

Horspath Parish Council (Updated June 2026)

RULES FOR THE BURIAL GROUND

Aims It is the intention of Horspath Parish Council that the New Burial Ground, owned and maintained for the village by the Parish Council, will provide a safe, peaceful and beautiful place in a green and pleasant location, for the interment of the remains of any deceased person who has been resident in Horspath for a significant part of their life. These Rules are designed to regulate the way in which this will be best achieved, in the administration of the use of the New Burial Ground on behalf of the Parish Council. The Rules are a public document and a copy may be made available to any resident of Horspath wishing to consult them. In the case of any dispute arising about the scope, application or interpretation of the Rules, the decision of Horspath Parish Council will be final. Matters of dispute will therefore be referred to the Parish Council. It is the sole right of Horspath Parish Council to revise these Rules as may be required from time to time. The fees will be revised by Horspath Parish Council annually.

General

1. The surface of the burial ground shall be kept level as far as possible and free from mounds, so that the grass may be cut. A period of six months shall be allowed for natural settlement of grave mounds after which time the Parish Council shall, at its discretion, take appropriate action to level the plot.
2. Every application to erect or place anything whatsoever or do any works in the burial ground shall be made in writing to the Parish Council stating a full description of the proposed work including (as may be appropriate) designs of monuments accompanied by scale drawings not less than 1:16, details of inscriptions and the like particulars.
3. Nothing shall be erected or placed in the burial ground until such proposals have received the consent of the Parish Council in writing.
4. When graves are dug, memorials erected or other similar work constructed, canvas or mats must be used to preserve the graves and adjoining materials and such other precautions as necessary. All excess materials must be removed from the site as soon as possible.
5. Any person who shall wilfully destroy or injure any building, wall or fence belonging to the burial ground, or cause any damage whatever, must pay the Parish Council for making good such damage.

Applications

6. Applications for interment are to be made to the appropriate clergy during the usual business hours on any day except Sunday, Christmas Day and Good Friday, not less than forty-eight hours before the interment. The appropriate clergy or funeral directors will liaise with the Parish Council to ensure that the necessary criteria are met and that the intended grave or ashes interment site is properly situated.
7. The applicant must give to the appropriate clergy and funeral directors a statement of the names in full, the occupation (where known) and age of the person to be buried, date of death, the Parish or place in which it occurred, the usual residence of the deceased, the day of the funeral and the division of the ground in which it is intended that the burial shall take place. Such statement shall be entered in a book and all fees are to be paid on such application. The Parish Council will maintain records of each interment, with reference to a Plan of the New Burial Ground to be supplied by the Parish Council.

8. The relevant Certificate for Burial; Coroner's order for Burial; Certificate for disposal (still birth); or Certificate for the burial of ashes must be handed to the Parish Council's appointed representative before any interment. No burial shall take place without the appropriate Certificate for disposal.

9. The Burial Ground is established to meet the needs of residents of the village of Horspath, and is not available to meet the needs of other communities.

10. To facilitate the progressive use of the Burial Ground to be planned, there is no allowance in these Rules for the purchase or reservation of any specific grave plots in advance. In the case of a spouse or partner whose remains are interred before those of the other partner, the grave will be dug to double depth before the first interment, to permit the same grave to be occupied by the remains of both partners at a later date, if that is the expressed wish of the applicant.

Monuments

11. Applications for the erection of a monument should be sent to the Horspath Parish Clerk together with a full visual representation:-
Hayley Kogel
63 Bowyer Road
Abingdon
Oxfordshire
OX14 2EP

Applications will be considered at monthly Parish Council meetings and notifications will be sent asking for the appropriate remittance to be paid prior to access being permitted.

(a) Headstones no larger than 4 ft (1200 mm) high, 2ft 6 in ft (760 mm) wide and 6 in (150 mm) thick nor less than 2 ft 6 in (760 mm) high, 1 ft 8 in (500 mm) wide and 3 in (75 mm) thick.

Note: A base forming an integral part of the design of a headstone is permitted provided it does not project more than 2 in (50 mm) beyond the headstone in any direction and provided that it is fixed on a foundation slab (which may be of any suitable material, not necessarily natural quarried material) which itself is fixed flush with the ground and extending 3 to 5 in (75 to 125 mm) all round so that a mower may freely pass over it.

(b) Horizontal ledgers must be flush with the level of the surrounding turf, to permit mowing to the edges of the graves. Inclusive measurements are to be no more than 7 ft (2100 mm) by 3 ft (900 mm).

(c) Vases not more than 12 in by 8 in by 8 in (300 mm by 200 mm by 200 mm) with a memorial inscription and situated at the head of the grave.

(d) Where an area of the burial ground has already been set aside for the purpose, tablets or plaques for cremated remains, not exceeding 1 ft 6 in (450 mm) square, and flush with the ground. Planting and pots are not allowed near these plaques, with the exception of bulbs such as daffodils or snowdrops, to facilitate mowing the grass.

12. All such monuments should be made of teak or oak or of natural stone with no mirror polished surfaces (i.e. highly polished so as to reflect). Stones traditionally used in local buildings or stones closely similar to them in colour and texture are to be preferred.

13. A cross should be individually designed if a permanent memorial in this form is required. In each case, application must be made to the Parish Council.

14. A minimum distance of 1.7 metres must be allowed between the adjacent rows and outside edges of adjacent graves to permit access by the Parish Council's motor mower.

The Sward

15. Only bulbs and small annual plants may be planted in the soil of any grave.
16. Plants or flowers may be placed in a removable sunken container, preferably of unpolished aluminium.
17. Wreaths and cut flowers may be laid direct on any grave or set in vases or containers as above. Persons deputed to care for the day-to-day upkeep and maintenance of the burial ground may remove the same when they appear to be withered. No artificial flowers shall be allowed. In the event of any grave not being looked after, the Parish Council reserves the right to tidy the grave and, if necessary, re-turf the area after notifying the next-of-kin, where known.
18. The Parish Council has the sole discretion to remove any item not consistent with these rules.

Specific Exclusions

19. No black, or polished 'granite' of whatever colour, no white marble, synthetic stone or plastic.
20. No raised kerbs, railings, plain or coloured stone chippings, built-in vase containers, figure statuary, open books, birdbaths or photographs.
21. No advertisement or trademark shall be inscribed on a gravestone. The mason's name may be inscribed at the side or the reverse of the headstone in unpainted and unleaded letters no larger than 1/2 in (15 mm) in height.
22. The Parish Council has the sole discretion to remove any item not consistent with these rules.
23. **Fees** These are set annually by Horspath Parish Council, and those currently applicable are:

Fee for a burial: (from 02/06/2026)	£500 (Paid directly to Horspath Parish Council)
Fee for the interment of ashes:	£160 (Paid directly to Horspath Parish Council)
Fee for permission for a monument:	£160 (Paid directly to Horspath Parish Council)
Fee for permission for a tablet for an ashes plot:	£95 (Paid directly to Horspath Parish Council)
24. **CODE holder** The appropriate clergy, funeral directors and grave diggers will have vehicular access to the Burial Ground.
25. **For the disposal of dead flowers and other greenery** by those tending graves in this Burial Ground, a black composter is provided. A green-wheeled bin is provided for the disposal of non-compostable materials such as wreaths, which have wire and wooden frames, and other non-organic material.
26. **To avoid damage to the slab paths**, all vehicles used by gravediggers, undertakers and monumental masons are required to turn sharp left onto the grass just inside the entrance gate and only to drive over the paved path where a section has been strengthened to take such vehicles.
27. Because **the footpath across the fields** from Manor Farm Road to the Burial Ground has a muddy and irregular surface, is narrow, requires the opening and closing of two gates to cross through the field of cows or horses, and has steps for people to negotiate, it **is not recommended by Horspath Parish Council as a pedestrian route** for people wishing to reach the Burial Ground from the Church. **The Council recommends the route via the Village Hall as the normal route to and from the Burial Ground for both vehicles and pedestrians.**