



DIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

CHURCHYARD REGULATIONS: SUMMARY

Information describing the type of memorial that the minister (a rector or a vicar) of a Parish may permit in a Churchyard.

Making arrangements for the last resting place for loved ones is an important and often distressing responsibility. Many choose burial or interment of cremated remains in consecrated ground. Christian burial in a churchyard must always be reverent and basic rules – the Diocesan Churchyard Regulations – exist to maintain the highest possible standards and to guide those charged with making sensitive decisions.

The Diocesan Churchyard Regulations describe the type of memorial that the minister in charge (or if none is in post, the Area Dean) may permit in a churchyard. Memorials that do not comply with the Regulations need a special legal permission known as a Faculty. The Minister may not approve a memorial that does not comply with the Regulations. If the Minister is not willing to approve the application, an application may be made to the Chancellor of the Diocese for a Faculty.

This is a summary of the regulations – please ask for a full version.

1. No memorial (including any type of gravestone or memorial vase) shall be erected or placed in the churchyard until the consent of the Minister has been obtained in writing. Please ask for an application form.
2. Memorials must be constructed and installed in accordance with the Recommended Code of Working Practice issued by the National Association of Memorial Masons and with British Standard BS 8415. Always check with your memorial mason that the memorial will comply with the NAMM code and BS 8415.
3. The Minister will normally be able to authorise the following:

memorials for graves – full burials

3.1 A simple vertical memorial standing on a plinth. The maximum permitted height of a memorial is 4 feet (1200 MM), measured from the surface of the ground and maximum width is 3 feet (900 MM) and maximum thickness is 6 inches (150 MM). The plinth supporting the memorial must not exceed 12 inches (300 MM) from front to back and not project more than 2 inches (50 MM) beyond the back and not more than 3 inches (75 MM) beyond the sides of the Memorial. Horizontal memorials flush with the surface of the surrounding ground are permitted.

Memorial stones, marking or recording the interment of cremated remains

3.1 A horizontal memorial exceeding 21" x 21" (533 MM x 533 MM), or such smaller size as may be imposed for uniformity with local practice in a specific churchyard, will require a Faculty. No part of the Memorial may be above the level of the surrounding ground.

3.2 A vertical memorial exceeding 2 feet (600 MM) high, measured from the surface of the ground, with a maximum width of 18 inches (460 MM) and maximum thickness of 3 inches (75 MM), on the plinth not exceeding 12 inches (300 MM) from front to back and projecting no more than 2 inches (50 MM) beyond the back and not more than 3 inches (75 MM) beyond the sides of the memorial will require a Faculty.

4. Vertical memorials need not be restricted to a strict rectangular shape and curved tops are preferable to straight- edged ones. Memorials should be simple and consistent with nearby memorials and the setting of the churchyard.

5. Inscriptions must be simple and reverent. All inscriptions must receive the prior written approval of the Minister.

6. Photographs, porcelain or plastic portraits and inscribed portraits or other representations of the deceased are not permitted under the Regulations.

7. Statuary and other sculpture are not permitted under the Regulations nor are additional non-permanent decorative items such as wind chimes.

8. Curbs, railings posts or chains and similar items to enclose the grave are not permitted under the Regulations.

9. Chippings and similar materials to cover the surface of the grave are not permitted under the Regulations.

10. Trees, shrubs and other plants are not permitted under the Regulations.

11. Good quality artificial flowers (but not plastic flowers) are permitted but should be (and will be) removed when they fade or decay or become out of season.

12. Wreaths and floral tributes may be laid on the grave and cut flowers placed in metal or stone vases placed on the memorial plinth. Glass, ceramic and plastic containers are not permitted. If there is no plinth, a vase may be sunk into the ground immediately in front of the Memorial but the vase must be sunk to below the level of the surrounding ground so that it does not impede and will not be damaged by a mower. Vases are not permitted on horizontal tablets.

13. The surface of the grave will be levelled after six months.