

Interment and Memorialisation Policy

Cemetery Trust (hereafter referred to as 'the Trust):	WODONGA
Date policy adopted (Trust meeting date):	13 TH JULY, 2026

The Trust adopted this policy at its Trust meeting on the date specified above. This policy will be reviewed two years from the date the policy was adopted.

Policy statement

The Trust understands, promotes and supports the use of a wide range of memorial items at the cemetery. The Trust understands that memorialisation items must be:

- respectful to the deceased and all visitors
- durable (with the exception of fresh flowers and temporary memorials)
- safe for all visitors, cemetery workers and volunteers
- support the aesthetics, standards and general nature of the particular area of the cemetery
- respectful of and acknowledge cultural diversity.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a consistent approach to memorialisation and interments that complies with the requirements of the Victorian *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003* (the Act) and the Victorian *Cemeteries and Crematoria Regulations 2025* (the Regulations).

Scope

The policy covers all rights of interment for places of interment in the cemetery held by right of interment holders who have primary responsibility for maintaining a memorial, and/or any other parties acting on behalf of a right of interment holder.

Right of Interment

A Right of Interment relates to a specific place of interment within a public cemetery, for example, a plot, grave or an ashes interment site.

There is a common misconception that the purchaser of a right of interment actually buys the land associated with a cemetery plot, grave or ashes site when a Right of Interment is purchased. This assumption is not correct as all public cemeteries in Victoria are situated on Crown Land.

What is actually purchased is the Right to determine who can be interred in that grave (or other type of place of interment) and the type of memorialisation (if any) to be established at the place of interment, subject to the cemetery Trust policies.

Rights of Interment at the Wodonga Cemetery are held in perpetuity. There is no tenure on our plots.

Rights and Obligations of the holder of the Right of Interment

The Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003 gives the holder of the Right of Interment:

- The right to authorise the interment of human remains in the place of interment
- The right to decide if a monument or memorial may be erected on the site
- The obligation to maintain the monument if any is erected on the site
- The right to object to or endorse an application to exhume remains from the site
- The right to transfer or bequeath the right of interment to another party.

One of the essential obligations of the holder of the Right of Interment is to promptly advise the Trust of any change to their contact details or of the transfer of the Right of Interment to another party so that the Trust can maintain accurate and up to date records.

Application for memorials

Anyone wishing to establish or alter a monument, memorial or headstone must submit an application to the Trust on the *Application to establish or alter a memorial or place of interment* form.

The application must be accompanied by the relevant cemetery fee, a plan or design of the memorial proposed to be established or altered, and the written consent of the right of interment holder. The Trust may require a statutory declaration and/or other documentation if the right of interment holder is unable to sign the application form. This application with the plan or draft of the proposed memorial should be submitted to the Trust for approval prior to the memorial or plaque being ordered, to ensure that the plan or draft conforms to the Trust's guidelines.

The Trust will advise the applicant in writing that the application has been approved or rejected. Any application or approval is not valid unless it is in writing.

Any unauthorised memorials, monuments, headstones or other structures will be removed by the Trust at the cost of the right of interment holder.

Temporary memorials

The Trust will permit upon approval a wooden grave marker of height no greater than one metre as a temporary marker on a grave subject to the marker being maintained in a condition satisfactory to the Trust.

Unless written approval has been received from the Trust, the grave marker may remain in position for a maximum period of one year following a burial or until a more permanent approved memorial has been established at the grave, whichever comes first.

Monuments and headstones

Anyone wishing to install a monument or headstone must submit an application in writing to the Trust, with the memorial being subject to approval of material, size, wording and compliance with the standards of the specific area within the cemetery.

A monument or headstone must meet the minimum requirements of the Australian Standard AS 4204 – 1994 Headstones and cemetery monuments, or its successors.

Any work must be undertaken by a party that has been approved by the Trust, and work will not be allowed to commence without the receipt of a permit from the Trust. Each permit issued by the Trust is valid for a period of 12 months only.

The Trust:

- Will provide details of memorial specifications that may apply to the particular area of the cemetery.
- Has no objection to granite candle boxes being incorporated into the design of monuments, however, only LED light candles are permitted.
- May require applications, at the cost of the applicant, to include design and strength specifications and computations from an independent engineer to ensure stability and public safety.
- Apart from temporary grave markers, does not permit the erection of timber monuments or structures.
- Does not permit the use of bricks or masonry blocks.
- Does not permit any inscriptions that may cause offence.
- Will not approve plans for monuments which incorporate garden beds.

Memorial Specifications

Monumental Lawn Section – Memorials must comply with the Monumental Lawn Headstone Agreement and Specifications document signed by the Rights Holder at the time of purchase of the Right. These memorials must be installed within twelve months of purchase. Any additional plaque/s attached to the memorial will only be permitted if front facing and authorised by the Trust, after an *Application to establish or alter a memorial or place of interment* has been submitted and approved.

Lawn Sections – A bronze plaque measuring 380mm W x 280mm H x 5mm D may be placed on the concrete desk provided by the Trust.

Ashes Sites - A bronze plaque measuring 152mm W x 152mm H x 5mm D may be placed on the plinth, paver or concrete block provided by the Trust, in the Burgundy Rose Garden, Flagpole Garden, Rose Garden and Memorial Garden. On the Niche Wall, the plaque of the same dimensions must have the appropriate fitting to attach to the niche.

Lawn Ashes Sites - A bronze plaque measuring 380mm W x 280mm H x 5mm D may be placed on the concrete desk provided by the Trust.

Infant Memorial – A plaque may be placed on the Infant Memorial. Sizing will vary depending on the selected location on the rock. The Trust will assist with the applicable dimensions and suggested plaque shapes to suit the situation.

Old Monumental Section - Memorials in keeping with the surrounds of the Old Monumental Sections of the cemetery will be considered after the submission for approval of an *Application to establish or alter a memorial or place of interment*.

Site Numbers

The site number of the plot is to be placed in the bottom right hand corner of the proposed plaque, headstone or memorial. This should include the Row Number and the Plot No. A guide as to the format of the site number is as follows:

Monumental Lawn Section – ML 00/00 (Row No./Plot No.)

Other Lawn Sections – 00/000 (Row No./Plot No.)

- Ashes Sites
- Burgundy Rose Garden - BRG E00 or BRG W00 (East or West Side and Plot No.)
 - Flag Pole Garden – FPG 00
 - Rose Garden – RG 000Z (Site No. and A,B,C or D)
 - Memorial Garden – MG T-000 (Top Row-No.), MG B-000 (Bottom Row –No.), MG I-000 (Inner Row-Site No.), MG RB-00 (Bottom Rock-Site No.), MG RT-00 (Top Rock-Site No.)
 - Niche Wall – NW E-A-00 or NW W-A-000 (East or West Side, Row No and Plot No.)
 - Lawn Ashes Site – As per Lawn sites 00/000 (Row No./Plot No.)

Plaques

Plaques can be ordered through the cemetery office, however they can also be purchased from external providers. A list of memorialists approved to work within the Wodonga Cemetery can be provided upon request.

Anyone wishing to install a bronze or granite plaque must submit an application in writing by way of an *Application to establish or alter a memorial or place of interment* to the Trust, with the plaque being subject to approval of material, size, wording and compliance with the standards of the specific area within the cemetery. Applications with inappropriate wording or motifs will not be approved.

Plaques may only be installed by persons authorised by the Trust and may only be affixed to monuments, headstones and as outlined in the above Memorial Specifications.

Granite plaques may be permitted in the Old Monumental Sections affixed to monuments or headstones. Any request for a granite plaque must be provided to the Trust in writing. All approvals or rejection of an application will be provided by the Trust in writing to the applicant.

Memorial Seats, Shelters etc.

Memorial seats, shelters and the like may be considered as an option for a memorial. All costs must be covered by the applicant. The structure must be available for use by any visitor to the cemetery. The location, sizing, materials etc. will be decided in consultation with the Trust.

Memorial items

A person must not, without the approval of the Trust, place the following items on a memorial or place of interment:

- Ceramic or glass items that are fragile or breakable
- Metal items that are likely to rust or deteriorate.

A person must not place any item likely to cause a risk to health or safety on a memorial or place of interment. A person placing an item on a memorial or place of interment must ensure that the item does not extend beyond the boundaries of the memorial or place of interment.

The Trust has the power to remove:

- any object that extends beyond the boundary of the memorial or place of interment
- any dead flowers or any other item that is in a poor condition
- any object placed on a memorial or place of interment in contravention of the Act, the Regulations or the Model Rules
- any object that may cause danger to any person or property.

Ornaments

Loose ornaments may be permitted if they:

- do not pose a health and safety risk to the public, Trust, volunteers, contractors and/or employees
- do not inhibit the maintenance of the cemetery grounds
- do not encroach on other graves.

Any items that pose a safety risk are not permitted.

Candles and candle boxes

Due to the cemetery's location and risk of fire the Trust does not permit the lighting of candles in the cemetery. LED light candles are permitted.

Flowers and flower vases

The Trust will allow both fresh and artificial flowers to be placed at a place of interment provided items do not extend beyond the boundaries of the place of interment.

- Breakable glass, ceramic etc. vases and containers are not permitted and will be removed for safety reasons as they pose a potential health and safety risk to the public and employees.
- One vase is provided for each lawn section plot, at the time of the first interment. Should a replacement vase be required, vases can be purchased from the Cemetery Trust Office.
- Dead and stray flowers will be removed as required by cemetery Trust members/staff prior to maintenance of the area.
- Up to two granite or masonry flower containers may be affixed to the plinth in a lawn area, provided such flower containers do not encroach onto other graves or obstruct lawn mowing equipment.

Care of memorials

Care and maintenance of any item of memorialisation is the responsibility of the right of interment holder. This care may include the cleaning (including polishing) the graves and headstones, including the inscription.

The Trust provides a plaque refurbishing service. Bookings for such a service can be made at the Trust's Office, on the payment of the approved fee.

The Trust has no objection to a private contractor offering a paid service to perform this work, however private contractors must apply in writing to the Trust before offering to undertake the above work and must comply with the following terms and conditions:

- The right of interment holder has provided written permission for this work to occur.
- No canvassing for business will be permitted within any Trust-operated cemetery.
- Private records detailing ownership over graves will not be provided to anyone proposing an enterprise to undertake this work.
- The applicant must indemnify the Trust in writing against any claims for compensation which may arise as a result of the conduct of the enterprise.
- The applicant must provide proof of applicable Public Liability Insurance cover and other insurances as needed.

The Trust is not prepared to grant any exclusive right of trade for these services. Any further similar applications may also be considered for approval by the Trust.

Structural integrity of memorials

The primary responsibility for maintaining a memorial rests with the right of interment holder.

When a grave, headstone or other memorial is found to be in a dangerous, unsafe or unstable state, immediate action will be taken by the Trust, to make it safe. The Trust will then contact the right of interment holder to inform them of the situation and direct them to repair or remove the memorial.

If the responsible person refuses to repair, remove or make safe the memorial, then the Trust, with consent of the Secretary of the Department of Health will make the memorial safe by either lying down or removing the memorial. If this is to occur, the Trust will request that the costs associated with the rectification are reimbursed to the Trust by the right of interment holder.

If the Trust is unable to contact the right of interment holder it will endeavour to locate that person, or a representative of the family, by whatever means possible. If this is not possible, the Trust will place an advertisement in the local newspaper.

If the responsible person still cannot be located to repair, remove or make safe the memorial, then the Trust, with consent of the Secretary of the Department of Health will make the memorial safe by either lying down, removing or rectifying the footings of the memorial, with costs associated with rectification noted for possible future debt recovery.

Vegetation

A person must not remove, pick or damage any plant, flower, shrub or tree in a public cemetery without the prior written approval of the Trust.

No tree, shrub or other vegetation may be planted in the cemetery grounds, or on or near a grave without prior written approval of the Trust.

Management of litter and waste

There are bins located at the cemetery to enable the removal of withered flowers, wrapping papers, rubber bands, other handling materials and weathered ornaments. These bins are to be used to ensure litter and waste do not create a safety hazard or detract from the aesthetics of the cemetery.

If a bin is not available, it is requested that rubbish is taken away.

Theft or damage

The Trust:

- is unable to accept any responsibility for the theft of any item of memorialisation
- is unable to accept any responsibility for damage to any item of memorialisation unless it can be shown that such damage was caused by tasks carried out by cemetery staff.

Interment Guidelines and Specifications

Burial plots within the Wodonga Cemetery can accommodate up to three burials, provided that the first interment is of a depth to accommodate the additional burials. In addition, a burial plot can also accommodate up to three ashes interments. The Rights Holder should be mindful that the plaque/memorialisation guidelines/specifications above still apply should there be a number of interments in the one site. In the Lawn Sections only one plaque measuring 380cm x 280 cm is permitted.

Ashes interment sites can accommodate only one ashes container which can be no larger than a standard container, 260mm x 150mm x 120mm. Ashes must remain in the container.

The Niche Wall has limited space in each niche and ashes container are limited to a maximum size of 110mm x 110mm x 190mm deep.

Rocks within the Memorial Garden can accommodate up to three ashes interments in standard size containers.

The Lawn Ashes Interment sites can accommodate up to three ashes interments in standard size containers

Scattering of ashes is strictly forbidden at the Wodonga Cemetery.

Releasing of Balloons

We are committed to helping the community say goodbye to loved ones in the best possible way, while protecting the environment. Please be aware that releasing balloons into the environment is prohibited under the Environment Protections Act 2017 and significant penalties apply to such breaches.

Relevant Documents

Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003

Cemeteries and Crematoria Regulations 2025

Environment Protections Act 2017

Australian Standard AS 4204-1994 Headstones and Cemetery Monuments

VERSION CONTROL

No.	Date	Comments	Next review
1	13/07/2026		2028

