

Notice Relating to Churchyards

Churchyard Management

1. The Parochial Church Council is responsible, under the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 and Canon F13.2, for the appearance care and maintenance of the Churchyard. The responsibility extends to the management of flowers and items placed on graves.
2. The Incumbent/Priest in Charge and PCC must maintain an up to date plan of the churchyard showing all known graves, the location of cremated remains and the burial plots reserved by faculty.
3. The introduction, alteration or reconstruction of any tombstone or other monument must be dealt with according to the following Churchyard Rules.
4. Every Parochial Church Council should make regulations for the proper exercise of its powers and duties in relation to the churchyard. Specimen regulations may be obtained from the Diocesan Registry and may be adapted or modified by the PCC to suit local circumstances.
5. A Parochial Church Council may adopt more stringent local Churchyard Rules under faculty. All existing faculties concerning churchyards will remain in force until further order following the commencement of the present Rules.

Churchyard Rules

Part I Introduction of tombstones or other monuments

No tombstone or other monument may be introduced without permission

1. **The Incumbent, Team Vicar or Priest in Charge** has powers delegated to him or her by the Chancellor. These powers allow such minister to give permission lasting for a period of up to 100 years for any tombstone or monument which complies with the provisions of the Appendix so long as the tombstone or monument is kept in good repair. Churchwardens and the PCC have no power to permit the introduction of any tombstone or other monument into a churchyard.
2. **The Area Dean/ (or a deputy)** in the event of a vacancy or the absence of the Incumbent or Priest in Charge has the same delegated powers. If contact with the appropriate member of clergy cannot be made the Diocesan Registrar should be consulted.
3. **The Chancellor** has power to allow by faculty the introduction of any kind of tombstone or other monument into a churchyard. Alternatively the Chancellor may decide that, in the particular circumstances, permission may be given without the need for a faculty.

Statutory fees are payable at the time of applying for a faculty. Full details may be obtained from the Diocesan Registry.

4. Application for permission to erect a tombstone or monument must be made on the form approved by the Chancellor (obtainable from The Diocesan Registry, Stone King LLP, Upper Borough Court, 3 Upper Borough Walls, Bath, BA1 1RG Tel. 01225 337599 Email. bathandwellsregistry@stoneking.co.uk). The same form may be used when a faculty is sought in relation to a tombstone or monument in a churchyard.
5. If there is any reason for concern the Incumbent/Priest in Charge should refer to the Archdeacon or the Diocesan Registry.
6. **The existence in churchyards of tombstones or monuments which do not comply with the terms of this Notice cannot be regarded as a precedent.**
7. **Any memorial erected otherwise than in accordance with this procedure or with the authority of a faculty, may lead to enforcement proceedings in which the Consistory Court may order removal of the memorial at the expense of the person or persons responsible, who may also be required to pay the court costs of such proceedings.**

Part II Burial of Cremated Remains

In many churchyards (open and closed) areas have been set aside for the interment of cremated remains. When seeking permission for such an area the PCC should first consult the Archdeacon. A DAC paper gives good advice and a faculty will usually be necessary. The faculty itself will often specify the type of memorialisation allowed in the area. Otherwise memorial plaques and other monuments marking cremated remains shall comply with the provisions of the Appendix. The occasional interment of cremated remains is acceptable in the general churchyard area. Small memorial plaques are permitted on top of graves where cremated remains are interred subsequent to burials. **Cremated remains should preferably be put into the ground without a box although a wooden or other biodegradable container is acceptable.**

Appendix

- I. In the case of a headstone:-
 - (a) the height of the memorial above ground level is between 450mm and 1220mm;
 - (b) the width of the memorial is between 500mm and 915mm;
 - (c) the thickness of the memorial is between 75mm and 105mm (but the thickness of a slate memorial may be a minimum of 50mm);

- (d) the upper edge of the memorial, within the above dimensions, is square or shaped in accordance with the diagrams approved by the Chancellor and kept by the Diocesan Registry;
 - (e) the memorial is set into a pre-cast concrete shoe-type foundation which is set directly into the ground, or is attached to a horizontal base which is fixed to a foundation, and is in all respects compliant with British Standard BS8415:2018 "Memorials within burial grounds and memorial sites - Specification," or any similar standard that may replace it;
 - (f) the memorial may be to a specification adopted by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and erected by it or on its behalf. Alternatively a grave marker of a design adopted by the Commission is permitted.
2. In the case of a cross:-
- (a) the height of the cross is between 750 and 1220mm above ground level;
 - (b) the width of the cross is between 500mm and 815mm
3. In the case of horizontal ledgers over coffin burials:-
- (a) the length is between 1200mm and 2100mm;
 - (b) the width is between 600mm and 900mm;
 - (c) the surface shall be just below the level of the turf.
4. In the case of memorial plaques over cremated remains:-
- (a) the dimensions are no more than 450mm by 400mm;
 - (b) the surface shall be just below the level of the turf.
5. Vases shall be separate measuring not more than 300mm by 200mm by 200mm.
6. Monuments may be of natural wood, slate or the following natural stones namely sandstone limestone and granite.
7. The surface of the stone shall not be polished or reflective.
8. Blank and pearl granite, marble of any colour, synthetic or reconstituted stone and plastic shall not be used.
9. A monument shall not include any raised kerb, railing, stone, or other chippings, picture or photograph, built-in vase container, statuary or bird bath.
10. No colouring is permitted except black, white or gold.
11. Inscriptions are factually accurate, concise, consistent with Christian doctrine and unlikely to be offensive or controversial for any reason. Any motif, emblem or other image forming part of the design is of a character commonly found in churchyard memorials or

is relevant to the life of the person commemorated and is not inconsistent with Christian doctrine. Such image should not exceed 20% of the face of the stone.

12. No advertisement or trade mark is to be inscribed on the monument, except for a reference to the mason incised at the side or on the reverse of a headstone in uncoloured and unleaded letters no more than 15mm in height.
13. The memorial does not contain a QR code or any other device intended to enable direct communication with an electronic resource.

Timothy Briden Chancellor

Dated the 29th day of March 2025