

can undermine the memorials and they can outgrow the available space.

Please help by removing dead flowers. Please don't leave toys, photos or other such items by the grave where the weather ruins them, and they become upsettingly unsightly.

Cremated remains

Many churches, even those whose Churchyards are closed or full, have a Garden of Remembrance for the burial of cremated remains. Normally, cremated remains are buried without a container - poured into the ground. At the discretion of the Vicar, a container made of biodegradable material may be used - so you should check this before purchasing an expensive wooden container.

Usually in a Garden of Remembrance no individual markers are allowed; instead names are recorded in the Church's Burial Register, Book of Remembrance, or on a single communal memorial stone.

Applying for a Faculty

You should talk to the Vicar who may be able to give delegated approval for the proposed memorial and can advise you about applying for a Faculty if one is needed, or about reserving a grave space. If a Faculty is needed you will need to be in touch with the Diocesan Registrar - a Church solicitor - who handles these matters and passes them onto the Chancellor:

Carlisle Diocesan Registrar (Laura Peace)
The Cube, Barrack Rd, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6DB
0191 226 7878 l.peace@sintons.co.uk

Alternatives

While many people value the Churchyard Regulations as preserving the special character, peace and dignity of a churchyard, others may find them too restrictive. If you feel that you cannot in honesty abide by them, you may need to consider a burial in a local authority cemetery.

Guidance for those arranging a burial in a Churchyard in the Diocese of Carlisle



When someone dies there are emotions of grief and loss but also complex practical things to be done. This leaflet gives guidance on burial in a Churchyard. We hope all we do will help to celebrate the life of the person who has died, allow you to express your sadness and loss and encourage you in the hope of the resurrection to eternal life.

Churchyards are special places protected by law. The rules can be more restrictive than those for council cemeteries. Churchyards are holy spaces uniquely important in many ways: family links, history, architecture, wildlife and natural beauty. The Church has a legal duty to ensure that the character of the churchyard does not detract from the character of the church or other monuments.

Churchyard law is explained in The Churchyard Regulations which can be downloaded from the Diocesan website :
www.carlisedioocese.org.uk/diocesan-advisory-council/churchyards/

The Regulations aim to protect our Churchyards for everyone, for ever. Early discussion with the Vicar can avoid problems. This is especially important because some of the decisions cannot be undone at all, and some would be expensive to undo.

In particular, the Church believes that burial creates the last earthly resting place for our bodies so only very very exceptionally is there a prospect of permission for exhumation and re-burial elsewhere.

Who can be buried in the Churchyard?

People living in the parish have a right of burial if the Churchyard has space and is not closed. Others may be buried with the permission of the Vicar and PCC. There is no right of burial in a particular part of the Churchyard - but it is sometimes possible to reserve a grave space by means of a Faculty [contact the vicar]. (A Faculty is the Permission to

do things in Church or Churchyard and is granted by the Chancellor (the ecclesiastical Judge) of the Diocese).

A reserved grave space should be marked in a clear, lasting way by the applicant in a manner agreed with the Vicar - typically a durable metal or wooden stake with initials and the date of reservation. Those reserving a grave space may be required to pay an annual fee to the PCC as a contribution to the upkeep of Church and Churchyard. There is a separate fee for burial which helps to maintain the Churchyard.

NB Churchyard burials are reserved for people and no animals may be buried there. The allocation and reservation of grave spaces does not affect the ownership of Churchyard which always remains the legal property of the Church - you do not and cannot purchase a grave space: the money you pay is a legal fee for the burial. Memorials remain the property and responsibility of the heir(s) of the person commemorated.

Memorials

You must get permission (a Faculty) to erect a memorial. The Chancellor delegates to Vicars (but not Churchwardens) a discretion to give permission for the more usual types of memorials, as described in the Regulations - but if the request falls outside these limits, or there is any doubt, the Vicar **must** refer the case to the Chancellor. The Churchyard Regulations seek to ensure that all memorials are appropriate to a Christian churchyard and harmonise with the character of the church and the adjoining memorials. We also need to ensure that memorials remain in good condition.

Size, shape and wording, images etc are governed by the Regulations - so an early discussion with the Vicar is best. Photographs, etched images, portraits or pictures of objects or motifs in porcelain or plastic are not permitted as they tend to weather and decay more quickly than traditional engraved stones. "Mass-produced" memorials of "unusual" shape such as hearts or teddy bears are not permitted because they can dominate the surrounding area and overwhelm the

character of adjoining memorials. However, the regulations are not meant to stifle originality, and specially designed memorials are encouraged: for example: www.memorialsbyartists.co.uk
www.letteringartstrust.org.uk/memorials

Materials and finish are also covered by the Regulations. In Cumbria most of our churches and the older memorials around them are made of local stones and slates, and these traditional materials are a key part of their treasured character. Imported stones and stones with mirror polishes can completely undermine this character and detract from the appearance of the church and churchyard. There are also growing concerns about the carbon footprint of stones imported from the far side of the world and worries about working conditions in quarries there.

Local monumental masons should know the Regulations but check before making any decisions. That someone has done something previously does not guarantee it would be allowed in the future.

Memorials should not be erected until 6 months after the burial to ensure stable ground for the foundations. (In some places, because of ground conditions, it may need to be longer.)

Memorials in a churchyard are both private and public monuments intended to be read now and in future. Inscriptions can be loving and personal but also reverent and in keeping with the Christian faith. Pet names and colloquialisms are inappropriate, being difficult to understand now and in the future.

Flowers

Because they become bedraggled, artificial flowers are not permitted, except Christmas wreaths, and poppies at Remembrance, which should be removed afterwards. Glass vases are discouraged as they can break and cause injuries. It may be possible to plant bulbs (but check if particular bulbs and plants are a special feature of that churchyard) but not larger plants like trees or shrubs as their roots