



## CHURCHYARD REGULATIONS

1. The Churchyard is subject to the jurisdiction of the Bishop exercised by the Chancellor of the Diocese and accordingly no memorial stones may be erected or any works undertaken except by written authority or faculty as outlined below.
2. However the Chancellor delegates authority to incumbents (including team vicars) to give consent to the erection or introduction of gravestones and memorials providing that they meet the following criteria (paragraphs 3-22) and the stipulated procedures are followed. Where there is no incumbent, this authority may be exercised by the priest in charge and if none, the rural dean, and references in these regulations to the incumbent shall be construed as including the priest in charge or if none the rural dean.
3. Nothing shall be erected or placed in the churchyard until the consent of the incumbent to such proposals has been obtained **in writing**. Applicants for consent should give a full description of the proposed design, measurements, inscriptions, and type and finish of stone proposed to be used. Similarly no headstone or any part of a memorial may be removed from a churchyard (e.g. for re-lettering) without the consent of the incumbent.
4. Applicants are advised not to accept any estimate or otherwise to enter into a contract with a funeral director or stonemason until such written consent has been obtained.

### Dimensions

5. The incumbent will normally be able to sanction:-
  - a) simple vertical headstones not exceeding 1200 mm.(4 ft.) high measured from the surface of the ground, 900 mm. (3 ft.) wide and 150 mm.(6 inches) thick. In parts of Wistaston churchyard the maximum dimensions actually permitted are smaller than these.
  - b) a plinth or base supporting such headstones not exceeding 300 mm. (12 inches) from front to back and not projecting more than 75 mm. (3 inches) beyond the back and sides of the headstone and not thereby causing the memorial to exceed the dimensions in 5 (a) above.  
(The intention of such a plinth is to enable a vase or other flower container to be sunk into or placed upon its forward projection.)
  - c) simple horizontal stones, marking or recording the burial of human remains other than cremated remains, set below ground level so as not to impede a mower and not exceeding 1200 mm. (4 ft.) in length and 900 mm. (3 ft.) in width.
  - d) simple memorial stones, marking or recording the interment of cremated remains (see paragraph 24) either mounted on walls provided for the purpose or laid horizontally in the ground, sunk so that their surface does not impede a mower passing over them. Such stones shall not exceed 300 mm. (12 inches) x 200 mm. (8 inches).

### Designs

6. Headstones need not be restricted to a rectangular shape and curved tops are preferable to straight edged ones. Memorials in the shape of a heart or of a book are **not permitted**.

### Inscriptions

7. Inscriptions must be simple and reverent, though they may include quotations from biblical or suitable literary sources. All inscriptions must receive the prior permission of the incumbent in accordance with paragraph 3 above.
8. Additions may be made to inscriptions at a later date, following subsequent interments in the same grave or for other good reason, but any such addition or alteration to an inscription must be separately approved by the incumbent in writing.
- 9.a) No advertisement or trademark should be inscribed on a headstone but the mason's name or mason's mark may be inscribed on the side or reverse of the memorial stone near the foot or on the plinth in letters no larger than 13 mm.(1/2 inch) in height such letters to be unleaded and unpainted.
  - b) The identification number of the grave plot should be inscribed as in paragraph (a) above.
10. For all inscriptions plain cut lettering of good design is preferred. Cut letters may be picked out in paint or gilding if appropriate to the design of the monument as a whole. Leaded letters are not permitted on new memorials, or existing memorials not previously leaded.

### Method of fixing headstones

11. Due regard must be paid to the nature of the ground and the problems of potential settlement. Memorials with or without a raised plinth (see paragraph 5b) may rest upon a foundation slab or be set in concrete which does not rise above ground level, does not impede a mower or reveal itself in an unsightly way. Headstones inserted directly into the ground must be of adequate dimension below ground level to ensure continued stability.

### Materials for headstones etc.

12. All monuments shall be made of stone which is harmonious with its surroundings. Native stones traditionally used in local buildings and memorials or stones similar to them in colour or texture are to be preferred.
13. Such natural unpolished stone will be insisted on in contexts such as ancient churchyards or areas immediately surrounding traditional church buildings or other areas of graveyards possessing a predominantly traditional, harmonious aspect.

14. However in areas of churchyards of more recent date, imported and highly finished stones may be commonly found **and in these contexts only** such materials as black, grey, blue and red granites (polished or unpolished) may be permitted at the discretion of the incumbent. When incumbents feel any doubt, they should require the applicant to apply for a faculty.

15. Photographs, porcelain or plastic portraits are **not permitted** to be affixed to any memorial or to form part of its design.

16. Memorials made of synthetic or reconstructed stone, ceramics, plastics or metal are **not permitted**.

**Treatment of gravespaces and maintenance**

17. It is **not permitted** to introduce kerbs, railings, posts or chains to enclose a grave nor to cover the surface of a grave with chippings or other extraneous material.

18. Spring flowering bulbs may be planted in the soil of any grave but not trees, shrubs, or plants which might impede mowing.

19. The surface of the grave shall be levelled and any mound removed within 6 months of a burial taking place. It should be flattened and turfed and seeded to allow for mowing.

20. Within six months of a burial, wreaths and floral tributes may be laid upon a grave and cut flowers arranged in a metal or stone vase, set below ground level so as not to impede a mower when not containing flowers. Glass, ceramic, and plastic containers are **not permitted**. After six months any such items may be removed by the persons to whom is deputed the day-to-day upkeep.

21. Persons to whom is deputed the day-to-day upkeep of the churchyard may remove wreaths, cut flowers etc., when they appear to be withered or dead.

22. Artificial flowers are **not permitted** with the exception of Remembrance Day poppies.

**Cremated remains**

23. The incumbent may permit cremated remains to be deposited in the churchyard. The remains shall not be scattered, but interred after prior arrangement with the incumbent, preferably, directly into the earth.

24. Memorial tablets in connection with cremated remains are permitted only in areas designated and set aside for that purpose. Additional inscriptions to existing memorials are permitted in compliance with paragraph 7.

**Memorials for which a Faculty must be obtained**

25. Applications for memorials, the design or dimensions of which fall outside the conditions outlined above shall be made by means of an application for faculty to the Diocesan Registry, Friars, White Friars, Chester. CH1 1XS.

26. Individually designed memorials are not discouraged but are subject to procedures for scrutiny and advice provided for in the Care of Churches etc. Measure 1991 and a faculty must be obtained for any such memorial. Statuary and other sculpture is generally discouraged unless it is of exceptional artistic merit and will in any event be subject to the above mentioned procedures for obtaining a faculty.

February 1995

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To be completed by Applicant(s) GRAVE Ref.No.....

- 1. The Applicant declares that he/she is the owner of the memorial and agrees that when introduced in the Churchyard, the Applicant will remain the owner of the memorial.
- 2. The Applicant agrees to keep the memorial in good repair and condition at all times and will indemnify the incumbent and the Parochial Church Council against any claims and liability arising from a failure to do so.
- 3. The Applicant agrees to observe the above Regulations.
- 4. The Applicant accepts that an exhumation cannot take place without the authority of the Diocesan Chancellor.
- 5. The Applicant accepts that if a memorial becomes out of repair, unsafe or unsightly, the Parochial Church Council may apply to the Diocesan Chancellor for permission to repair, reposition or remove the memorial.

Signature of Applicant(s).....Date.....

Signed by (insert full names).....Address.....

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To be completed by stonemason

We/I.....

of.....

- 1. hereby undertake to the Chancellor of the Diocese of Chester that the memorial referred to in this Application will be erected in accordance with the particulars stated in the Application (as approved by the incumbent) and will be made using good workmanship.
- 2. hereby agree to indemnify the incumbent and the Parochial Church Council in respect of all liability arising from our/my failure to make, erect and install the memorial in a proper manner.

Signature.....Date.....

Signed by (insert full names).....