

# A Guide to Monuments

## Your Rights (The Charter for the Bereaved)

Right 5: You have the right to place a memorial within the constraints of regulations in force or to leave the grave unmarked.

Right 6: You have the right and responsibility to maintain the memorial upon the grave during the period of grave rights granted to you, or any extension made to this period. The memorial cannot be disturbed or moved during this period without your express permission, unless it poses a safety hazard. The safe erection and maintenance of the memorial is your responsibility during the period of rights.

Right 7: Except where the Charter members are the sole supplier of memorials, you have the right to use any memorial mason of your choice, provided they are not prohibited by the Charter Member.

## **What is a monument?**

A monument is anything above the level of the ground that is placed on the grave as a tribute to those buried there. It could take many forms but may include stone, wood, mounded earth and/or plants.

## **Can I have a monument?**

To place a monument on a grave you must first purchase the grave. This entails a one off fee that gives you Exclusive Rights of burial for the grave and the right to erect a monument for a period of thirty or seventy five years. This period may be extended after the initial period is up.

## **When can I erect it?**

After a funeral, we will mound the earth on the grave and put the flowers and wreaths on top. After a month (or less if the weather is bad) we will remove all floral tributes and dispose of them. Please do not plant anything directly into the mound. Flowers may be left in a container (not glass, ceramic or thin plastic) and you may put a wooden cross up to 500mm (18") high on the grave temporarily. When six months has passed you may erect a permanent monument. There is no need to wait until the end of the six months to apply however.

## **Must I use a stonemason?**

No, but if you do - they must be members of our 'Approved Contractor Scheme' and they will usually advise you and then submit an application on your behalf.

## **How do I apply to put a monument there myself?**

If you do not wish to use a stonemason you must submit your own application on a form available from us. You must satisfy us that you are competent to construct the memorial yourself. We will inspect the monument as it is built and may ask you to remove or rebuild any monument that we do not consider to be safe.

### **Can I keep a mound of earth on all or part of the grave?**

Yes - if you wish to leave a mound upon the grave you still need to apply to us to do so. If you do not do this by six months after the funeral we will remove the mound. If you keep a mound on the grave you must arrange to cut the grass regularly or have it cut for you. You may enter into a contract with us to cut it for you. Unkempt mounds may be removed.

### **What kind of memorial can I have?**

You may apply to have any kind of memorial you like. We will consider each memorial on its own merits and will generally approve any monument as long as it is not in bad taste and is sufficiently well constructed to be safe for at least the period of the Rights. If we refuse permission you will be given a full written explanation. The type of monument you want may be limited by the area of the cemetery your grave is in.

### **Access**

On occasions there may be an interment in an adjacent grave. If necessary we may have to erect a cover over your monument to protect it and soil may be placed on this cover. Your grave may be inaccessible for a few days. In extreme circumstances, it may be necessary to remove your monument for safety reasons. We will be fully responsible for restoring your monument in a safe and clean state after the funeral.

### **Vandalism**

Whilst Vandalism is a very rare event in our cemeteries, it can occur from time to time. The Council cannot be held liable for any damage caused by the irresponsible actions of others, although we will prosecute anyone caught causing vandalism. We strongly recommend that grave owners take out insurance to protect their property.