



# **Dartmoor Forest Parish Council**

## **Procedure 5.5**

### **Postbridge Cemetery Plots and Burials**

## Record of Amendments and Reviews

<u>Version</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Date of Adoption</u>
1	New procedure	3 December 2007
2	Revised to produce complete document, incorporating text from several semi-formal documents	23 November 2021
2	Reviewed and Readopted	27 June 2023
3	Re written	28 Oct 2025

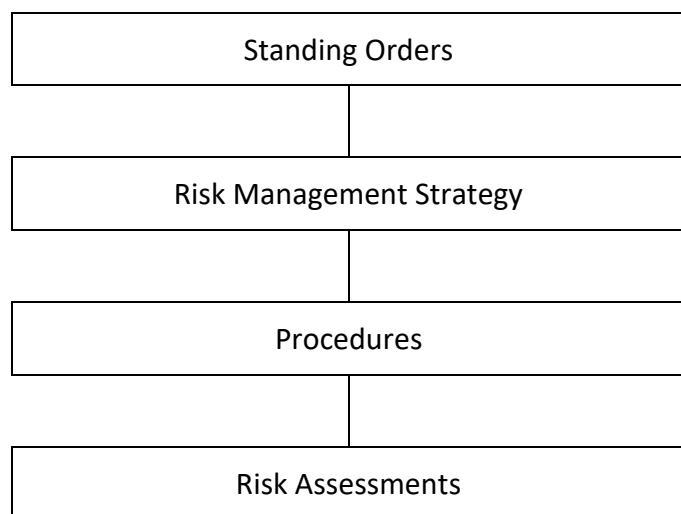
Next review required by:	October 2027
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## **References:**

- A. Department for Constitutional Affairs Guide for Burial Ground Managers (Nov 2005).
- B. Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) Handbook.

## Document Hierarchy

In the event of any discrepancy between Dartmoor Forest Parish Council Codes, Regulations, Policies, Strategies, Procedures and other documentation, the version contained in the higher-level document detailed below will apply, unless changed by a resolution of the council.



## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Dartmoor Forest Parish Council owns Postbridge Cemetery. The burial ground was opened in 1901. Until then, coffins were carried across the moor to Lydford and resting places are still visible.
- 1.2. There are two sections to the cemetery. Standing with the entrance gate behind you (facing North) the ground on the left hand (West) side is consecrated and that on the right (East) is not. Historically, those being buried in the un-consecrated area were not allowed through the gates and coffins were passed through a hole in the wall into the cemetery. This practice ceased some decades ago.
- 1.3. Additional land over the North bank at the bottom of the area was purchased in 2004 as an extension, but since the rhododendrons were cleared there is sufficient space in the original enclosure for the foreseeable future. Burials average less than one per year.
- 1.4. Dartmoor Forest Parish Council aim for Postbridge Cemetery to run on a self-financing basis and sets fees accordingly. There is no intent to raise general funds for the Council through the cemetery.
- 1.5. The Burial Clerk fulfils a legal requirement for burials at Postbridge Cemetery. The Burials Clerk acts as the first point of contact for funeral directors and stonemasons, and is responsible for ensuring all burial ground aspects of funerals run smoothly. The Burial Clerk is also responsible for liaising with clergy and maintaining the statutory Burial Records. The Burials Clerk may also deal directly with the bereaved for plot selection and on the day of the funeral.

## **Cemetery Maintenance**

- 2.1 The Parish Council is responsible for all aspects of managing the ground. The grass is cut by the Parish Lengthsman. Tree surgery is necessary from time to time, for which a Tree Surgeon is contracted in. The Lengthsman usually completes any bank and wall maintenance and repair.
- 2.2 Penlee Lane is maintained by Highways. On occasions the Parish Council have asked residents whose property borders on to the lane to cut back encroaching hedges to prevent the hearse and funeral cortege cars getting scratched.
- 2.3 There is a separate procedure for memorial inspections.

## **Purchase of Grave/ Plot in advance of Burial**

- 3.1. Anyone wishing to purchase a Grave/Plot should contact the Burial Clerk, and complete the 'Application to Purchase Burial Plot' form (see appendix 1)
- 3.2. If Applicant is **not** a current resident of Postbridge item will be put on next Council Meeting Agenda for Council to consider the application. Council decision is final.
- 3.3. If applicant is a current resident of Postbridge, or application from non resident is approved by Council, Burial Clerk liaises with applicant to agree on location of the plot.
- 3.4. Clerk issues invoice for plot fee and Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB).
- 3.5. Upon receiving payment, Burial Clerk issues EROB: sends it to applicant and retains a copy on Parsh Councils records (electronic and hard copy). Legally, this is the deed of purchase for the plot of land for 99 years.
- 3.6. Burials Clerk must mark the plot with a numbered wooden peg and record it on the Plot Purchase Register and the Cemetery Site Plan.

## **FUNERAL PROCEDURE**

### **4. Initial Actions**

- 4.1. News of a death can come from several sources: the village Post Office; Parish Councillors; the deceased's next of kin; the funeral director; or the clergy.
- 4.2. On being informed of a death, the Burial Clerk is to establish communications with the Funeral Director as soon as possible. If the Funeral Director is not familiar with Postbridge Cemetery, the Burials Clerk must ensure the Funeral Director understands the constraints on parking and the non-availability of double plots (see below).
- 4.3. The Gravedigger is normally contracted by the Funeral Director, who is responsible for negotiating the fee for the gravedigging. The local Gravedigger is Mark Hutchins [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who knows the land well and does a good job.
- 4.4. The Burials Clerk must write to the Funeral Director forwarding the Application for Interment Form (Annex B) and giving the cost of the Parish Council's fees and the size restriction on monuments (Annex C).

### **5. Plot Location / Selection**

- 5.1. The family may already own a plot with Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial in which case the only requirement of the Burials Clerk is to mark the plot for the Gravedigger. If the person named on the Grant document has died the plot legally is deemed to be an asset and passes to the estate of the next of kin of that person.
- 5.2. If Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial is not owned for any plot, the Burials Clerk must meet with the family to guide them in plot selection. Historically, plot usage has been slightly random but over recent years the Parish Council has tried to be more logical. In selecting the plot, the Burials Clerk must ensure the family understand the difference between the consecrated and un-consecrated areas
- 5.3. Double depth plots are not allowed as the land is far too hard and stony. This means that a second, usually adjacent, plot needs to be purchased.
- 5.4. When a plot is agreed upon, the Burials Clerk must mark the plot with a numbered wooden peg and record it on the Plot Purchase Register and the Cemetery Site Plan. The Burials Clerk must create the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial and give this to the plot purchaser, keeping a copy in the Parish Council's records. Legally, this is the deed of purchase for the plot of land for 99 years.

### **6. Before the Funeral**

- 6.1. The Burials Clerk must determine from the Funeral Director how many cars are expected. Normally, only three vehicles in addition to the hearse are able to drive to the cemetery. For larger numbers, mourners usually park on the B3212 by the church and walk up to the cemetery. Exceptionally, permission may be sought for additional cars to park in the driveway to Penlee Farm from the owner, Dave Fisher, who is a former Chair of the Parish Council. [REDACTED]
- 6.2. The Burials Clerk must inform local residents bordering on the cemetery of the date and time of the funeral.
- 6.3. The Burials Clerk must ensure the Application for Interment Form (Annex B) is completed and returned by noon three days prior to the funeral. In exceptional circumstances, completion of the form could wait until immediately prior to the funeral but the burial cannot proceed until it is complete.
- 6.4. The Burials Clerk must arrange a time with the Gravedigger for the cemetery main gates to be unlocked to allow digging machinery in.
- 6.5. The Burials Clerk must ensure the cemetery is looking tidy and well cared for. This is usually undertaken by the Lengthsman.

## 7. Burial Service

- 7.1. The Burials Clerk, or nominated Council representative, must be in attendance when the burial service takes place.
- 7.2. No burials are allowed legally unless the Burials Clerk has received the Registrar's green burial certificate. In practice the funeral director will bring it to the cemetery and hand it over before proceedings begin.
- 7.3. The Burials Clerk must take to the funeral:
  - The Register of Burials,
  - The Parish Council's copy of the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial, and
  - Any other Parish Council paperwork to be handed to the Funeral Director.
- 7.4. The Funeral Director will usually hand a cheque to the Burials Clerk in payment of the Parish Council's fees if this has not been done beforehand.
- 7.5. The Burials Clerk must arrive at the cemetery well before the funeral to:
  - Unlock and open the main gates,
  - Ensure that the cemetery is tidy,
  - Help to guide cars requiring parking space, and
  - Show the clergy/officiating person to the burial plot.
- 7.6. During the service, the Burials Clerk is to stand inconspicuously outside the gates to prevent any interruption to the service.
- 7.7. After the service, the Burials Clerk must make up the Register of Burials and the Register of Public Graves.
- 7.8. The Burials Clerk must obtain the signature in black ink in the Register of Burials of the member of the clergy who conducted the service.
- 7.9. Detach and complete the appropriate section of the Registrar's green burial certificate and send to the Registrar at the address on the back of the form.

## 8. Interment of Cremated Remains

- 8.1. There are no legal requirements to be met for the interment of cremated remains.
- 8.2. A plot for the interment of cremated remains must be purchased and recorded as above. These plots are smaller and in a separate part of the cemetery in both the consecrated and un-consecrated areas.
- 8.3. The Parish Council's policy is that the Burials Clerk, or nominated Council representative, must be in attendance when the burial service takes place.
- 8.4. The Burials Clerk must complete all non-legal preparatory actions above prior to the service to inter cremated remains, as appropriate.
- 8.5. The Burials Clerk must arrive at the cemetery well before the burial service (see 7.5 & 7.6)

## 9. Monuments

- 9.1. Some people choose to pay for the fee to erect the monument at the same time as the funeral, other choose to pay it later, when the ground has settled properly.
- 9.2. The Burials Clerk must give a copy of the Headstone Requirements (Annex C) to the Funeral Director or a member of the bereaved family, and to the stonemason.
- 9.3. The Burials Clerk is responsible for ensuring that the bereaved family and stonemason comply with the Parish Council's Headstone Requirements.
- 9.4. The Burials Clerk must liaise with the stonemason over the monument erection and arrange for the cemetery main gates to be unlocked for the access of equipment.
- 9.5. If the bereaved family are to be present for the monument erection, the Burials Clerk is to ensure the cemetery is looking tidy and well cared for.

# Dartmoor Forest Parish Council



## Purchase of Grave/Plot - Postbridge Cemetery

- A Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB) may be purchased at any time. An Exclusive Right of Burial is currently granted for a period of 99 years from the date of purchase.
- The Exclusive Right of Burial can be issued in the names of up to three people.
- A deed for the Exclusive Right of Burial will be issued to the purchaser/s of the grave upon payment of the appropriate fee. The Council's records contain the details of the registered grave owners; however, it is important that the grave owners keep safe their Exclusive Right of Burial deed. Possession of the deed does not in itself signify ownership of the Exclusive Rights.
- When an interment is not that of the deed holder, consent in writing from the deed holder(s) is required on the Notice of Internment form prior to the interment taking place.
- Ownership of the Exclusive Right of Burial can be transferred either during the owner's lifetime or after their death. Transfer of the Exclusive Right of Burial from the living owner(s) to another individual(s) is done so upon completion of an Assignment Form.
- The Exclusive Right of Burial may be transferred on the death of the registered owner to the person or persons entitled to it. In order to establish grave ownership, the person or persons wishing to take up ownership must be able to produce a Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration. If these legal documents have not been applied for or issued, then ownership may be transferred to the executor by Statutory Declaration.
- A transferred Exclusive Right of Burial is only valid if it has been registered and acknowledged by the Parish Council.
- Where no Exclusive Right of Burial exists the Parish Council has the right to use unpurchased graves, that have sufficient depth, for further interments. No previous interments will be disturbed in such circumstances.
- Double depth graves are not allowed as the land is far too hard and stony. This means that a second, usually adjacent, grave needs to be purchased.

### Fees for Purchase of Grave (Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026)

	Resident	Previous resident	Non-Resident
Plot for burial of coffin	£200	£300	£400
Plot for burial of cremated remains	£ 100	£ 150	£200
Deed of Assignment/Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial	£ 16	£ 24	£ 32

### Residential Criteria

A Postbridge resident is defined as someone who, at the time of his/her death:

- Resided in a property within the Postbridge boundary
- Or had been hospitalised from a property within the Postbridge boundary
- Or had moved to a residential home from a property within Postbridge

### Council Approval

Applications from current residents of Postbridge do not require the approval of the Council.

Applications from previous residents, or from those who have never been a resident must be approved by the Council as an agenda item at a monthly meeting, and the Council decision recorded in the minutes. Council meetings are normally held on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

The Parish Council will consider applications for variations/exceptions to the residency rules on an individual basis. The Parish Council's decision in such matters is final.

## **Application to Purchase a Burial Plot Postbridge Cemetery**

Please complete section A, section B or C as applicable, and section D.

### **A: Primary Applicant**

### **Second Applicant-If plot to be held in joint names**

First Name:	First Name:
Last Name:	Last Name:
Address:	Address:
Post Code:	Post Code:
Email Address:	Email Address:
Telephone Number:	Telephone Number:

### **B: If you do not currently live in Postbridge, but were a previous resident, complete below**

Date from	Date to	Address

### **C: If you have never been a resident of Postbridge, please give your reasons for wishing to purchase a burial plot. i.e. family connection etc (max 250 words) This will be considered by Council.**

## Section D

The Cemetery has both Consecrated and Un-consecrated areas, please indicate your preference.  
(This cannot be changed once the plot has been purchased)

Consecrated

Un-consecrated

There are different areas allocated for burial of coffins and ashes, please indicate your preference.  
(This cannot be changed once the plot has been purchased)

Burial of Coffin

Burial of Ashes

If you are familiar with the layout of the Cemetery, do you have a preferred location?

Yes

No

If you are unfamiliar with the Cemetery, it is possible to arrange to meet the Burial Clerk at the Cemetery to select your plot location. Please tick if you would like to take up this opportunity.

Yes

If YES, Burial Clerk will contact you to arrange date/time.

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For Office Use:

Resident status confirmed: Current / Previous / Non resident

Presented to Council as necessary: Meeting Date:

Agenda Item:

Outcome: Approved

Denied

Cost: £ (includes £8 for Deed of Assignment)

Invoice issued: ----/----/-----

Payment Received: ----/----/-----

EROB issued: ----/----/----- Grave/Plot number:

Plot Marker in place: ----/----/-----

Parish Clerk: Duncan Swift

Telephone:

Email: [clerk@dartmoorforestparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@dartmoorforestparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Website: [www.dartmoorforestparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.dartmoorforestparishcouncil.gov.uk)

# **Dartmoor Forest Parish Council**



## Application for Interment

**This application must be delivered to the Parish Clerk No later than noon 3 working days prior to interment**

Cemetery in which interment is required	Postbridge	
Funeral Director		
Day, date & time of burial		
Full name of deceased		
Maiden Name		
Address		
Postcode		
Place where death occurred		
Date of death	Age	
Dimensions of coffin or casket		
(in inches) Length	Width	Depth
Coffin type		
Religious denomination	Officiating Minister	
Chapel or straight to grave	Number of grave	
Was deceased a resident of Postbridge	YES / NO	
Occupation (prior to retirement)		

**Please complete sections A or B**

## **Section A New graves only**

I would like to purchase the Exclusive Rights of Burial for 99 years.

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Full name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Postcode** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone number** \_\_\_\_\_

**Relationship to deceased** \_\_\_\_\_

**Section B Previously purchased to be opened**

To be completed by the grave owner or their next of kin where the deceased is the grave owner.

Please open grave number \_\_\_\_\_ at Postbridge Cemetery

for the interment of \_\_\_\_\_

I am the registered owner of the grave / next of kin / executor of the owner (delete as appropriate)

If none of the above please state your relationship to the deceased grave owner

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Full name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

**N.B. Dartmoor Forest Parish can only authorise the opening of a purchased grave with the permission of the owner or to inter the owner. In all other cases ownership must be transferred to someone who can legally prove that they are entitled to receive these ownership rights. Whilst the Council will offer all assistance in establishing the means of transfer, responsibility remains with the funeral arranger to have clarified this matter before booking.**

In accordance with our responsibility under the Data Protection Act, you should be aware that the personal information you are giving will be held and may be passed to other services of the Council, so that you are provided with the best possible support.

We will not pass your personal information to external individuals or organisations unless there is a legal obligation to do so.

Fees		Details of Funeral Director / Arranger
Purchase		
Interment		
Chapel		
Total		
Receipt Number		

**Parish Clerk: Duncan Swift**

Email: [clerk@dartmoorforestparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@dartmoorforestparishcouncil.gov.uk)

DFPC Procedure – Postbridge Cemetery Plots and Burials

**Telephone:**

Website: [dartmoorforestparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://dartmoorforestparishcouncil.gov.uk)

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## ANNEX C

### POSTBRIDGE CEMETERY FEES – (Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026)

#### PURCHASE OF GRAVE

	Resident	Previous resident	Non-Resident
Plot for burial of coffin	£200	£300	£400
Plot for burial of cremated remains	£ 100	£ 150	£200
Deed of Assignment/Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial	£ 16	£ 24	£ 32

#### BURIALS

	Resident	Previous resident	Non-Resident
Interment of coffin in burial ground	£200	£300	£400
Interment of stillborn infant or infant dying within first five years		£ nil	
Burial of cremated remains in burial ground (in container or loose)	£100	£ 150	£200
Scattering of cremated remains in burial ground	On application to the Clerk		

#### MONUMENTS IN BURIAL GROUND

	Resident	Previous resident	Non-Resident
Small cross of wood	£100	£150	£200
Vase not exceeding H12" x D8" x W8"	£100	£150	£200
Tablet not exceeding 21" x 21" (erected horizontally or vertically)	£100	£150	£200
Boulder style headstones not exceeding 21" x 21"	£100	£150	£200
Base with flower/vase hole(s)	£50	£75	£100
Larger headstones and standing crosses	£200	£300	£400
Kerbed headstones (in addition to headstone cost above)	£100	£150	£200
Any other monument - On application to the Clerk	On application to the Clerk		
Original inscription on tablet	£nil		
Additional inscription on existing tablet	£nil		

## **HEADSTONE FINISHES**

Granite headstones that are predominantly grey in colour, or other stone with similar visual properties, are preferred in Postbridge Cemetery.

Headstone finishes that are permitted include:

- Honed (eggshell - smooth, yet unreflective);
- Part-polished (only polished on the inscription and base area);
- Pitched (rustic rock finishes)

Owing to the rustic and traditional appearance of Postbridge cemetery, fully polished headstones are not permitted.

Engravings - There is no restriction on the font or colouring for headstone engravings.

## **RESIDENTIAL CRITERIA**

The fees above apply to Postbridge residents. A Postbridge resident is defined as someone who, at the time of his/her death:

- Resided in a property within the Postbridge boundary
- Or had been hospitalised from a property within the Postbridge boundary
- Or had moved to a residential home from a property within Postbridge

The Parish Council will consider applications for variations/exceptions to the residency rules on an individual basis. The Parish Council's decision in such matters is final

### **Please Note :**

It is regretted that double depth burial plots are not available due to the stony nature of the ground

Dartmoor Forest Parish Council aims to keep Postbridge Cemetery self-financing and non-profit making as far as possible. Fees were set by the Parish Council in September 2012 (see Parish Council minutes) reviewed in May 2020 (see Parish Council minutes), and again in November 2025 (see Parish Council minutes).

All applications and payments should be forwarded to the Parish Clerk -  
[clerk@dartmoorforestparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@dartmoorforestparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Details for bank transfers are:

Bank: Lloyds Bank, Fore Street, Okehampton EX20 1HJ  
Account Name: Dartmoor Forest Parish Council  
Sort Code: 30-96-23  
Account Number: 00741473

**ANNEX D**

**CEMETERY SITE PLAN** – see separate document as it changes as plots are purchased/burials take place