

SUMMARY OF THE CHANCELLOR'S REGULATIONS FOR CHURCHYARDS AND CHURCHYARD MEMORIALS

There is no specific right given to anyone to have a memorial erected in a churchyard. Appropriate permission must always be obtained first.

Incumbents (and this expression is intended to include Rectors, Vicars, Priest-in-Charge and where appropriate during a Vacancy in a Benefice the Rural Dean) have the authority of the Chancellor of the Diocese to approve memorials and inscriptions which fall within the standard guidelines, a summary of which is detailed below:

Material

Stones should be natural and of a non-reflective finish.

Stones allowed are Limestone; Slate; Light grey granite; Blue or Rustenburg Grey Granite (Charcoal). All matt finish.

Other stones may be allowed depending on local considerations. Please check with your Incumbent, Rural Dean, Archdeacon or with the Registry

Memorials

Upright stones

- Height - a maximum of 4ft (1200mm) and minimum 2ft 6" (750mm) when measured from the surface of the ground.
- Width – a maximum of 3ft (900mm) and minimum 1ft 8" (500mm).
- Depth (thickness of stone) – a maximum of 6" (150mm) and minimum 3" (75mm) Except if slate is being used which may be thinner to a minimum of 1.5" (38mm).
 - A child's upright memorial may be smaller but the minimum dimensions are 2 ft high (600mm), 1 ft 3" wide (375mm) and 2" (50mm) thick

Horizontal ledger stones

- Allowed to a maximum size of 7ft (2100mm) by 3ft (900mm) (including the base).
- A ledger stone may be flush with the ground, slightly sloping to enable rainwater to run off, or raised (to a maximum height of 9" (225mm)).
- Any base should be flush with the ground and extend to a maximum of 3" (75mm).

Plinths

- A headstone or cross may stand on a plinth of the same stone as the headstone provided it is integral to the design and does not project more than 4" (100mm) in any direction or more than 3ft (900mm) in width in total.

Vases

- A base may have an integrated vase or fixed memorial vase but may not have loose or unfixed vases. Provided a vase is fixed to a base or plinth it does not need to be flush.

- Vases not fixed to a plinth must be sunk into the ground so that they are flush with the ground.
- They may also be placed adjacent to cremation tablets but flush with the ground if room permits.

Crosses

- Wooden or stone crosses, including Celtic crosses not exceeding 6ft high are permitted.

Plain open books

- Plain open books without elaborate decoration (such as wings, supports, tassels or other ornamentation) and of appropriate stone are allowed to a maximum size of 2ft wide(600mm) by 1 ft 6" high(450mm) on an appropriately sized base.

Flat stones

- If there are no specific rules for a particular Garden of Remembrance then stones over cremated remains must be small flat tablets laid flush with the ground to a **maximum** size of 12" x 15" unless local considerations allow for bigger stones.
- No fixed vases or other objects may be placed on stones but the stone may contain a sunken vase holder.
- Such stones may also be placed over cremated remains which are interred into an existing full grave.

Inscriptions

- Inscriptions should give full Christian names and dates but nicknames or Mum, Dad etc are allowed if placed within commas or brackets.
- Simple descriptions such as 'farmed in this village for fifty years' 'Much-loved father and grandfather' 'Lover of animals' 'Mother and friend' are allowed.
- Scriptural texts are allowed.
- Suitable lines from poems or literature generally placed within commas.
- Inscriptions should be incised into the stone or carved in relief.
- Inscriptions may be painted in black, white, gold or a colour that harmonises with the underlying stone. (Please note that due to the nature of the climate in this country gilded lettering tends to deteriorate rapidly).
- The stonemason's name may be discreetly inscribed on the reverse of the stone.
- A regimental badge or insignia from the armed forces is allowed provided written authority is given from the relevant branch of the force in question.

Engravings

- Small well carved engravings are allowed, to include: Christian symbols, flora, fauna or an item of particular relevance to the person commemorated (such as a musical instrument, tractor or motorcycle).
- Engravings may be painted but not in bright colours.

Flowers

- Flowers should be placed directly on the grave and should be removed from any plastic wrapping, bows or temporary containers.

- Flowers may be placed in removable vases sunk into the ground (such vases may also be used adjacent to cremated flat tablets if room permits).
- Bulbs may be planted but not shrubs, hedging, conifers or other perennial plants.
- High quality silk flowers may be left at the grave side. Poppies and wreaths allowed during the Remembrance period in November.
- Christmas Wreaths for a short time over the appropriate period.

Items which may be allowed with faculty permission

- Natural boulder shaped memorials, with single sloping face to carry inscription.
- Individually designed and hand-carved memorials which do not fall within the measurements described above.
- Large coloured engravings.
- Badge or insignia from organisations or clubs (sporting or otherwise) other than armed forces.
- QR codes. – although national guidance suggests these are rarely permitted in churchyards.
- Kerbs and Chippings in exceptional circumstances (please do not purchase any such items before permission is granted)
- White marble or polished black marble stones in exceptional circumstances (please do not purchase any such items before permission is granted)

Items strictly prohibited

- Both a headstone and ledger stone on the same grave are not permitted
- Vases may not be placed loosely and separately on a grave
- Railings, ornaments, lights, photographs, ceramic portraits, children's toys, models, garden ornaments, windmills, balloons, wind chimes and any other trinkets.
- Heart-shaped stones
- Teddy bear shaped stones
- Advertisements or trademarks
- Plastic plates on the reverse of the stone with the stonemason's name.
- Engravings of TV or cartoon characters (such as the Teletubbies, Thomas the tank engine, Winnie-the-Pooh)
- Plastic flowers.

Please note that some churchyards and gardens of remembrance often have regulations agreed locally, approved by tradition or faculty, which may be different to those listed above. You should check with the incumbent.

If the incumbent thinks that the matter requested is outside his/her discretion, but is acceptable and inoffensive the incumbent may, if there is a positive motion in favour from the PCC, approach the Registry which in turn will ask the Chancellor if the request can be treated as being within the discretion of the incumbent.

Unusual or alternative memorials which do not conform with the regulations listed above *may* still be allowed but only with specific reference to the Chancellor and generally by way of a formal faculty permission. The Incumbent is not authorised to allow anything that falls

outside the regulations and you should contact the Diocesan Registry in the first instance for advice on how best to proceed and to obtain any faculty forms required.

Diocesan Registry, 42-44 Castle Street, Salisbury, SP1 3TX
(01722) 432390
registry@battbroadbent.co.uk

This summary of the full regulations has been agreed by the Chancellor of the Diocese of Winchester.

The full regulations may be found on the Diocesan Website or they may be obtained from the DAC at Old Alresford Place, SO24 9DH or from the Diocesan Registry.

**His Honour Judge Christopher Clark QC
Chancellor of the Diocese of Winchester
March 2015**