

## 13.7 COLUMBARIA AND MEMORIAL GARDENS

### POLICY

From time immemorial, people have sought to record the passing generation by stones and places special to the memory of those they love (e.g. Genesis 35:20). The earliest books of the Bible, with their long genealogies also attest the Judeo-Christian affirmation of the importance attached to the remembrance of the passing generations.

In our Christian faith, we find great significance in our Christian names given to us in our baptism. They connect us both to our particular families and affirm the faith of the church in the resurrection of the dead. Our Christian names, therefore, may be appropriately recorded where a person's mortal remains are interred.

There is a growing desire in our community to feel a sense of connection with those who have gone before, and in our sensitive placement of Columbarium and Memorial Gardens we meet this need, allowing our churches to be perceived as open and inclusive parts of the communities we serve.

Ultimately, as Christians, our sense of belonging is caught up in the Eucharist, where we gather "with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven", yet we need to be sensitive and helpful to our brothers and sisters who are not yet able to capture such a vision, in offering a place that will enrich their sense of belonging and help them recall with thankfulness those who have gone before.

Thus, when a church has a Graveyard, a Columbarium or a Memorial Garden it provides a sacred space for people to remember their loved ones. For many people, a plaque bearing the name of the loved one is of great significance. It is very appropriate that each person whose earthly remains are interred in church grounds, ought to be able, if the family so wish, to have a plaque in their memory in that place.

On the other hand, the places of interment which we offer are sacred places open for all to enter. Aesthetical considerations as to the development of columbaria and memorial gardens, and as to the size and style of plaques, are also therefore of great concern, hence this policy sets out Diocesan expectations as to the standards to be exercised in the establishment of new Columbaria and Memorial Gardens.

## **COLUMBARIUM**

It should be noted that, in general, the application to build a Columbarium will need to be accompanied by a statement which clearly indicates that the Diocesan expectations as to the establishment of new Columbarium have been observed. Any drawings accompanying such an application should clearly show that the Columbarium and its siting is aesthetically in keeping with its surroundings.

## **MEMORIAL GARDENS**

A Memorial Garden should be an area well defined and planned to fit in and complement the overall churchyard landscaping. It should be

- i. a garden area where ashes can be buried in the soil and no markers are placed.
- ii. a garden area where ashes can be placed under a marker,
- iii. a lawned area where ashes can be placed under a marker, or
- iv. a garden or lawned area where ashes can be immured and a memorial plaque can be placed on an adjacent wall.

## **MANAGEMENT OF NEW AND EXISTING COLUMBARIA OR MEMORIAL GARDENS**

1. The management of existing Columbaria or Memorial Gardens shall rest with the Incumbent and Churchwardens who will constitute the Management Committee. The Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team may nominate a person or persons to be the Responsible Officer/s for the day to day management of the Columbarium or Memorial Garden
2. The Responsible Officer/s shall ensure that:
  - (a) The Parish Columbarium and Memorial Gardens Register and site plan is maintained and up-to-date;
  - (b) All interments are recorded in the Register;
  - (c) The Register shall include the name of the person to be interred, their age, date of death and date of interment with the plot or niche number.
  - (d) The Register is to be endorsed by the Incumbent and the responsible officer for each interment.
  - (e) Reservations for niche's and plots are to be recorded in the Register with a site number allocated. These reservations must be included on the site plan for the

Columbarium or Memorial Garden.

- (f) The Register is to be made available to the Bishop, Archdeacon or Area Dean for inspection along with other Church Registers on request.

### 3. Charges

The fee shall be determined by the Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team which shall be reviewed at least every three years, in the year of each new Synod.

### 4. Funds

- (a) A separate account shall be maintained for the receiving of fees
- (b) All expenses for the:
  - (i) interment of ashes
  - (ii) upkeep and maintenance
  - (iii) repairs - replacements and extensions will be paid from this fund.
- (c) Sufficient monies shall be kept in this fund (designated The Saint .....Memorial Garden/Columbarium Trust Account) to meet all foreseeable needs.
- (d) The Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team will be responsible for the general funds for meeting all costs associated with the Memorial Garden or Columbarium that cannot be met from the Trust Funds.
- (f) Monies may only be transferred from the Trust Account to a Parish Account on a motion carried by two thirds of the Parish Council.
- (g) The Fund shall be administered by the Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team Treasurer and will become an audited account presented to the Annual General Meeting.

### 5. Reservations

Reservations in the Columbarium or Memorial Garden may be made by the payment of the prescribed fee. The difference (if any) between this fee and the fee current at the time of interment is not expected to be paid

The number of the reserved site will be indicated on the receipt.

- 6. Receipts shall be issued for all fees received and receipts for reservation should also stipulate regulation 5.

7. Name Plates - Inscriptions

- (a) Name plates shall be:
- (i) of a uniform size
  - (ii) of uniform material – either Chrome plated metal, Bronze, Stainless steel or brushed aluminium (Parish to determine which material it will use for ALL plates).
  - (iii) of uniform script – size, and typeface

- (b) Plates shall **only** bear the following:

Name  
Age  
Date of Death

The only symbol allowed will be a cross at the top of the plate.

Plates must be ordered by the Responsible Officer/s in a Parish

- (c) All plates are to be a maximum of 150 X 120mm cm and placed either over the niche in the case of a columbarium, or on the memorial wall in the case of a memorial garden.

8. The Columbarium and Memorial Garden Records Management

- (a) There shall be a Register for Parish Columbaria and Memorial Gardens records which shall provide details of:

- (i) Name of person who has been interred; date of interment; “plot” number; fee paid; receipt issued to whom; contact details for next of kin or other person.
- (ii) Name of person who has “reserved” a plot; their contact details/next of kin; fee paid; date; receipt no.; and reserved plot;
- (iii) and each interment endorsed by the Incumbent and a Churchwarde

- (b) There shall be a site map of the columbarium and the memorial garden

- (i) indicating the location of all the “plots” and their number;
- (ii) showing the plots which have been taken;
- (iii) showing the plots which have been reserved and by whom.

- (c) The Register may be maintained in either

- (i) Hard bound book with separate site map
- (ii) Loose leaf folder containing the site map
- (iii) Electronically – which is regularly backed-up.

While Parishes are mindful of people's needs and wishes, it is important to remember that columbaria and memorial gardens are sacred places, and therefore the placement of miscellaneous or extraneous objects, is to be discouraged.

The maintenance of the columbaria and memorial gardens is the responsibility of the Management Committee and the responsible officers, and therefore no additional plantings or landscaping may be undertaken by any other persons unless authorised in writing by the Management Committee. Any variation to this policy will be at the discretion of the Parish Council.

## PROCEDURE

- Stage 1      Concept Plan
- Step 1      Preparation of the Plan
  - Step 2      Funding for development
  - Step 3      Local Government and other regulatory authorities
  - Step 4      Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team discussions with Archdeacon
  - Step 5      In principle approval for terms and conditions of any loan
- Stage 2      Determination of the Category of Development
- Step 6      Category 1 development
  - Step 7      Category 2 development
- Stage 3      Application to Bishop for 'In Principle' approval
- Step 8      Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team resolves to seek 'in principle' approval
  - Step 9      Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team writes to the Bishop
  - Step 10     Bishop Responds
- Stage 4      Exhibition of the proposed development in the Parish
- Step 11     Has a meeting of the Parish previously given approval for the proposed development
  - Step 12     Exhibition and Special Parish Meeting
  - Step 13     Submissions are received
  - Step 14     Archdeacon's advice following exhibition and submissions
  - Step 15     Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team reconsiders proposed development.
- Stage 5      Application to Bishop and PAB
- Step 16     Application is forwarded to Bishop and PAB
  - Step 17     Does proposed development require an Episcopal Certificate
  - Step 18     Application for Episcopal Certificate
  - Step 19     Bishop and PAB considers application
  - Step 20     Diocesan Council considers the proposal and the application for an Episcopal Certificate
  - Step 21     Has a precedent been established?
- Stage 6      Regulatory Approvals Process
- Step 22     Preparation of formal documentations for application
  - Step 23     PAB endorses final formal documentation complies with approvals
  - Step 24     Formal applications lodged

- Step 25 Reconsideration of proposed development following conditions of approval/refusal.
- Step 26 Project commences

### STAGE 1 – CONCEPT PLAN

**Step 1 Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team resolves to prepare a Concept Plan** - Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team prepares a concept plan the proposed erection of a Columbarium or creation of a Memorial Garden, its size, capacity, future development needs, and cost, and financing options; as well as an detailed drawing to show its relationship to other buildings, the grounds and the church, as well as its zoning. A landscape plan should also be included.

**Step 2 Funding of the proposed development** – Does the Parish have funds available for the proposed development?

*If Yes – Parish may to proceed to Step 3.*

*If No funding is available – Parish is to make initial enquiries to a Funding Agency if the Archdeacon indicates that the project is viable.*

**Step 3 Churchwardens to seek verbal advice from Local Government and other relevant regulatory authorities for advice on approvals required for the proposed development of the site.**

*If there are minor or no constraints draft Concept Plan to proceed.*

*If there are constraints, or an approval process required the Parish is to reconsider the concept plan in its discussion with the Archdeacon (Step 4).*

**Step 4 Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team discussions with Archdeacon** - Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team discusses the viability of the proposed columbaria, its costing and funding source, to gain an indication of its likely approval.

*The Archdeacon confirms that the proposal is viable pending approval by the Property Approvals Board and therefore the Parish can proceed.*

*The Archdeacon considers the proposal, its use, cost and financing arrangements are not viable and that the Parish Council or Parish Resourcing*

Team should reconsider the concept plan with further ongoing discussions with the Archdeacon.

**Step 5** The Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team to discuss with the Archdeacon and Diocesan Business Manager the terms, conditions, interest rate, repayment arrangements discussed with the Funding Agency.

*If initial terms, conditions, etc. are considered satisfactory by Archdeacon and DBM the Parish to proceed to Step 9.*

*If terms, conditions, etc. are not considered satisfactory by Archdeacon and DBM an alternate source of funding is to be sought. The Parish is to be guided by the Archdeacon and DBM in this matter. The Parish is to return to Step 2.*

## **STAGE 2 DETERMINATION OF CATEGORY OF PROJECT**

**Step 6 (a)** If the proposed development is under \$25,000 it is a **Category 1 development** and requires the approval of the Bishop and the PAB only. This category of project requires a Project Manager to be appointed by the Parish Wardens in consultation with the Archdeacon. However, if an Episcopal Certificate is required, the Diocesan Council's approval is required.

**(b)** If the proposed development is valued between \$25,001 and \$200,000 it is a **Category 2 development** and requires the approval of the Bishop, PAB and the Diocesan Council. This category of project requires a Project Management Committee comprising up to three appropriately qualified people selected by the Parish Wardens in consultation with the Archdeacon.

**(c)** If the proposed development is valued over \$200,001 it is a **Category 3 development** and requires the approval of the Bishop, PAB and Diocesan Council. This category of project requires a Joint Management Committee comprising up to three members of PAB and three Parish representatives appointed by the Archdeacon in consultation with the PAB and Parish.

**Step 7** Archdeacon confirms category of development

### STAGE 3 APPLICATION FOR ‘IN PRINCIPLE’ APPROVAL FROM THE BISHOP

**Step 8** Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team resolves to seek the Bishop’s *in principle* approval to establish a Columbarium or Memorial Garden

**Step 9** Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team writes to the Bishop, with a copy to the Archdeacon, to request his/her *in principle* approval for the Parish to undertake the proposal. The application should include:

- (i) The text of the Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team resolution seeking permission to proceed;
- (ii) The meeting date, the number of members present and an indication if there was any dissent to the proposal;
- (iii) A copy of the concept plan;
- (iv) An exact and full description of the proposed development if a Columbarium and/or Memorial Garden including the present zoning. As well as a clear drawing showing all adjacent buildings, their relationship to the Church, a landscape plan and tree and shrub plantings.;
- (v) The reasons for the proposal;
- (vi) current identification survey report.
- (vii) The estimated cost of the development
- (viii) Proposed financial arrangements for the development.

**Step 10** The Bishop Responds

*By giving in principle approval the Bishop is directing the Incumbent to call a Special Parish Meeting (Section 43 of the Administration of Parishes Ordinance 2010) to decide whether the Parish wishes to undertake the proposed development, and therefore to proceed to seek formal approval.*

*If the Bishop does not give in principle approval to the concept plan the Parish can reconsider the concept plan in line with any advice from the Bishop or the Archdeacon, and recommence the process from Step 1.  
Or the Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team may decide **not to pursue the development.***

#### **STAGE 4 EXHIBITION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND HOLDING OF A SPECIAL PARISH MEETING**

**Step 11** Has a meeting of the Parish previously given approval for the proposed development (i.e. was it a decision of the Annual General Meeting, a special purpose meeting for this particular item, or is the proposed development part of a strategic vision adopted by the Parish).

*If Yes a further meeting of the Parish is NOT required, unless this proposal is substantially different to the original proposal. Go to Step 16.*

*If No the proposal must be considered by a meeting of the Parish. Go to Step 13.*

**Step 12** The Concept Plan for the proposed columbaria and / or Memorial Garden of the site is notified to the Parish with plans and concept drawings displayed for a period of 21 days during which time Parishioners are invited to make written submissions on the proposed development before the end of the exhibition period. These are to be forwarded to the Parish Council Secretary.

At the same time notice is given that the Incumbent has been instructed by the Bishop to hold a Special Parish Meeting (Administration of Parishes Ordinance Section 43) in 14 days' time (during the exhibition period) to decide whether the Parish wishes the proposed development to proceed.

The Special Parish Meeting must be held in the same manner as the conduct of the Annual General Meeting (Administration of Parishes Ordinance 2010, Section 39). The Parish Electoral Roll closes on the day the Special Meeting is called, and only those Electors on the roll can vote at the Special Parish Meeting. The only item to be decided upon at this meeting is the proposed development. (Administration of Parishes Ordinance 2010, Sections 38, 39, 41, 43)

*If the Parish decides to proceed with the proposed development, continue from Step 17.*

*If the Parish decides not to proceed with the proposed development the matter is returned to the Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team for further deliberation.*

**Step 13** Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team receives and considers submissions.

*A copy of all submissions is to be forwarded to the Archdeacon.*

*Minor amendments if considered add value to the development are to be incorporated in the concept plan and referred to the Archdeacon.*

*Major amendments recommended by Parishioners are to be referred to the Archdeacon.*

*If agreed by the Archdeacon these amendments can be made to the concept plan.*

*If the Archdeacon considers that significant changes are being recommended, the approval process may have to be recommenced at Step 1.*

**Step 14** The Archdeacon's advice on the continued viability of the project following the proposed amendments is sought.

*Archdeacon recommends which changes can be incorporated without negatively impacting on the proposed development.*

*Archdeacon advises which draft amendments are not acceptable.*

**Step 15** Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team reconsiders the proposed development following input from the Parish and the Archdeacon, and if necessary reworks the Concept Plan.

## **STAGE 5 APPLICATION TO PROPERTY APPROVALS BOARD**

**Step 16** Parish completes the Application for Approval of Building Works form to undertake erection of the proposed Columbarium and/or Memorial Garden and submits it to the Bishop and the Property Approvals Board, with a copy to the Archdeacon. This application should contain:

- (i) The text of the Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team resolution seeking permission to proceed;
- (ii) The date of the Parish meeting, the number of members present, an indication of those in dissent to the proposal, and a copy of all submissions made;

- (iii) A copy of the concept plan;
- (iv) An exact and full description of the proposal including the present zoning. As well as a drawing showing the location of the proposed Columbarium and Memorial Garden in relation to all other building along with a landscape plan;
- (v) An indication of the size, capacity and future development needs.
- (vi) The estimated cost of the development
- (vii) The Parish's proposed financial arrangements for the development.

**Step 17 Does the proposed development require an Episcopal Certificate?**

*If the Parish is not borrowing funds for the proposed development Diocesan Council approval is not required for a Category 1 project.*

*If the Parish is borrowing money to fund the development, then the approval of the Diocesan Council is required in order to approve an Episcopal Certificate to cover the borrowed funds.*

**Step 18 If the Parish requires financial assistance it makes application to the Trustees of Church Property for the granting of an Episcopal Certificate, which is submitted with the Application for Approval of Building Works. (Appendix 2 – Application for Permission to Borrow Moneys for Capital Purposes; and Appendix 3 – Request for Issue of an Episcopal Certificate pursuant to the Capital Needs Financing Ordinance 2009)**

**Step 19 The Bishop and the Property Approvals Board considers the application, and whether it complies with all relevant legislation; is it in the interest of the Diocese and the Parish; and can it be financed properly.**

*If the Bishop and PAB approve the application and there is no application for an Episcopal Certificate the Parish can commence the proposed development.*

*If the Bishop and the PAB does not consider that it complies with all requirements, the Archdeacon advises the Parish of their decision and any alternative options for their further consideration. If it is recommended that the Parish submit an alternative proposal the process recommences at Step 1.*

**Step 20** If there is an application for an Episcopal Certificate, the Trustees consider the application and if approved recommends to Diocesan Council that it grant such an Episcopal Certificate.

*If Diocesan Council gives approval the Parish may commence formal negotiations with the Lending Authority previously given in principle approval.*

*If Diocesan Council does not give approval the Archdeacon will advise the Parish that the Episcopal Certificate will not be granted and therefore the proposed development cannot go ahead.*

**Step 21** Diocesan Council to determine if this decision creates a precedent, alters a policy, or is a determination by exception.  
*If so, changes to policy etc. are implemented by the Diocesan Business Manager.*

#### **STAGE 6 REGULATORY APPROVALS**

**Step 22** Parish commences process to prepare formal documentation, drawings and relevant applications with all necessary supporting approvals documentation which are to be referred to the PAB for final endorsement before lodging with the Local Government Authorities.

**Step 23** PAB considers final documentation to ensure they comply with the approvals of the Bishop, the PAB and the Diocesan Council.

*If they comply the Parish commences formal lodgement of applications with regulatory authorities.*

*If they do not comply amendments are to be made to bring proposed development in line with approvals given by Bishop, PAB and/or Diocesan Council.*

**Step 24** Formal Application/s is/are lodged with the relevant approval authority.  
**Additional information may be requested.**  
**Approval may be granted subject to conditions.**  
**Application may be refused.**

**Step 25** Following all approvals/refusals, the Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team should reconsider the viability of the project in line with the conditions imposed.

*Parish Wardens and Project Manager/Management Committee to assess if these conditions will have a negative impact on the proposed development proceeding.*

*In consultation with the Archdeacon, Project Manager/Management Committee to decide whether to proceed. OR*

**Step 26** The Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team accepts conditions and the Project commences.

At this stage the PAB requirements for the oversight of new building projects will commence - See Policy 14.3.