

BEECHWORTH CEMETERY TRUST

Monumental Stonemasons Policy

Introduction:

The purpose of this policy is to set out parameters, standards and requirements to be adhered to when the Trust interacts with Monumental Stonemason, their staff and other contractors engaged by families to install a permanent monument, plaque or similar on a place of interment within the Beechworth Public Cemetery. This policy encompasses both the Lawn and General sections of the facility.

Scope:

This policy applies to the Trust, Monumental Stonemasons/contractors, Right of Interment holders and any third party acting on behalf of a Right of Interment holder when applying, establishing a monument/memorial within the Cemetery.

Consultation:

During the development and review of this Policy the Trust consulted with the Department of Health - Victoria (DH) and the Cemeteries and Crematorium Association of Victoria (CCAV) as well as a desktop scan of other Cemetery Trust websites.

Background:

The historic Beechworth Public Cemetery, established in 1856, is the final resting place of over seventeen thousand men women and children. Of these, over ten thousand people within the General Cemetery are buried in unmarked graves, with many of these involving multiple unrelated interments. Around six thousand people were former residents or patients of the large institutions that once flourished in the township. The accurate documentation of some of these many thousands of burials cannot be guaranteed, particularly as, from 1856 up to 1877, the burial records are either non-existent, partially missing or sparse. This situation results, in many instances, in difficulties establishing the exact location of unmarked graves for possible future monument installation. From this, it is imperative that the Trust be involved in any plot location process, either for family members of the deceased, researchers or for marking the plot(s) for Monumental Stonemasons who may be commissioned to construct monuments on grave-sites.

Legislative requirements:

The Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003, Part 7 Division 2, establishes the power for a Cemetery Trust to approve and manage the establishment and alteration of monuments within the Cemetery. In particular clause 99(1)(c) enables a Cemetery Trust to refuse an application for any other reason that the Cemetery Trust thinks fit. The Department of Health - Victoria - (DH) have advised that where a Trust develops a policy to manage operating procedures of the Cemetery which does not alter or conflict with the Model Rules for the Cemetery, the Trust does not need to have the Policy approved by the Governor in Council. The Trust has reviewed this Policy and has not sought approval from the Governor in General as the Policy does not conflict or alter the Model Rules for the Trust.

Appointments:

Monumental Stonemasons who perform work within any area of the Beechworth Public Cemetery must be approved by the Beechworth Cemetery Trust and currently, there are ~~two~~three such appointments. MonumentalStonemasons, other than thecurrent appointees, who may perform a “one-off” service must also seek permission to do so from the Trust. This also includes Monumental Stonemasons appointed by the Office of Australian War Graves (OAWG) who are commissioned to construct military graves for veterans. With these non-appointed Monumental Stonemasons and their infrequent and ad-hoc service, their appointment process will be:

- If there is insufficient time to table the request at a bi-monthly Trust meeting before construction is proposed, then the matter will be determined and approved/rejected by prior email consideration by the Trust,
- The Chairperson/Secretary is to report the activity and outcome at the next bi-monthly Trust Meeting.

Any future Monumental Stonemason(s) who may nominate to be appointed to work within the Beechworth Public Cemetery will:

- have their written application considered at the bi-monthly Trust Meeting. The application is to include:
 - copies of any current Trade Certificate(s) held,
 - a listing of other Cemeteries with which your business has a contractual appointment,
 - copy of the current Indemnity Insurance policy; and
 - length of time that you have worked within the Cemeteries Sector as a Monumental Stonemason.
- have the application outcome conveyed to them in writing.
 - If the application is rejected, then the full reasoning is to be detailed within the response,
 - With successful applicants, a copy of the Beechworth Public Cemetery Monumental Stonemason Policy will be included with the successful response letter.

Monument/memorial applications and permit to work:

Applications, while generally lodged via a Monumental Stonemason, may also be lodged by a right of interment holder or a third party acting on behalf of a right of interment holder.

No monumental work may commence until:

- an application (with written consent of the right of interment holder) is provided to the Trust and the Trust has provided written approval to the applicant. A copy of the Application Form is available on the Cemetery's website;
- the Trust has been advised, in a timely manner, of the impending work schedule and this is to include the time/date of the proposed task, preferably within seven (7) business days,
- an invoice from the Trust is then sent
- the required fee is paid electronically into the Trust's nominated bank account. This will also include an invoice for the work performed being emailed to the Trust, and;

- a tax invoice/receipt is issued indicating the application and payment has been accepted.

Also, at the completion of the work, the Monumental Stonemason shall provide, via email, a colour photograph of the completed work for Cemetery records and also for uploading to the Cemetery's web-based Chronicle software for general public information.

All applications must meet the Australian Standards and include all required drawings, specifications and details to enable the Trust, or its delegate, to assess the compliance of the proposed works. This particularly applies to pieces of natural rock etc that are to hold plaques.

To ensure stability and safety for non-standard memorial designs, the Trust may also require, at the expense of the Monumental Stonemason, design computations and construction supervision from an independent engineer with qualifications satisfactory to the Trust.

The Trust, or its delegate, will endeavour to issue a written response to applications within ten (10) business days.

Each permit issued by the Trust is valid for a period of twelve (12) months only. The Trust reserves the right not to issue further permits should a Monumental Stonemason have a backlog of uncompleted jobs.

The Trust will not approve the installation of timber monuments and grave surrounds. Materials to be used should be clearly detailed in the application.

Graves containing flower beds will not be approved as per the Cemetery's Monuments Policy.

Policy breaches:

If there is found to be any breaches to the Monumental Stonemasons work or procedures as detailed within this Policy, then the Beechworth Cemetery Trust reserves the right to revoke the relevant Monumental Stonemasons right to work within the confines of the Beechworth Public Cemetery. This suspension is to be determined at the bi-monthly Trust Meeting who will:

- consider and determine the reasons, severity and length of the suspension;
- provide a reasonable timeframe to rectify the issues before the suspension is to take effect,
- provide, in writing, to the Monumental Stonemason concerned, with the issues and reasons for the suspension

The suspension may be lifted once all compliance issues have been met and again, this will be determined at a bi-monthly Trust Meeting.

Other Monument or associated structures:

From time to time, the Trust may commission a Monumental Stonemason to install other structures with the Cemetery. This may include:

- new plinths and dividers in the Lawn Section;
- compartment number blocks in both the Lawn Section and Memorial Wall.

All relevant requirements within this Policy also cover this non grave/monument work.

Australian Standards:

The current Australian Standard - AS 4204:2019 Headstones and Cemetery monuments – and the Trust's own specifications, specify the minimum standards the Trust expects of all monumental work. The Australian Standard specifies:

- minimum thickness of stone
- concrete strength
- dowels and cramp requirements
- reinforcing steel
- bonding and sealing agents including mortar
- pier and footing requirements.

Location of proposed works:

The Trust will confirm the location of the correct place of interment by placing a [blue flag](#) at the head of the plot. It is the Monumental Stonemason's responsibility to construct the monument on the correct place of interment and not transgress onto pathways or adjacent places of interment. This is imperative, given the excessive number of unmarked graves within the facility. If the Monumental Stonemason has any doubts as to the location or other site-related issues then they should contact the Trust before proceeding.

Construction site requirements:

The safety of the public and workers on-site is paramount. The Trust and/or delegate reserves the right to immediately halt all work should a safety or hazard risk be identified.

Risk assessment:

As required by the Victorian *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, Monumental Stonemasons are expected to identify the potential hazards, assess the risks involved and implement appropriate risk management strategies for the contracted work.

Safe work site:

While work is in progress the site must be protected by barriers and warning signs. If a work site is to be left unattended overnight or for longer periods, any potential hazard must be covered or otherwise secured.

Safe work procedures:

To ensure their employees can complete their tasks safely, Monumental Stonemasons are to ensure that:

- they have been provided with instruction, information and training;
- they have safe work procedures to guide their work;
- they are supervised, and;
- a Workplace First Aid Kit is supplied when working on site.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

The Monumental Stonemason must specify and enforce the wearing/use of personal protective clothing and equipment by their employees. This may include:

- hard hats
- high visibility vests/shirts/jackets
- safety boots
- eye protection
- hearing protection
- sun protection (hats, long sleeved shirts, long trousers and sunscreen).

Hazardous materials:

Some construction materials may be hazardous and have either immediate or delayed effects on those who handle and use them. All employees involved with these materials must be trained in the safe handling and use requirements as specified in the Material Safety Data Sheet/label. All labels must be readable and the MSDS must be present on site.

Clean up and waste:

Spoil and waste material (e.g. soil, boxing, concrete, packaging, off cuts etc.) are an environmental and safety hazard and detract from the overall presentation of the Cemetery. Spoil and waste must be removed and taken off-site. If works are scheduled over an extended period, a clean-up should be completed at the end of each working day unless the Trust or its delegate has provided prior written approval.

Indemnity:

The Trust requires that any third-party undertaking work on behalf of an applicant provides indemnity against injury or damage arising from their work.

The Trust does not assume any liability for the construction of a monument by a third party. This also applies to other unrelated adjacent graves which may be inadvertently damaged by the Monumental Stonemason.

Vehicle access:

Prior to a Monumental Stonemason or employee taking any vehicle or vehicles off a roadway in the Cemetery, they shall seek and obtain written permission from the Trust or its delegate, in every instance.

Vehicle and plant operation:

All Monumental Stonemasons and employees that are required to drive vehicles or operate mobile plant within the Cemetery must have a current Victorian driver's licence or an operator's certificate for the plant item (where required).

All vehicles must adhere to the speed limit of 10km/hr within the Cemetery.

Noise:

Monumental Stonemasons and employees should be familiar with and abide by the local by-laws relating to noise pollution and impact.

Out of respect, construction operations must not create noise while a funeral is being conducted.

This includes the operation of motorized equipment and general work noise including conversation. If in doubt, work should cease while an interment takes place and mourners are onsite.

Community impacts, expectations and standards:

The Cemetery Trust requires all contractors to perform works in a manner that maintains positive relationships with the community.

Any works conducted during a time when funerals are underway must be approved by the Cemetery Trust.

Personal conduct:

As required by the Victorian *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, Monumental Stonemasons are expected to identify the potential hazards, assess the risks involved and implement appropriate risk management strategies for the contracted work.

Monumental Stonemasons and employees must always ensure their behaviour and conduct befits the environment they are working in. To this end they must:

- refrain from activities which could contribute to accidents or harassment;
- refrain from all acts of intimidation, bullying and harassment toward other employees, members of the public, Cemetery Trust members/staff or volunteers;
- not operate loud music/radios;
- not shout or use inappropriate/offensive language while on site, and;
- wear professional, safe and appropriate clothing(preferably displaying the logo or name of the business entity concerned)for the work being completed.

Alcohol and drugs:

Alcohol and drug consumption by contractors or employees (including possession and distribution) is not permitted within the Cemetery grounds. Monumental Stonemasons and employees must not arrive for work under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Any individual found contravening this requirement will be required to leave the Cemetery immediately.

Policy Clarification and Concerns:

If the contents of this policy require further clarification or additional information by Cemetery users, then these should be directed to [“The Chairperson/Secretary”](#).

Policy Publicity:

This policy will be available on the Beechworth Public Cemetery website and also made available on request by contacting the Trust.

Implementation of Policy:

The Trust authorise the Chairperson/Secretary to implement this policy, and where applicable, consistent with any strategic documents or plans for the BeechworthCemetery Trust.

References:

- Occupational Health & Safety Regulation - 2017
- Occupational Health & Safety Act - 2004 (Vic)
- The Australian Standard - AS-4204 - 2019 Headstones and Cemetery monuments
- Australian Standards - AS04425 Above Ground Interment Structures (Mausolea)
- Cemeteries & Crematoria Act - 2003
- Cemeteries & Crematoria Regulations - 2025
- Beechworth Public Cemetery Monuments Policy
- Beechworth Public Cemetery Fees Schedule2025-2026
- Military Graves, Monuments& Veteran Recognition in the Beechworth Public Cemetery Policy.
- Dept of Health - (DH) website - Monumental Stonemasons Policy Template.

Adopted: Trust Meeting - 18thSeptember 2023

Reviewed: Trust Meeting - 15th September 2025