

*Ashes burials. Continued...*

Ashes can either be poured directly into the ground or buried in a biodegradable container (i.e. made of cardboard or wood). (For burials of ashes in the Garden of Remembrance, we ask that ashes are poured directly into the ground.) The Cremation Certificate must be given to the Vicar, to remain in Church records, before the ashes can be buried.

### **Can I choose a plot location?**

It might be possible to choose a particular new plot for your loved one who has died, depending on the space available. Please ask the Vicar for information.

### **Can I reserve a plot for the future?**

It might be possible to reserve a specific plot for the burial of a body in the future, depending on the location, and as long as sufficient space is available in the churchyard for at least five years' worth of burials. (Please note that it is not possible to reserve a plot for the burial of ashes.) Those who are eligible to reserve a plot are those who are eligible for a burial (see above), plus members of the Church congregation. A special legal permission called a Faculty is needed to reserve a burial plot. The Church will help you to apply – please ask the Sexton for more details.

### **What memorials are allowed?**

Three types of memorials are allowed in our churchyard: (1) an authorised headstone, (2) a temporary wooden cross bearing a memorial plaque (which must be removed when the headstone is in place or new inscription added to an existing headstone, or three years after the burial, whichever is sooner), and (3) a wooden bench bearing a memorial plaque.

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Please note that no other memorials (e.g. plaques, stones, vases, photos or kerbs) are allowed. The placing of memorials without permission is illegal. Please see our leaflet “Memorials for our loved ones” for more information – it can be accessed on our website and on Church noticeboards.

### **What items are allowed to be placed on graves?**

Please read our leaflet “The Churchyard Code” (see website/Church noticeboards) which explains the rules.

The main thing to remember is that, in the long-term, only four things are allowed on graves: (1) an authorised headstone, (2) small things that grow in the soil (e.g. grass, plants, flowers), (3) bark chippings, and (4) cut flowers.

Please do not build borders or plant hedges around a grave or put down loose stones.

### **Statutory fees**

The Church is under legal obligation to charge fees for a burial of a body or cremated remains. These fees are set by the Church of England and are adjusted in January each year. Gravedigging fees are also payable. Please ask the Funeral Director or the Church for details.

### **Contact details**

To arrange a burial or ashes burial: Revd David Cattle, Vicar, on [vicar@stmichaelsgalleywood.org.uk](mailto:vicar@stmichaelsgalleywood.org.uk) or 01245 956953

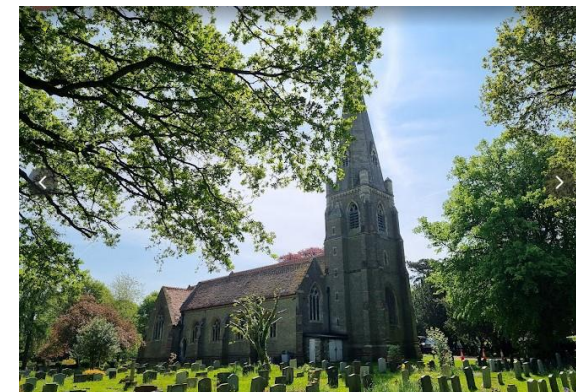
To enquire about reserving a plot for the future: Anne Pepper, Sexton, on [sexton@stmichaelsgalleywood.org.uk](mailto:sexton@stmichaelsgalleywood.org.uk)

Please see our website for more information: [www.stmichaelsgalleywood.org.uk/churchyard/](http://www.stmichaelsgalleywood.org.uk/churchyard/)



## **Burials in our churchyard**

Full burials, ashes burials and plot reservations



Updated July 2024



## Our churchyard

At St Michael's we have a large churchyard which is still open for burials and for the interment (burial) of ashes. It is a beautiful, peaceful resting place for the mortal remains of our loved ones, with the Church building at its heart. It is...

...**sacred**. It is land which has been set aside and blessed for holy use. Here we can remember our loved ones, enjoy the beauty of nature, feel closer to God, and be reminded of the hope of eternal life.

...**shared**. The land is owned by the Church for the benefit of everyone, so it is a shared space. Like with any shared space, there is a list of rules to make sure that the needs of all users are respected, and that what happens here is safe and fair for everyone.

...**sustainable**. In keeping with our desire to care for God's creation, everything in the churchyard (except headstones, benches, and some limited temporary items) must be living (i.e. not plastic or artificial).

It is important to note that the ground above which our loved ones are buried is not owned by any individual family, but remains part of the churchyard which is owned by the Church and kept as a shared space for the benefit of everyone. Therefore, no grave should be treated like a private memorial garden. This is the case even if a statutory fee has been paid in order to reserve a plot.

Please contact the Vicar or the Sexton (details below) if you have any questions or need any help, and especially if you would like someone to support you in times of grief.

## What are the rules?

All cemeteries and burial grounds have a list of rules to follow. If you choose for your loved one to be buried in our churchyard, you are also choosing to follow the rules of the churchyard, which are set by the Chancellor of the Diocese of Chelmsford, Philippa Hopkins KC, who is the senior legal officer for the Bishop. The rules are part of a legal framework, and so are part of English law, and they apply to every churchyard in the Diocese of Chelmsford. The full list of rules can be found in "The Churchyard Handbook" on our website: [www.stmichaelsgalleywood.org.uk/churchyard/](http://www.stmichaelsgalleywood.org.uk/churchyard/)

We ask that everyone follows the rules, so we can avoid unnecessary upset and potentially expensive mistakes.

***It is essential that permission is obtained from the Church before any burials take place.*** This is so that things can happen in an orderly way, and that proper records can be kept for the future. Please do not scatter ashes in our churchyard – the scattering of ashes in churchyards is illegal.

## Who can be buried in our churchyard?

As long as there is room, a person has a legal right to be buried in our churchyard if:

- they lived in the Church Parish of Galleywood at the time of their death (please note that the Church and Civic Parishes are different),
- they died in the Church Parish of Galleywood, or
- their name was on the electoral roll of St Michael's Church at the time of their death.

*Who can be buried in our churchyard? Continued...*

Permission may also be granted for the burial of someone who used to live in the Parish, or who used to be on the electoral roll, but had moved away for some reason (e.g. due to age or ill health). Also, permission may be granted for a burial in an existing family grave (as opposed to a new plot) for someone who does not meet the above criteria. Each application will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

## How do I arrange the burial of my loved one?

If your loved one has died and you would like their body to be buried in our churchyard, please ask the Funeral Director in the first instance. The Funeral Director will contact the Church to check eligibility and to make the arrangements.

## How do I arrange for my loved one's ashes to be buried?

In the past, ashes have been buried in our Garden of Remembrance. The Garden is currently full, and so no ashes can be buried there, except for very close relatives of those whose ashes are already buried there.

The Church is currently offering individual ashes plots outside of the Garden of Remembrance. These plots are smaller than full burial plots, but can be fitted with a headstone like a full burial plot can.

To arrange a burial of ashes, you can either contact a Funeral Director and ask them to make the arrangements, or approach the Vicar directly. A service of committal can be conducted at the graveside as the ashes are buried, if you would like that.