of the person's name, within brackets or inverted commas.
- An inscription must be incised or in relief and may be uncoloured, grey or black only; plastic, lead or other inserted lettering is not permitted.
- Hand-crafted letter cutting is permitted.

- Cursive script (that is, a script which gives the appearance of having been written in a running hand) is not permitted.
- The addition of further inscriptions which comply with the whole of these Regulations and which are consistent with the style and language of the original inscription may be authorised following further burial in a grave or interment of further cremated remains.
- An application for authority to add a further inscription must be made to the Council in writing and provide details of the proposed additional inscription (including the style of lettering to be used and the place on the monument or ledger stone where it is proposed to be added).

9. Works to Existing Monuments & Ledger Stones

Any works carried out on existing monuments and ledger stones must comply with the following:

- The owner of a monument or ledger stone which is less than 50 years old may carry out works of repair to it (including renewing lettering) provided that the monument was lawfully introduced into the Burial Ground and the Council authorises the repairs before they are carried out.
- Repairs which would result in the monument or ledger stone ceasing to comply with these Regulations must not be authorised.
- The owner of a monument or ledger stone which is less than 50 years old may, if authorised to do so by the Council, remove it from the Burial Ground for not more than 3 months for the purpose of adding an inscription authorised under Section 8 or carrying out repairs authorised under Section 9 of these regulations.
- A monument or ledger stone which is more than 50 years old must not be removed from the Burial Ground without the authority of the Council.

10. General

The following regulations must be observed to maintain and preserve the general appearance of the Sibford Burial Ground for the benefit of all visitors:

- Individual gardens, including the planting of trees or shrubs are not permitted; but the Council may authorise the planting of a small number of bulbs.
- Plastic flowers and plastic wreaths are not permitted; except that wreaths and other arrangements of artificial poppies may be introduced to commemorate those who have died in the service of their country in time of war or other conflict.
- Cut flowers and silk flowers may be left at the place of burial or interment of cremated remains but must be removed once they are decaying or have become faded.
- With the permission of the Council, up to 3 toys or similar objects may be left at the place of burial or interment of cremated remains for a period of 12 months from the date of burial or interment but must be removed at the end of that period.
- The Council, or a person acting on their behalf, may remove any objects which are not, or have ceased to be, authorised under these regulations and which have not been authorised by the Council.

- The Council reserves the right of unobstructed access to the whole of the Sibford Burial Ground, including the right of passage over all graves for any purpose including maintenance and repair, and to enable burials and interments in any space adjacent to existing burial plots and cremated remains plots.