



CHEDDLETON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs. L.J. Green Telephone: 01538 385223 Mobile: 07488 314605
34, The Walks, Leek, Staffs, ST13 8BY. Email: clerk@cheddleton-pc.gov.uk

BURIAL GROUNDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Page	TABLE OF CONTENTS
1	Table of Contents
2	Introduction
2	Objectives of the policy
2	Relevant legislation
3	Fees
3	Eligibility
3	Grave spaces
4	Interments
5	First interment
5	Reopening of a grave
5	Arranging an interment
6	Allocation of graves
6	Roles during interments
7	Reservation of grave spaces
7	Rights of burial
7	Responsibilities of a grave manager
8	Rights of a grave manager
8	Changes to a grave manager
8	Grave digging
8	Grave digger responsibilities
9	General grave digging requirements and standards
10	Grave digging depths
11	Funeral directors
12	Memorials
12	Memorial masons
13	New or replacement memorials
13	Amendments to memorials
13	Memorials without interments
14	Memorial safety
15	Environment and grave standards
16	The removal of items
16	Benches
16	Maintenance of burial grounds – grass cutting
17	Uneven ground and graves
17	Winter management
17	Exhumations
19	Appendix 1 – Funeral directors’ terms and conditions
20	Appendix 2 – Grave digging terms and conditions
20	Appendix 3 – Memorial masons’ rules and regulations
22	Appendix 4 – Memorial benches in the burial ground
23	Objectives of the policy
23	General
25	Maintenance
25	Fees
26	Appendix 5 – Eligibility for interment into the burial ground INTRODUCTION
26	Objectives of the policy
27	Appendix 6 – Rules and regulations of the burial ground

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Cheddleton Parish Council currently owns and manages two Burial Grounds:

- St. Edward's Lawn Cemetery.
- Cheddleton Lawn Cemetery.

1.2 The Parish Council also undertakes the maintenance of the closed Asylum Burial Ground.

1.3 The council's appointed 'Registrar of the Burial Grounds' is the Clerk of the Parish Council.

OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

2.1 This policy aims to ensure the following:

- The Burial Ground, memorials and any activities within the Burial Ground are safe for all users of the site, including visitors, contractors, and professionals in the funeral business.
- The environment is pleasant and peaceful in order to show sensitivity and respect for those interred and to support family and friends to reflect and remember their loved one.
- The processes followed to deal with any issues that may arise are fair, transparent and are sensitively and appropriately communicated.
- To manage the supply of current burial plots in Cheddleton and to ensure the continued availability of burial space within the Council's boundaries.
- That issues that arise are addressed in a sensitive and appropriate manner.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

3.1 The legislation that applies to Burial Grounds is extensive and not possible to list in its entirety here. However, some of the key legislation is noted below. As a burial authority, Cheddleton Parish Council acts under the powers and duties granted in the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977. The Burial Act 1857 makes it illegal to disturb a grave other than to conduct an authorised exhumation.

3.2 Health and Safety law applies in both the Parish Council's responsibility to provide safe working conditions for workers and contractors (Health and Safety at Work Act 1974) and the duty to protect visitors from harm (Occupier Liability Act 1957 1984).

3.3 The Parish Council has a duty to be inclusive to those with protected characteristics as outlined in the Equalities Act 2010 and applies in the Burial

Ground in terms of being accessible and accommodating different cultural needs.

FEES

4.1 The Fees for the Burial Grounds are set by Cheddleton Parish Council's Burial Grounds Committee. The fees are subject to change in each financial year which will be announced no later than 1 March in the preceding financial year. The fees charged contribute to the fees incurred in running the Burial Ground, including staff time, maintenance work and contracts and safety inspections.

ELIGIBILITY

5.1 As with all burial sites across the country, land is in short-supply and maintenance of a lawned Burial Ground is costly. It is therefore important that space within the Cheddleton Burial Grounds is used effectively for the benefit of the residents of the Parish.

5.2 For this reason, only individuals with a significant connection to Cheddleton may be interred within the Parish Council owned Burial Grounds. The detail of what constitutes a significant connection is outlined in Appendix 5.

5.3 The Parish Council does recognise that a person may have a significant connection to Cheddleton that falls outside of these circumstances, and in such cases, these will be considered individually by the Parish Clerk, and if necessary, the Burial Grounds Committee.

GRAVE SPACES

6.1 There are two types of grave spaces currently available at Cheddleton Parish Council owned Burial Grounds:

- Full Graves - these are full size burial plots, usually dug for two (dependent on ground conditions). Where there is a specific need, and only with the written permission of the Parish or delegated Officer, a grave may be dug for three people. Cremated remains can also be placed in a full -size grave where there have already been one or more burials.
- Garden of Remembrance – may hold up to two caskets of cremated remains. Memorials take the form of a stone block and or an additional vase.

6.2 Interments at the St. Edward's Churchyard are managed by St. Edward's Church and Cheddleton Parish Council has no oversight in the arrangements made.

INTERMENTS

7.1 Both burials and interment of cremated remains are available at Cheddleton Parish Council Burial Grounds.

7.2 Any interments at St. Edward's church yard are administrated by St. Edward's Church and the Parish Council does not have involvement in such arrangements.

7.3 All coffins and caskets used in interments must contain a plaque stating, at minimum, the name of the person interred and either their date of death or age at death. This will be checked at the time of interment against the paperwork submitted.

7.4 Given the limited size of the available burial plots, only coffins up to 6'6" x 26" x 16" (198cm x 26cm x 40cm) in size are permitted. The Parish Council is unlikely to be able to accommodate any larger size coffins. Where an individual is of a size that cannot be accommodated within a coffin of these dimensions, Funeral Directors should contact the Parish Council to enquire about potential options. The Parish Council will endeavour to support such an interment, but no guarantee can be given.

7.5 Burials may be conducted either as a first interment in a new full grave space or as a reopening, as described in sections 7.9-7.11.

7.6 Cremated remains may be interred in a new Garden of Remembrance plot. They may be placed as a re-opening in all types of graves, providing there is sufficient space. Cremated remains must be placed in a casket with a plaque and may not be poured or scattered either within graves or anywhere in the Burial Ground.

7.7 Cremated remains may also be interred in a coffin at the same time as a burial. This is permitted providing the following conditions are met:

- The names of both people interred are inscribed on a plaque in the coffin.
- The interment paperwork for both is completed.
- The payment consists of both the appropriate burial fee and the fee for placing cremated remains in an existing grave.

7.8 The paperwork and administrative requirements required of an interment are outlined in Sections 7.12-7.17. The formal paperwork required, and payment must be received by the Parish Council at least 48 hours in advance of the interment.

FIRST INTERMENT

7.9 Only those that are deemed eligible under the burial eligibility policy (see Appendix 5) may be interred at the Burial Ground. The first interment in a full grave cannot be cremated remains.

REOPENING OF A GRAVE

7.10 A re-opening refers to an interment in a grave that has already had at least one previous interment (either burial or interment of cremated remains). A re-opening may only take place with the written authorisation of the grave manager(s) (see section 9.8) or where the person being interred was the signatory of the previous interment. In any case, an interment will only be authorised where there is sufficient space and there are no safety concerns.

7.11 Should there be any concern about whether there is a sufficient space for a further interment, the person making the arrangements should seek the advice of a grave digger.

ARRANGEMENT OF INTERMENT

7.12 Interments can be organised by a private individual or by a contractor (such as a funeral director). The organiser must ensure they are aware of the prerequisite documentation as well as their requirement to engage an approved grave digger as described under section 10.2 and 10.3. Individual arrangements of burials are permitted but discouraged due to the requirement to organise appropriate collection and transport and placement of the body, a matter that Cheddleton Parish Council is unable to assist with or advise on.

7.13 The signatory on the notice of interment must be aware of the responsibilities that will entail their signing of the form (see section 9.5).

7.14 To arrange an interment at one of Cheddleton Parish Council's Burial Ground sites, the person making the arrangements must phone or email the Parish Council to check availability for the required date and time.

7.15 The time that the interment is booked for is the intended time of arrival of the funeral cortege at the Burial Ground. Where the interment does not take place within 20 minutes of this time, a late fee may be charged. If the cortege arrives at the Burial Ground earlier than the booked time, the Funeral Director is not to proceed to the grave or begin the interment until the time stated.

7.16 Interments may only take place in daylight hours and during normal working hours.

7.17 Completed paperwork must be received at least 48 hours in advance of an interment. The paperwork must consist of:

- A fully completed and signed notice of interment.
- The payment/evidence of payment of any fees due.
- One of the appropriate certifications authorizing interment:
- The 'Green Form' containing Part B and Part C of the 'Registrar's Certificate for Burial and Cremation.'
- The Cremation Certificate.
- Confirmation of delivery of a non-viable foetus.
- Certificate of Stillbirth.
- Certificate from the Coroner authorising either a burial or cremation (this must be the correct certificate for the type of interment considered).
- Certificate of non-liability to register.

ALLOCATION OF GRAVES

7.18 The placement of the grave is allocated by the Parish Clerk or delegated Officer and is recorded on the notice of interment either at the time of booking (for re-openings interments in reserved plots) or two working days before the interment (for new plots). Allocation of new graves will usually be the next in row from the previous. There is a marked area of the burial ground at St. Edward's Lawn Cemetery which has not been consecrated and therefore is available for burials of non-Christians or any denomination and beliefs should you prefer a plot in this area make it clear on your application. If an individual, family, or friend has a particular preference regarding grave location, this will be taken into consideration, but the Parish Council cannot guarantee to meet that request.

ROLES DURING INTERMENTS

7.19 It is understood that families and friends may wish to partake in the duties of the burial and family members may act as pallbearers. However, in order to ensure the safety of all users of the Burial Ground, no individual other than those working as the contracted individual/company authorised to work at the Burial Ground may participate in grave digging or lowering the coffin.

RESERVATION OF GRAVE SPACES

8.1 Cheddleton Parish Council does not offer an option to purchase plots or reserve graves for future use. However, the Parish Council will, of course, honour plot reservations made when such a scheme previously operated. It should be noted that the reservation fee paid does not form part of the payment of the interment fee or any other fees related to the interment or memorial of a person in the Burial Ground.

RIGHTS OF BURIAL

9.1 Cheddleton Parish Council does not offer exclusive rights of burial, rather operating under implied rights of burial with stringent measures in place to ensure that responsibilities and methods of authorisation for future interments are made clear.

9.2 The person who signs the initial notice of interment form becomes the ‘Grave Manager’ – the person that can authorise memorials or further interments and is also responsible for the maintenance of the grave (for instance addressing any memorial safety concerns). All individuals signing a notice of interment must ensure they are aware of the rights and responsibilities of being a Grave Manager and the rules and regulations they are required to adhere to.

9.3 Cheddleton Parish Council is happy to accept multiple Grave Managers. This can be achieved by either all signatories signing the notice of interment or via a letter of authorisation signed by the Grave Manager. It must be clear whether all signatories are required to authorise changes to the grave, or whether any individual declared can make changes.

9.4 Where an issue is identified at the grave, such as a repair, the responsibility will still fall upon all Grave Managers to ensure that the issue is resolved.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A GRAVE MANAGER

9.5 Grave Managers are responsible for ensuring the grave is maintained tidily and to a good standard, that no unauthorised changes are made to the grave and identified repair issues are conducted. What constitutes a good standard is outlined in the rules and regulations of the Burial Ground (Appendix 6). It should be noted that this includes the financial cost of making good any repairs required or safety concerns.

9.6 Grave Managers must update the Parish Council with any changes to their address or contact details in order to receive up to date information.

RIGHTS OF A GRAVE MANAGER

9.7 Providing there is sufficient space within the grave, the Grave Manager (or any one of the Grave Managers) has the right to be interred in the burial plot in the event of their death.

9.8 The written consent of the Grave Manager(s) is required in order for the Parish Council to authorise any further interment (except where the deceased is the previous Grave Manager) and to authorise any memorial changes.

9.9 In the event of the death of the sole signatory, where they are interred within Cheddleton Burial Grounds, the person(s) who sign(s) the deceased's notice of interment will become the 'Grave Manager.'

CHANGES TO A GRAVE MANAGER

9.10 Cheddleton Parish Council understand that there may be occasions where a change in Grave Manager may be required. This can be achieved by both the current Grave Manager and the intended Grave Manager providing a signed letter to agreeing the transfer of grave management rights and responsibilities. This transfer of responsibilities should not be assumed completed until written confirmation from the Parish Council is received.

GRAVE DIGGING

10.1 The Parish Council does not employ or instruct grave diggers, a grave digger for an interment must be appointed or instructed by the Funeral Director, the person arranging the interment, or another individual acting on behalf of the family.

10.2 However, in the interest of the safety of the Burial Ground, only gravediggers that are authorised by Cheddleton Parish Council to do so may dig or inter in the Burial Ground.

10.3 Authorisation will only be granted upon receipt of public liability insurance documents, and a signed agreement to the terms and conditions of working in the Burial Ground. (see Appendix 2).

GRAVE DIGGER RESPONSIBILITIES

10.4 Grave diggers must follow the ICCM Code of Safe Working Practice for Cemeteries and must ensure the safety of all staff, contractors, and visitors to the Burial Grounds as a result of their work. Grave diggers must provide any additional documentation required by the Parish Council upon request. This may

include, but is not limited to, risk assessments, method statements, and evidence of competency in any machinery used.

10.5 It is the grave digger's responsibility to ensure they are aware of the grave they are digging and to enquire with the Parish Council should they have any queries on the grave.

10.6 Grave diggers must ensure they have the appropriate safety gear. This includes appropriate footwear and clothing, and all other personal protective equipment deemed necessary in the grave digger's risk assessment.

GENERAL GRAVE DIGGING REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS

10.7 Prior to excavation, grave diggers must ensure they are aware of the correct grave to be dug. Any queries with regard to the correct location should be directed to the Parish Council.

10.8 No grave may be dug at the Burial Grounds without the permission of Cheddleton Parish Council. Small mechanical diggers may be used with the permission. Where access to a grave plot is not appropriate with a mechanical digger, the grave will be dug by hand with the minimum of disturbance to the surrounding graves. Adjacent plots are to be protected, with a suitable material, from soil removed from the grave. Topsoil/Turf will be kept for replacing at the top and not used for back filling the lower part of the grave.

10.9 The grave must not be dug any earlier than 48 hours prior to the interment without the prior permission of the Parish Council. The dug grave must be supervised or adequately boarded at all times, and appropriately guarded, as to prevent the risk of slip, trips, and falls.

10.10 The requirements relating to the depth of grave required (as outlined in section 10.12- 10.15) must be adhered to at all times. Any difficulties should be reported to the Parish Council and the appropriate funeral director immediately.

10.11 The actual grave depth dug must be reported to the Parish Council Officer in attendance at the Burial Ground. Should no Officer be able to attend the interment in question, the grave digger is required to report the depth dug by either phone or in writing.

10.12 Vehicles taken into the Burial Grounds are to remain on the path and must not be parked on the grass. Should any damage be caused this must be remedied by the Grave digger within 14 days.

10.13 Before an interment, grave surrounds will be covered with grass mats. Webbing for lowering the surface biers will be made available for use by the Funeral Director.

10.14 Graves are to be backfilled immediately after the mourners have left the graveside. The site is to be left clean, tidy, and safe after an interment. Floral tributes are to be gathered and placed on the finished grave. Should there be any damage or disturbance to a grave it must be reported to the Council and repaired immediately.

10.15 Spoil from the graves is to be placed in the area designated by the Clerk but preferably removed off site especially for the first interment.

10.16 All Grave Diggers working in the Burial Grounds must be covered by £5 million Public Liability Insurance, evidence of which will be submitted to the Parish Council on an annual basis.

GRAVE DIGGING DEPTHS

10.17 As a standard, all full graves must be dug for at least two (at least 6 feet deep).

10.18 Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Local Authorities Cemetery Order 1977 provides the following minimum measurements to be adhered to at the time of interment:

- The coffin placed in a re-opened grave must be separated from any coffin previously interred by a layer of earth measuring at least 6 inches (15cm) thick.
- No part of any coffin interred may be less than 3 feet (91cm) below the ground level of the grave and any area immediately adjoining the grave.
- Given the type of soil at Cheddleton Parish Burial Ground, it is not suitable to reduce the minimum burial depths to less than 3ft below ground levels, as outlined in Schedule 2 of the Local Authorities Cemetery Order 1977.

10.19 Taking into consideration the above points, and the assumed coffin depth of 1'3" 38 cm (which may well increase), the following minimum depth for graving digging is given below. It is strongly recommended that the grave is dug deeper than the minimum depth, as far as reasonably possible, in order to ensure that contingency against future unknown factors is built in.

Dug for 1	4'3" 1.37m
Dug for 2	6'0" 1.83m
Dug for 3 (only permitted with the authorisation of the Clerk)	7'9" 2.36m

10.20 When conducting a re-opening, it is possible that a shallow grave may be encountered and there is limited opportunity to resolve the issue. In this instance it is essential that the Clerk of the Parish Council is immediately informed. The Clerk will help look for possible alternatives.

FUNERAL DIRECTORS

11.1 Only Funeral Directors who have signed the terms and conditions sited in Appendix 1 will be granted permission to conduct interments at the sites.

11.2 All Funeral Directors are required to provide to the Parish Council annually and also on receipt of any specific request from the Parish Council the following documentation:

- Full risk assessments and method statement showing how work will be undertaken and what measures will be taken to minimise the risk of personal injury or damage to property. These must cover all aspects of work the Funeral Director is likely to undertake, including any activities within the Burial Grounds that are associated with the funeral service and all issues relating to vehicle access and movements within the Burial Grounds.
- A copy of their incident reporting mechanisms and procedures in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR).
- A copy of their Health and Safety policy and codes of practice.
- A copy of their Public and Employee Liability insurance with at least £5 million cover. Copies also to be provided to the Parish Council upon policy renewal.
- Or any other document requested by the Parish Council.

11.3 Funeral Directors acting on behalf of families and friends interring at the Burial Grounds must ensure that the family are provided a copy of, and are aware of, the rules and regulations of the Burial Grounds, as well as this policy.

11.4 The Funeral Directors must also ensure that signatories are aware of their responsibilities as outlined in section 9.5-9.9.

11.5 In the instance that the signatory is not the next of kin of the deceased, the Funeral Directors must have made all reasonable steps to ensure that the next of

kin is aware of the implication of another individual signing the Notice of Interment.

MEMORIALS

12.1 Memorials may only be placed, amended, or replaced with the written permission of the Parish Council, which can be applied for using the 'Application for permission to erect Headstone.' This will only be granted where the Memorial Mason in question has registered to work with Cheddleton Parish Council.

12.2 The appropriate fee must be included with the 'Application for permission to erect Headstone.' Permission to place a memorial will only be given where the form is signed by both an approved Memorial Mason and the Grave Manager (as outlined in section 9.2).

12.3 Memorials for first interments, or where the Grave Manager is being interred cannot be processed or approved by the Parish Council until the interment paperwork is received. This is due to the need to ensure that the Grave Manager has authorised the memorial.

12.4 Memorials on graves shall not exceed three feet (3') (91cm.) in height from ground level, two feet six inches (2'6" (76cm.) in width and six inches (6") (15cm.) thick. The base shall not exceed twelve inches (12") (30cm) from front to back and the depth of any base containing flower vase containers must not be less than four inches (4") (10cm.) **The memorial must be non-figurative and constructed in a durable natural stone, marble, or granite. Any etching such as: a flower, tractor, picture or similar must be approved by the Clerk on application. Any photo plaque must be no bigger than 6" x 6" (15.25cm).**

12.5 Memorials for the garden of remembrance shall not exceed 20" (50cm) in height from ground level, 18" (40cm) in width and six inches (6") (15cm) at the base tapering to 3" at the top. The memorial must be non-figurative and constructed in a durable natural stone – black marble or, granite. Where a standard memorial is not required a single vase of a standard 6" x 6" x 6" size constructed of natural stone will be allowed provided it is placed on the slabs at the head of the grave.

MEMORIAL MASONS

12.6 Only Memorial Masons who are registered under the Memorial Mason Registration Scheme will be authorised to work within the Parish Council owned Burial Grounds. This scheme does not apply to St. Edward's Churchyard, for

which all queries must be issued to the church directly. Memorial Masons are required to apply to the Registration Scheme annually, and provide the following documentation:

- A copy of their Public and Employee Liability Insurance with at least £5 million cover. Copies also to be provided to the Parish Council upon policy renewal.
- Proof of current membership of the National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) or The British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM).

12.7 The full rules and regulations of the Memorial Mason's Registration Scheme are outlined in Appendix 3.

12.8 Memorial Masons must ensure that no stone or memorial is placed or amended without the written permission of the Parish Council. Proof of submission of paperwork and/or payment is not sufficient.

12.9 Where an application for a memorial has been received but the interment paperwork is outstanding, the Parish Council will usually await the interment paperwork before authorising.

NEW OR REPLACEMENT MEMORIALS

12.10 For the memorial to be approved, it must fall within the maximum permitted dimensions outlined in the Memorials 12.4-12.5 along with completed 'Application for permission to erect Headstone' form and drawing of the proposed headstone, vase with dimensions and intended inscriptions.

12.11 The memorial must also be in keeping with the overall environment at the Burial Ground with regard to colour and lettering.

AMENDMENTS TO MEMORIAL

12.12 Any amendments such as additional inscription or regilding the lettering must be applied for using the same 'Application for permission to erect Headstone' form. There is no fee associated with approving inscriptions. Where the work being done is restorative only (for example regilding lettering), this will not attract a fee.

MEMORIALS WITHOUT INTERMENTS

12.13 Cheddleton Parish Council will not usually permit a memorial to be placed without an interment being arranged. Any person not interred in the Burial Ground may not be remembered on an existing memorial.

12.14 Where a family wish to place a memorial with the intention to inter at a later date, this will be considered on a case-by- case basis by the Clerk and if necessary, the Burial Grounds Committee.

MEMORIAL SAFETY

12.15 Though uncommon, there have been a number of serious injuries (including fatalities) to members of the public in UK cemeteries caused by falling memorials. In addition to only permitting Memorial Masons to work in the Burial Ground where their competency is assessed via the Memorial Mason's Registration Scheme, Cheddleton Parish Council also arranges safety testing of all memorials within all its managed Burial Grounds at least once every five years.

12.16 The memorial safety testing is conducted by a contractor who is procured according to the Financial Regulations of Cheddleton Parish Council. As part of the memorial safety testing, the contractor carries out a visual inspection of each memorial, followed by the 'hand test', where a force is applied to the top of the headstone to identify any potential movement, and whether any action is required to improve the safety of the memorial.

12.17 As a result of the memorial testing, a memorial may be considered either safe (where no further action is required for five years or unless a specific need is identified prior to the next inspection), or unsafe.

12.18 Safety issues may also be identified outside formal safety assessments, either by Burial Ground Users, Contractors providing a service at the Burial Ground, or Officers working for the Parish Council. All safety concerns regarding memorials at the Burial Ground must be directed to the Parish Council, who dependent on risk, will identify the next steps to take.

12.19 The action taken when a memorial is deemed unsafe, depends on the risk it presents to other Burial Ground users. Where there is an immediate risk to the safety of the Burial Ground users, there is no choice but to lay the memorial down flat. However, it is noted that this can be incredibly upsetting to the loved ones of those remembered in the memorial, and this will only be done when absolutely necessary. Where a memorial has been laid flat, the Parish Council will write to the Grave Manager on the most up to date contact information held, as well as leave a letter on the grave. This will explain why the action has been taken and what work must be undertaken to make the memorial safe.

12.20 Where the assessor identifies that there is an issue with the memorial that needs addressing, but it does not present an immediate risk of falling, the Parish Council will write to the Grave Manager at the address most recently provided, requesting that the repair be carried out and specifying a date by which this work must be completed. Where there is doubt as to whether the address continues to be occupied by the Grave Manager, the Parish Council may elect to instead leave the letter on the memorial in question.

12.21 Should the required work not be conducted within the period requested, the Parish Council will consider what is the most appropriate next step to take, depending on the risk presented and any other known details of the case.

ENVIRONMENT AND GRAVE STANDARDS

13.1 In order to maintain the overall clean, tidy, safe, and well managed environment at the Burial Ground for all users to enjoy and reflect, there are a number of standards that all Burial Ground users are required to adhere to:

- All plastic wrapping or cellophane must be removed from flowers or any other grave ornaments prior to their placement and either placed in a bin or removed from the site.
- No bottles, cans or other containers of alcohol may be left on graves or in the any area of the Burial Ground.
- No planting of trees, bushes, flowers, or any other plants may take place in the Burial Ground without the written authorisation of the Parish Council.
- Any grave ornaments must be in good condition, not present a safety risk (such as broken glass or electrical items), and must not be offensive, smelly, or upsetting to other Burial Ground users.
- Dying flowers or plants, discoloured wreaths and broken items should not be left on the grave.

13.2 The Burial Grounds are lawned cemeteries, which means the graves need to remain clear of obstructions which prevent the maintenance of the lawn. For this reason, the following apply:

- No vase, pot or container of any kind may be sunk into the soil on any grave.
- A small vase or plant may be placed near the headstone to keep the grave free for mowing. No items may be placed other than on the base of the headstone.
- Fresh flowers and wreaths may be laid on a grave after interment where they can remain for up to three months.

- No bushes, bulbs or plants may be placed in the soil without the express written permission of the Parish Council.
- No kerbs, railings and non-turfed areas are permitted without the written permission of the Parish Council. Written permission will only be granted where ground conditions prevent a well-maintained lawn area.
- Artificial grass is not permitted.

THE REMOVAL OF ITEMS

13.3 The Parish Council may remove items from graves without notice, where it is causing a significant disruption to other Burial Ground users or the overall environment of the Burial Ground. Items removed will usually be stored for a minimum of two months to allow the Grave Manager the opportunity to collect. Where the items are perishable, broken or in a poor state of repair, the Parish Council will be required to dispose of these items immediately.

13.4 Where the Parish Council has written or notified a Grave Manager that an item needs to be removed, a deadline will be provided. Should the item not be removed by this date, the Parish Council will arrange removal and disposal of the item. The cost of doing so may be charged to the Grave Manager.

13.5 It should also be noted that Christmas Wreaths are removed from graves at the end of January.

BENCHES

14.1 Benches may not be placed in the Burial Ground without the written permission of the Parish Council. Due to the limited space available in the Parish Council owned Burial Grounds it is not possible to grant a bench for each request made or grant permission for a memorial bench to be placed in perpetuity. For this reason, memorial bench applications will only be considered in line with the Memorial Bench procedure outlined in Appendices 4a and 4b.

14.2 Unauthorised benches are liable to be removed without notice.

MAINTENANCE OF BURIAL GROUNDS GRASS CUTTING

15.1 The maintenance of the Burial Grounds, including the cutting of grass is the responsibility of the Parish Council. A ground's contractor conducts maintenance.

15.2 Grass cutting of used grave areas will usually take place at least twice a month during the grass growing months. Sections of the Burial Ground which are

not in use may be allowed to grow to support and enhance local wildlife over summer months.

15.3 Any concerns about grass cutting should be directed to the Parish Council.

UNEVEN GROUND AND GRAVES

15.3 Due to the movement of soil, it is common that the ground on grave areas may sink and become uneven. Where the ground is sunken to an extent that it poses an immediate risk to the health and safety of Burial Ground users, the Parish Council will arrange for this to be rectified.

15.4 In all other cases, an annual levelling of graves will be undertaken, following which the grave will be re-turfed. A sign will be placed in the Burial Ground when this will be undertaken.

WINTER MANAGEMENT

15.5 It should be noted that the Burial Ground is unsupervised, and users are required to make their own assessment of whether the weather and ground conditions allow them to safely use the Burial Ground before entering the site.

EXHUMATIONS

16.1 An exhumation or disinterment refers to the removal of human remains from the ground. An exhumation may be required or requested for a number of reasons including moving the remains to a different location, for scientific or forensic examination or to conduct further groundwork, for instance to deepen the grave to allow for further interments.

16.2 It is unlawful for an exhumation to take place without obtaining the necessary permissions. In the instance of the Cheddleton Parish Council owned Burial Grounds, lawful permission may only be obtained via a license applied for through the Ministry of Justice.

16.3 To apply for an exhumation, the applicant needs to fill out and sign the Part A of the 'Application for a license for the removal of buried human remains (including cremated remains) in England and Wales.' This form is available from <https://www.gov.uk>. Once completed, the form must be signed by the Grave Manager (if they are not the applicant) and submitted to Cheddleton Parish Council.

16.4 Cheddleton Parish Council will complete Part B of the application and submit it to the Ministry of Justice. This process may incur a charge.

16.5 Once a license is received, the arrangements for the exhumation to take place, in accordance with the license, may commence.

16.6 The applicant will be responsible for all costs associated with the exhumation and any re-interment, unless otherwise agreed in writing.

16.7 The process to be followed includes the below:

- The Parish Council informs the local Environmental Health team. The Environmental Health team may choose not to attend where the exhumation is of cremated remains, but they must be present for the exhumation of a buried person.
- A date and time are arranged for all those due to be in attendance, which includes a grave digger. The exhumation must take place early in the morning to allow for maximum privacy.
- A risk assessment and method statement are required from the grave digger prior to the exhumation taking place
- An Officer of the Parish Council must be present for the exhumation to ensure that the conditions of the licenses are followed and that:
 - a) The correct grave is opened.
 - b) The plot is appropriately screened for privacy.
 - c) The work is conducted in a sensitive and respectful manner.
 - d) Adequate health and safety measures are in place and adhered to.
 - e) The name plate(s) on the casket (s) match those on the license.
 - f) All requests and measures stipulated by the Environmental Health Officer are conducted.
 - g) All conditions of the exhumation license are met.

16.8 Following an exhumation, the Parish Council's Burial Register and Burial Plot Plans will be updated to reflect the disinterment, and any re-interment will be recorded in the usual way.

16.9 Exhumations at the consecrated churchyard at St. Edward's will follow a different process. Such exhumations are managed by St. Edward's Church and any queries regarding the matter should be conducted to the church office.

APPENDIX 1 – FUNERAL DIRECTORS TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A1.1 Only Funeral Directors who have signed the terms and conditions of working in the Cheddleton Parish Council owned Burial Grounds will be granted permission to conduct interments at the sites.

A1.2 All Funeral Directors are required to provide to the Parish Council annually and also on receipt of any specific request from the Parish Council the following documentation:

- Full risk assessments and method statement showing how work will be undertaken and what measures will be taken to minimise the risk of personal injury or damage to property. These must cover all aspects of work the Funeral Director is likely to undertake, including any activities within the cemetery that are associated with the funeral service and all issues relating to vehicle access and movements with the Burial Grounds.
- A copy of their incident reporting mechanisms and procedures in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR).
- A copy of their Health and Safety policy and codes of practice.
- A copy of their Public and Employee Liability insurance with at least £5 million cover. Copies also to be provided to the Parish Council upon policy renewal.
- Or any other document requested by the Parish Council.

A1.3 The Parish Council may undertake spot checks without prior notice to ensure compliance with their policy and procedures. Any Funeral Director or any other person found to be in contravention thereof may be prohibited from working at the Burial Grounds and shall not be entitled to any recompense whatsoever.

A1.4 Funeral Directors acting on behalf of families and friends interring at the Burial Grounds must ensure that the family are provided a copy of, and are aware of, the rules and regulations of the Burial Grounds as well as this policy.

A1.5 The Funeral Directors must also ensure that signatories of the Notice of Interment are aware of their responsibilities as outlined in section 9 of the attached policy. In the instance that the signatory is not the next of kin, the Funeral Directors must have made all reasonable steps to ensure that the next of kin is aware of the implication of another individual signing the Notice of Interment and thus becoming the Grave Manager.

APPENDIX 2 – GRAVE DIGGING TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A2.1 Graves may only be dug at St. Edward's Lawn Cemetery and Cheddleton Lawn Cemetery by contractors who have signed the terms and conditions below and agree to adhere to all the specifications set out in section 10 in the attached policy.

A2.2 Grave diggers and contractors carrying out work at Cheddleton Parish Council owned Burial Grounds must comply with all legislative requirements and provide to the Parish Council copies of their policies, risk assessments, method statements, safe systems of work, staff training records, COSHH assessments, insurance certificates or any other document requested by the Parish Council prior to undertaking any work on site.

A2.3 The Parish Council may undertake spot checks without prior notice to ensure compliance with their policy and procedures. Any contractor or any other person found to be in contravention thereof may be prohibited from working at the Burial Grounds and shall not be entitled to any recompense whatsoever.

APPENDIX 3 - MEMORIAL MASONS RULES AND REGULATIONS

A3.1 Introduction This Scheme applies to both of Cheddleton Parish Council's Burial Grounds. Only Memorial Masons who have been approved by Cheddleton Parish Council and who have agreed to be bound by the terms of this scheme shall be registered to work in the Parish Burial Grounds. This Scheme not only applies to the fixing of new memorials, but also to any work conducted on existing memorials and/or their underwork. This scheme sets out the rules that will apply to Memorial Masons, together with the penalties that might be expected if these rules are breached. If a Memorial Mason signs this form and meets the registration requirements set out below, their name, firm or company, or organisation shall be entered in the Cheddleton Parish Council's Register.

A3.2 Registration requirements in order for a Memorial Mason to be registered under the Memorial Masons Registration Scheme the following requirements must be satisfied:

- Insurance – every Memorial Mason shall be insured for public liability to the value of £5,000,000 and shall produce evidence of such insurance to the Registrar.
- Experience and Qualification – Memorial Masons shall be required to prove to the satisfaction of Cheddleton Parish Council that all their staff are suitably

qualified and competent to conduct the necessary work within the Parish Burial Ground. Ideally, this will be achieved by obtaining a qualification from a national accreditation scheme.

- Discipline and Workmanship – every Memorial Mason who agrees to be bound by the terms of this scheme undertakes to Cheddleton Parish Council that they have not been barred from carrying out work in any other cemetery within the previous two years and confirms that they will comply with all statutory requirements, the Burial Ground regulations, the Memorial Registration Scheme and the current NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) Code of Working Practice.

A3.3 Application to erect or conduct work to a memorial.

All memorials to be installed in the Parish Burial Ground and all work to existing memorials must first be approved by the Clerk following receipt of an application form provided by the Clerk and completed by the Memorial Mason. All applicants shall include full details of the memorial to be installed or the work to be carried out to an existing memorial and in the former case shall indicate the size of memorial, material to be used, the inscription and full installation details, including the method of fixing the memorial to the 24 foundations. All work will be in accordance with the current NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) Code of Working Practice. Upon approval of the application, a permit to erect or conduct works to a memorial will be issued to the Memorial Mason by the Clerk.

The permit shall state in the case of new memorials that the memorial is subject to a five yearly inspection which will be arranged by the Clerk. Subject to the memorial being inspected and being found safe, the inspection period may then be extended. This condition will form part of the permit.

A3.4 Erection of (or works conducted to) a memorial.

No work shall commence until the Clerk issues the permit to the Memorial Mason, it will be assumed that work will commence and be completed within 3 months of the date listed on the permit.

The memorial shall be installed, or the work shall take place as indicated on the application form. No variation to the details on the original application will be permitted; if a variation is required then the Memorial Mason shall submit an amended application form for approval by the Clerk who shall, if satisfied, then issue a further permit. All work undertaken on site will be in accordance with the permit, as well as with the detail submitted on the application form and/or any

amended application form and the current NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) Code of Working Practice.

A3.5 Inspection of work

The Clerk will inspect all work conducted by the Memorial Masons. The Clerk may from time to time instruct a Memorial Mason to remove and re-fix a memorial they have erected or worked on, so that fixing methods etc can be checked. Whatever the findings of these inspections, the Memorial Mason will conduct this work free of charge.

Notice that this work may be conducted at the Clerk's discretion, is noted in the current rules and regulations and further approval from the applicant would not be sought. Where work is unacceptable, for whatever reason, the Clerk will instruct the Memorial Mason to return to bring the memorial up to the appropriate standard.

A3.6 Definitions

- 'Memorial' means a headstone or other marker, or monument erected above a grave space.
- 'Memorial Mason' means an individual company or organisation concerned with the production, erection, and/or maintenance of a memorial.
- 'Permit' means the document marked permit and issued by the Clerk to a Memorial Mason to allow a memorial to be erected or work to take place in respect of an existing memorial.
- 'Parish Burial Ground' means St. Edward's Lawn Cemetery and Cheddleton Lawn Cemetery.
- 'Parish Burial Ground Regulations' means those regulations which are approved by Cheddleton Parish Council, and which govern the use and operation of the Parish Burial Ground.

APPENDIX 4 - Memorial Benches in the Burial Ground.

A4.1 Cheddleton Parish Council wishes to ensure that friends and relatives of those interred within the Parish Burial Ground are able to apply for lasting memorials to their loved ones, now, and in the future but this will be limited because of space.

A4.2 To enable the installation of memorial benches to be an option in the coming years, the Parish Council has resolved to provide high quality recycled plastic benches. This policy applies to St. Edward's Lawn Cemetery only.

OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

A4.3 This policy has been produced with the following guiding principles:

- To be respectful and sympathetic to those seeking to install a memorial. The policy recognises that the provision of a seat as a memorial provides a tribute to a loved one and is a benefit to the community in which they lived.
- To be measurable, clear, and easily understood by residents.
- To balance the contrasting needs of a variety of users.
- To ensure that the high-quality appearance of the Burial Grounds is maintained.
- To establish responsibility for the maintenance, repair, and replacement of memorials.

A4.4 The policy will ensure that memorials:

- Have permission from the next of kin.
- Have a common appearance, style and size and are positioned in an appropriate place.
- Will not cause offence to others.

A4.5 It is the intention that the policy only covers broad common issues and is not meant to be exhaustive. The content of this policy will be considered regularly, to meet changing circumstances. Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Council for approval. Specific requests outside this policy may be considered by the Parish Council's Burial Grounds Committee.

A4.6 This policy will be made available to the general public and all applicants for memorial benches will be issued with a copy.

GENERAL

A4.7 Applications for memorial benches must be made by the next of kin (or be approved by the next of kin) of an individual interred in the Parish Burial Ground.

A4.8 Applications can be made for individuals or couples. It is recommended that consideration be given to whether a plaque should be for a couple or for the individuals that were part of that couple.

A4.9 Only one application may be made per individual or couple. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the option to provide a memorial is available to a wide

range of people. Therefore, multiple applications in memory of the same individual will not be granted.

A4.10 A memorial plaque shall be fitted to each bench. The bench will be purchased and the plaques engraved and installed as and when required.

A4.11 Plaques shall be fitted to the upper most lathe of the back of the bench. The inscription on the plaque shall not exceed 100 letters (including spaces). For example, “In (Loving) Memory of” the name of the person, recognition of public office (if appropriate) and the dates of birth and death. The approval of the wording is to discretion of the Clerk.

A4.12 The Parish Council aims to ensure that memorial benches have a common appearance, style and size and are appropriate for that location. The Parish Council will source and install benches and will make the final decision about the location of the bench. If the next location for a bench is not in the same location as the grave of a loved one, the Parish Council will discuss this with the applicant(s).

A4.13 Benches installed prior to this policy will continue to be the responsibility of the owner. Replacement of benches installed previously is not permitted. All new memorial benches will be subject to this policy.

A4.14 Any new memorial benches that are not purchased through the Parish Council will be removed to a safe compound. The owner will be contacted, and removal will be necessary.

A4.15 No additional mementoes e.g. vases, statues, flowers, wreaths, balloons, or other ornamentation etc., shall be permitted on or around the bench. These shall be removed without reference to the original applicant(s).

A4.16 The bench remains the property of Cheddleton Parish Council. Payment received from the applicant(s) is treated as a donation.

A4.17 Any individual visiting the Burial Grounds is permitted to sit on memorial benches. These are installed for the benefit of visitors to the site and are not solely for the use of applicants.

A4.18 The Parish Council will not grant applications for memorial benches to pets.

A4.19 The Parish Council will keep a record of applicants and their contact details in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations. It is the

responsibility of the applicant(s) to provide the Clerk with updated contact details in writing.

MAINTENANCE

A4.20 The Parish Council will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the benches that are purchased through this policy and will maintain benches to an adequate standard.

A4.21 The Parish Council will maintain each memorial bench for a period of ten years. This will include any preservation, treatment, and repair works. It is expected that any memorial bench will have a serviceable life of 10 years. After a period of 10 years the Parish Council will contact the applicant(s) of the seat to ascertain the future of the bench, such as: A) Removal and the return of any plaque to the applicant(s) or their family. B) Re-siting the plaque on a different memorial bench (if required).

A4.22 The Parish Council accepts no replacement liability for a bench that is considered by the Parish Council to be unsafe and to have reached the end of its useful life. The Parish Council reserves the right to remove any memorial benches that have been damaged and are in the view of the Parish Council beyond economical repair. In this event, the applicant(s) will be informed. Any inscribed plaques will be returned to the applicant(s) or disposed of if contact cannot be made.

A4.23 The Parish Council accepts no liability for damage to any memorial benches from vandals, third parties or whilst routine maintenance is being conducted.

FEES

A4.24 This scheme is not designed to provide an income for the Parish Council. The cost of the provision of memorial benches and plaques has been kept as low as possible to ensure that it is not cost-prohibitive for individuals and families.

A4.25 Costs will be sort on application as prices may vary for the purchase of new benches.

A4.26 Payment is required with every application before purchase and installation of the bench. Payment is non-refundable.

APPENDIX 5 – Eligibility for Interment in the Burial Ground.

INTRODUCTION

A5.1 Cheddleton Parish Council manages two burial sites and conducts the maintenance of the St Edward's Asylum closed Burial Ground. As with all burial sites across the country, land is in short-supply and maintenance of a lawned Burial Ground is costly. It is therefore important that space is used effectively for the benefit of the residents of the Parish.

A5.2 Cheddleton Parish Council is flexible and each application for burial including the burial of cremated remains is considered on a case-by-case basis. However, it is important to note that priority will always be given to the needs of residents of the Parish.

OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

A5.3 The purpose of this document is to provide guidance in relation to how eligibility for burial in Cheddleton will be determined, and to ensure there is transparency with regard to this decision-making. PROVISIONS

A5.4 Persons meeting the eligibility criteria are:

- A person for whom clear documentary evidence is provided showing that they were a current resident of the Parish.
- A person for whom clear documentary evidence is provided showing that they were on the Electoral Roll of Cheddleton, current as at the date of death.
- A child, at least one of whose parents was living in a dwelling within the Cheddleton boundaries, current as at the date of the child's death; or,
- A close relative (e.g. mother, father, sibling or child) is a current resident of the Parish, using the criteria from above, or is buried in the Burial Grounds already;
- A person who had lived most of their lives in Cheddleton, but had spent the latter part in a nursing/residential home out of the Parish.

A5.6 Where no evidence is provided, the application will normally be rejected. However, an appeal can be submitted to the Parish Council's Burial Grounds Committee, if required.

A5.7 For the burial of other non-residents, which may cover those who have lived here in the past or have had a very close connection with the Parish, the permission of the Clerk is required.

A5.8 Funeral Directors MUST confirm the status of the deceased prior to arranging any funeral or interment arrangements.

A5.9 Current residents of the Parish or a child will normally be charged single fees. Those not resident at the time of death, may be permitted burial within the sites, but will be charged double fees.

APPENDIX 6 – RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE BURIAL GROUND

Please read the following Rules carefully as any infringement of the Rules will be enforced against and this can cause upset.

A copy of these regulations must be signed by the Applicant and returned, together with the Application for Interment, to the Council.

To ensure the Burial Grounds provide a safe, comfortable, and well-maintained space for people to reflect and remember loved ones, all visitors and users of the Burial Grounds are required to adhere to the rules below.

1. All Charges and fees to be paid to the Council 48 hours prior to any burial/ installation or removal of memorial. With the completed forms as set out 7.17 of the Management Policy.
2. The Council reserve the right to amend the Fees and Regulations and holds records of burials within the burial grounds.
3. No dogs are permitted within the Burial Grounds (with the exception of assistance dogs. Assistance dog owners are responsible for cleaning up and the appropriate disposal of any fouling).
4. Children must be accompanied by a responsible person. Any person creating a disturbance or, nuisance or, acts of vandalism appertaining to the burial ground will be promptly prosecuted.
5. No ashes are permitted to be scattered at the Burial Grounds. Ashes in caskets may be interred with the written permission of the Parish Council.
6. Only individuals approved by the Parish Council are permitted to build a grave, use grave digging equipment or erect memorials and only at the plot where permission has been granted.

7. All memorials must be approved by the Parish Council prior to placement. Unauthorised memorials are subject to removal by the Parish Council without notice.
8. The selection of any grave space shall be subject to the approval of the Clerk. The Clerk's decision in respect of the allocation of the grave space shall be final.
9. Anyone acting as a bearer during an interment does so at their own risk and only professional undertakers may participate in lowering the coffin. The Parish Council accepts no responsibility for any resulting accident or injury to a bearer howsoever caused.
10. Plastic packaging or cellophane must be removed from any arrangements or flowers laid on graves. All dead flowers/wreaths should be removed and disposed of in the bin provided, and Bottles, cans or other containers of alcohol must not be left on graves or any area of the Burial Ground. The consumption of alcohol in the Burial Ground is prohibited.
11. Wreaths and fresh flowers may only be laid direct on any grave for a maximum of three months following interment. A bin is provided for the disposal of these. After this period, one small vase or plant may be placed at the headstone, but the grave area must be left clear for mowing. Additional items are likely to be removed without notice.
12. Kerbs, railings, or other forms of surrounds may only be placed with the written permission of the Parish Council. This permission may only be granted where the ground conditions prevent lawned or turfed graves. Artificial grass is not permitted.
13. No vase, pot or container of any kind may be sunk into the soil on any grave or placed in chippings.
14. No tree or shrub shall be planted in the Burial Ground without the permission of the Parish Council. Bulbs, plants, and tress shall not be planted in the soil of any grave. Over time, tree or shrub roots could undermine the foundation of a memorial thereby affecting its stability. If planted, the Parish Council reserves the right to remove such trees or shrubs without notice.

15. Grounds Maintenance or anyone else tending a grave are not permitted to use any chemical herbicide or pesticide within the Burial Ground.
16. No bench may be placed without the written permission of the Parish Council. Written permission will usually be granted as per the Memorial Bench policy.
17. The Parish Council accepts no responsibility for the condition of any memorial, grave, headstone, or monument within the Burial Ground. The Parish Council accepts no responsibility for making good any damage caused to monuments, gravestones, or graves.
18. All users of the Burial Ground are required to take reasonable steps to ensure their own health and safety. While efforts will be made to minimise any risks, the Burial Grounds are not supervised, and users of the Burial Grounds must assess whether it is safe for them to enter, particularly during icy weather or when the ground is very slippery.
19. The Parish Council is committed to delivering a high standard of service to the bereaved. The Parish Council operates a complaints procedure. In the event of any dissatisfaction, a complaint should be made to the Clerk.
20. Memorials should meet with the specifications set out in 12.4 or 12.5 of the Management Policy. If no memorial stone is present a temporary wooden cross or small stone cairn is allowed for a maximum of 12 months.