



Filey Parish

St. Oswald's St. John's St. Thomas'

30th April 2021

Parish Church of St Oswald's Filey - Churchyard

First of all, if you regularly visit a family grave at St Oswald's to keep it tidy I would like to thank you for doing so. It is not always an easy task, especially if you live in another part of the country. However, it has been noted that many graves and cremated remains plots especially along the North wall of the Churchyard, are not within the Churchyard Memorial Rules 2018. Having recently been contacted by the 'Legal Secretary to the Archbishop of York Registrar' I am asking families to remove any breaches of rules, so that we can make good the areas affected. I enclose a copy of relevant part of these Rules:

Paragraph 1.3 of the Rules:

- 1.3 It is important to note that the next of kin of the deceased do not own the land in which a body is buried ("the grave"). The grave is part of the churchyard. The family has no proprietary rights over the land; and so the grave may not be marked, or delineated, by kerbs, chains, verge stones, railings or fences

And

Paragraph 4.6 further states:-

- 4.6 MATERIALS - Monuments shall be of natural native stone (such as local limestone or sandstone) or slate or may be of hardwood (e.g. oak). The best stones are those in harmony with the stone of the Church and other mature local buildings. The surface of the stone shall not be polished so as to reflect. "Part honed" is the term used for the smoothest finish which is permitted.

The following materials shall not be used: black, blue or red granite, all polished granite of whatever colour, marble, synthetic or artificial stone or plastic. **A grave shall not have upon it chippings of any sort, or glass shades, or any kerb, railing, chain, or fencing of any kind.** The grass sward must be allowed to grow **naturally** so that the whole churchyard can be managed tidily.

A consecrated grave yard is a place of special interest to a wide range of people - mourners, parishioners, historians, ecologists, visitors and others. So the care of churchyards throughout the country is regulated in a number of different ways. Like the church building and its contents, any significant work requires a 'Faculty' (legal permission). The full details of 'Churchyard Memorial Regulations' can be found here:

<https://dioceseofyork.org.uk/uploads/attachment/4368/churchyard-memorial-regulations-2018-amended-aug-2019.pdf>

As the churchyard at St Oswald's is also 'closed' to new burials, apart from burial of ashes in a specified area, this means further regulations apply, set by Parliament. Simply put,

Scarborough Borough Council look after the maintenance of churchyard, but we as the PCC also have responsibilities, part of which is to manage the churchyard within the rules.

Therefore, I would respectfully ask that if there is anything on or around your family grave that is in contravention of these rules that you remove them within the next few weeks. This is especially relevant if you have erected any form of kerbing and inlaid any chippings, pebbles, slate, or placed any lights, pictures or trinkets, toys etc or planted any trees or shrubs or demarked a plot with a garden.

I or the Church Warden are happy to meet with you to clarify any queries you might have.

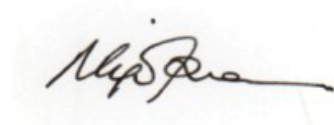
Grass Cutting

There are widely differing expectations and opinions about grass cutting. Some prefer short and collected, others would make it a wildlife haven and let it grow. It is however, quite unacceptable to expect the graveyard to be pristine, but where families do cut the grass it does make a difference. So thank you if you do so.

It takes around four days to trim the grass, it is not done every week and allowances need to be made for weather, holidays and illness. Grass is not collected up. The councils' work has been made considerably harder and dangerous recently where loose chippings, slate and pebbles are being scattered around graves.

Please be assured, that I am most grateful to everyone who comes to make their family grave site tidy, and I encourage you to continue. However, please do so within the regulations.

With Kind Regards



Revd. Nigel Chapman
Parish of Filey

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