Burials and Funerals

What I need to know

This leaflet is intended to help alleviate questions and concerns surrounding your loved one's funeral and burial during this sad time. If you have any additional questions or need pastoral support, please see the contact info below and they would be more than happy to get in touch.

Funeral & Burial Questions:	Please call the Parish Office (number below)
Pastoral Support	Revd Matthew Lawes (Vicar)
Parish Office: 01709 589674	Diocese Office: 01709 309100

1. Burials in a Churchyard

If you are considering a burial for a family member or loved one at your local Parish churchyard you will need to ensure that there is a legal right to burial. To establish this legal right, they will need to have been a resident of the parish, to be on the electoral roll of the parish, or to have died in the parish you are wishing to bury them in. Where this legal right is not established the Parish Priest may allow the burial to take place. In making this decision, the Parish Priest will take account of any general guidance on the subject from the Parochial Church Council.

These same rights and restrictions apply to the interment of cremated remains.

Have they lived in the local parish? Been on the electoral roll? Or died in the parish? If yes, they have the right to be buried in the local Parish open church yard.

2. Memorial Stones

The introduction of a memorial stone at the site of a loved one's burial is one of the ways families choose to remember those who have passed away.

An application for permission to introduce a memorial needs to be granted before the memorial can be installed. Permission is granted by the Parish Priest. In cases where there is no Parish Priest in post you will need to seek permission from the Area Dean.

The introduction of the memorial can only take place after six months have passed from the burial. In some locations and at some times, the six-month

period may need to be longer due to the condition of the ground and soil in the churchyard.

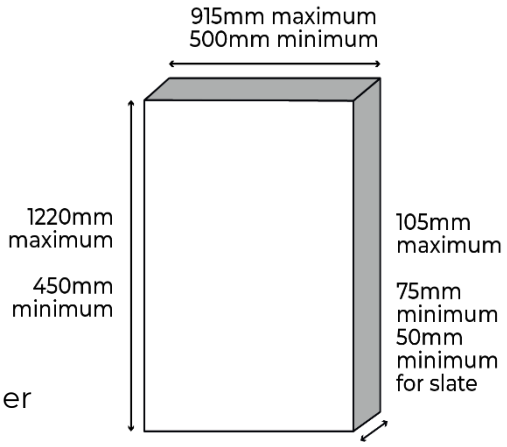
Erecting a temporary marker of the burial is sometimes possible but you would need to discuss this with your local Parish Priest.

There are rules[1] in place that govern the size, shape, material and text of all memorials. Parish Priests are not able to allow anything that falls outside of these rules. The design of memorials is very personal, this next section is intended to highlight what is possible, in the hope of preventing disappointment.

Headstone size and base

Headstones should measure:

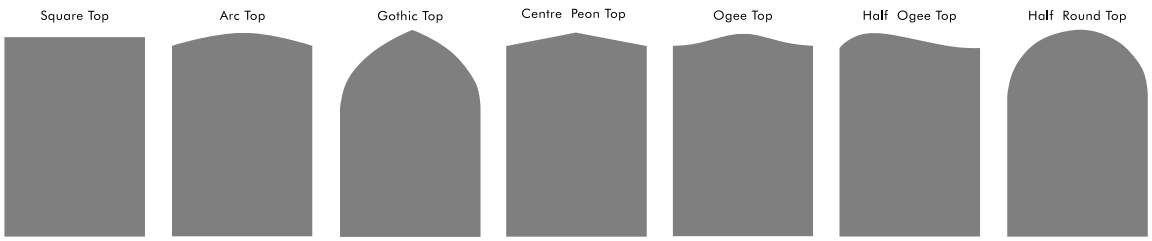
- No more than 1220mm (4ft) high, measured from the surface of the ground;
- No more than 915mm (3ft) wide;
- No more than 105mm (4in) thick;
- No less than 450mm (1ft 6in) high;
- No less than 500mm (1ft 8in) wide;
- No less than 75mm (3in) thick (except in the case of slate memorials, which may be thinner but no less than 50mm (2in thick).



A headstone is a lasting symbol to which you and others may wish to return, to remember your loved ones. Churchyards provide a public space for mourning and reflection and as such any memorial stone must be adequately secured in the ground to ensure that it is stable.

A headstone may stand on a stone base, provided that it is an integral part of the design and does not project more than 105mm (4in) beyond the headstone in any direction, except where a receptacle for flowers is provided. This is to ensure the safety of all those using this public space and to ensure longevity.

Suggested shapes



[1] A copy of the *Diocese of Sheffield Churchyard Rules* may be obtained by emailing the Diocesan Registry.

If you want to install a memorial of any other shape you will need to apply for a faculty. The Parish Priest or Area Dean will be able to give you the paperwork for this.

Please be advised that Railings, chains, chippings, fencing, and wooden edging are not permitted even by faculty. All lighting (including solar lighting) is prohibited.

- All memorials should be made of natural stone. An unpolished surface is preferred but if a polished surface is permitted, this should be on the front and on the top surface of the base only.
- Stones traditionally used in local buildings, or stones closely similar to the colour and texture to that of the church, are to be preferred (i.e. sandstone, limestone, granite or slate).
- White marble, synthetic stone or plastic are not permitted.
- Please note that kerb stones are not normally permitted as they can prevent adequate grounds maintenance.

Inscriptions – all inscriptions must be factual and accurate. Cardinal numbers are preferred for dates

- Inscriptions must include
  - The name of the deceased
  - The date of their death,
  - Date of birth or the age at death.
- Lettering should be incised, or in relief, and may be painted. Lettering may be picked out in black, gold, silver-grey, or white. Matt colours must be used.
- Hand-cut lettering is encouraged.
- The normal expectation is that inscriptions will be in English and in the Roman alphabet. Inscriptions (in part or in whole) in other languages must be accompanied by an agreed translation.
- Inscriptions are to appear on one side only.
- Forenames may be present, or they can be replaced by initials
- Relationships must be stated correctly,
- Relations are normally limited to parents, children and spouse or partner but, if space is available, grandparents may also be named.
- The Parish Priest may approve the deceased being referred to by a known name other than that by which they are formally identified.
- Quotations from Scripture or other appropriate literary sources may be permitted, subject to approval by the Parish Priest or Area Dean.
- Additions may be made to an inscription at a later date following a subsequent interment in the same grave or for other suitable reason. For such additions separate approval is needed from the Parish Priest or Area Dean.
- A badge or insignia of the Armed Forces of the Crown is permitted, provided that the application is accompanied by a letter of authority from the branch of the Forces in question.
- **Where the stone is to bear any embellishment or symbol other than lettering, this should be fully described in the application; in such cases, the Parish Priest may require the applicant to seek faculty permission.**

What cannot be permitted

- No photographs
- No trademarks
- No advertising
- No new memorials with plastic or other inserted (e.g. lead) lettering may be introduced.
- No porcelain portraits
- No controversial inscriptions that could offend
- QR codes always require a faculty

If you have questions please get in contact with your Parish Priest or Area Dean. Alternatively, you can call the Church House office Tel: (01709) 309100

3. Flowers and other items

Everyone grieves differently and many will want to visit their loved one's graveside on significant dates or on a more regular basis. In this next section we will highlight what can be placed in a churchyard. Please bear in mind that churchyards are for everyone and need to be spaces where the bereaved are able to grieve in a respectful and safe environment. As such we have a duty to manage what can be placed on a grave in addition to the memorial.

Items that are encouraged

- Flowers can be placed on the graveside either in a holder built into the design of the head stone or in a removable container that is buried completely below ground. (please do not use glass for safety reasons).
- Wreaths and cut flowers may be placed in such containers or laid on any grave but must be removed as soon as they appear to be withered.
- Bulbs may be planted in the soil of the grave.

Items that are prohibited (list not exhaustive)

- Cellophane-wrapped flowers and objects
- Artificial flowers are discouraged
- Bushes, plants and trees should not be planted on or near any graves.
- Other items are discouraged as they may be stolen or vandalised.

If discouraged or prohibited items are placed on graves the Parish Priest and Churchwarden will request the removal of these items. If this request is not complied with, the items will be removed after suitable notice has been given.

4. Interment of cremated remains

When interring cremated remains this will normally happen by pouring the ashes directly into a hole in the ground without a container. The remains will be poured from the container they were brought in and covered with soil by the minister committing them to the earth. At the discretion of the Parish Priest such cremated remains may be buried in a casket or urn provided that it is made of biodegradable material.

The scattering of cremated remains in churchyards is **not** allowed.

Memorials for cremated remains

Where cremated remains are interred, memorial tablets may be permitted subject to the Churchyard Regulations and any specific rules relating to a particular churchyard. The Parish Priest will be able to advise.

In some parishes a Book of Remembrance is used – instead of memorial tablets - to commemorate the deceased.

5. Maintenance and Repair of Memorials

Individual memorials are primarily the responsibility of those who erected them and, after their death, of the heirs at law of the person commemorated by those memorials.

Where a memorial becomes dangerous or derelict, or where it needs to be re-sited, a faculty must be sought for dealing with this. Where a matter is urgent for health and safety reasons, emergency permission can be granted.

Reasonable efforts will be made by the Parochial Church Council to find the owner of any such memorial who must be given the opportunity to remove or repair the memorial.

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