

The Parish of St Mary Magdalene, Yarm CREMATED REMAINS POLICY

The following duties was agreed at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting held on 26th June 2023.

Policy Statement

This Policy is taken from DIOCESE OF YORK CHURCHYARD MEMORIAL REGULATION 2018 amended 2019

Policy

RULES MADE BY THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DIOCESE AS TO THE EXTENT OF A MINISTER'S AUTHORITY TO ALLOW MEMORIALS IN CHURCHYARDS.

THE GENERAL LEGAL POSITION

1.1 Churchyards are a valuable heritage and also a great responsibility. Churchyards are consecrated and therefore they fall under the jurisdiction of the Bishop exercised through the Chancellor of the Diocese. The Chancellor has delegated authority to the minister responsible for a churchyard to allow the placing of memorials which fall within these Rules.

1.2 Care must be taken to see that new memorials harmonise with their surroundings. Advice about suitable stones, appropriate designs and the composition of inscriptions may be obtained from the DAC Secretary.

1.3 It is important to note that the next of kin of the deceased do not own the land in which a body is buried ("the grave"). The grave is part of the churchyard. The family has no proprietary rights over the land; and so the grave may not be marked, or delineated, by kerbs, chains, verge stones, railings or fences

1.4 Items which are not allowed to be placed on a grave include angel or dove statuettes, garden ornaments, bird baths, pictures, textiles, clothes or artificial flowers (other than silk flowers in good condition). Personal belongings or memorabilia belonging to or associated with the deceased may not be placed on the grave, and this includes in the case of children, toys or teddy bears.

1.5 However the family is the owner of any memorial stone erected or placed on the grave and is responsible for its repair. Lawful authority (which means either permission under these Rules or a Faculty from the Chancellor) must still first be obtained before any memorial is put in position.

FLOWERS

2.1 Cut flowers may be laid on the grave, but flowers must be removed as soon as they start to wither.

2.2 Where it is desired to have a container in which cut flowers may stand in water the design of a memorial may include an integral flower receptacle, but the receptacle must comply with Rule 4.5 below. Where there is no receptacle cut flowers may be placed in a removable container. This container must be recessed completely into the ground, so that when not in use there is no obstruction to churchyard maintenance. A separate free standing flower vase or container standing on the surface of or near the grave is not permitted.

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4.5 INTEGRAL RECEPTACLE FOR FLOWERS -A built in receptacle for flowers may form part of the memorial in which case this should be flush with the top of the base. If the whole of the receptacle is not contained within the surface area of the base it must not project more than 4" beyond the side of the headstone or more than 8" in front of the headstone.

2.3 Spring bulbs may be placed in the soil of any grave. Trees, bushes and shrubs along with planted annual and perennial flowers are not permitted. A grave should not take on a cultivated or garden appearance.

2.4 Traditional Easter and Christmas wreaths and Remembrance Day poppies are permitted. These must be removed after a period of not more than two months. Silk flowers are permitted but must be removed when they become faded, dirty, dishevelled or discoloured. Otherwise no artificial flowers are allowed to be laid on the grave or placed in containers in the grave.

MEMORIALS MARKING THE BURIAL OF CREMATED REMAINS

5.1 In an area set aside for the burial of cremated remains, a stone tablet or plaque, no larger than 18" by 18" may be laid flush with the ground.

5.2 The burial may be marked by a stone tablet or plaque laid flush to the ground surface measuring not more than 18" by 18". Such a tablet may be square, rectangular, circular or oval in shape, but not triangular.

5.3 Stone tablets or plaques must comply with Rule 4.6 as to materials and finish, Rule 4.8 as to Inscriptions, Rule 4.9 as to lettering, and Rule 4.11 as to etchings.

4.6 MATERIALS -Monuments shall be of natural native stone (such as local limestone or sandstone) or slate or may be of hardwood (e.g. oak). The best stones are those in harmony with the stone of the Church and other mature local buildings. The surface of the stone shall not be polished so as to reflect. "Part honed" is the term used for the smoothest finish which is permitted.

The following materials shall not be used: black, blue or red granite, all polished granite of whatever colour, marble, synthetic or artificial stone or plastic. A grave shall not have upon it chippings of any sort, or glass shades, or any kerb, railing, chain, or fencing of any kind. The grass sward must be allowed to grow naturally so that the whole churchyard can be managed tidily.

4.8 INSCRIPTIONS – These should be composed with care. A gravestone in a churchyard is a public memorial in a public place and may be there for a long time. Simple information like full names, dates and forms of address like "mother" and "father" are the most dignified inscriptions. Private names used by members of the family are not suitable, but shortened names by which the deceased was known may be included in brackets or quotation marks along with the full name.

If additional words are considered necessary they must be simple and not incompatible with Christian faith. They should be words which the family will still feel comfortable about many years later. Three principles should be observed. Such words should honour the dead, comfort the living and inform posterity. The most usual sources are the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, hymns and appropriate literature compatible with the Christian faith. Inscriptions should be without punctuation.

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Particular thought must be given to requests to inscribe the reverse side of the memorial. If the minister is confident that the inscription is in accordance with the three above principles then the minister may approve it, but in any case of doubt the minister should refer the matter to the Chancellor through the Registrar.

In referring to family members, the full form of address (e.g. "mother", "father") is to be preferred on a memorial (being in a public place). The minister should encourage applicants to use the full form. However, if after considering this advice the applicants still wish to use diminutives, the minister has discretion to approve diminutives in common or regional usage (e.g. "mum", "dad"). The minister may similarly approve the inclusion of shortened names by which the deceased was commonly known. The wording of an inscription must be included in the application form and be approved by the minister.

An addition may be made to an inscription (on an existing memorial) at a later date following a subsequent burial in the same grave or for some other good reason, but an application must be made to the minister. The lettering, layout and wording of an additional inscription must be similar in design to those of the original inscription.

Where a family is of a nationality other than British and request to have an inscription in their native tongue on the memorial, the inscription must be in English as it is in a public place; but in addition they may include a translation in their native language. This may be permitted by the Minister

4.9 LETTERING – This may be incised or in relief. The cut surface can be coloured one shade lighter or darker than the stone. It must not be gilded or silvered and no plastic or inserted lettering is allowed.

4.11 ETCHINGS -Up to one-fifth of the front of the stone can be carved or etched with a religious subject or a depiction of the interests or occupation of the deceased. It may be coloured one shade lighter or darker than the stone but may not otherwise be coloured.

4.14 QR CODES – No stone containing a QR code may be installed. No Quick Response Code may be added without a faculty.

4.15 OTHER LINKS - No stone containing an electronic link may be installed. No Links may be added without a faculty.

5.4 A stone tablet or plaque marking the burial of cremated remains may include an integral flower receptacle, the top of which must be flush with the tablet or ground surface.

5.5.1 No upright memorial may be permitted by the minister in charge of the churchyard under these Rules to mark the burial of cremated remains.

5.6 Where cremated remains are buried in a churchyard the minister may also grant permission for the following forms of commemoration:

- an inscription on a single communal memorial in the churchyard (where such a memorial exists pursuant to a previous faculty)

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- an additional inscription to an existing stone relating to a close relative.

5.7 APPLICATION FORM - Application for commemoration under Rule 5.1 – 5.6 shall be made in writing to the minister on the prescribed Application Form, which is attached to these Rules. If consent is given the minister must do so by returning Part B of the form and he must direct the type of commemoration allowed; if a tablet or plaque is to be placed he must direct the precise location for it. The applicant must pay the fee required by the minister and must comply with all directions given.


OTHER COMMEMORATION AFTER CREMATION

6.1 The minister may grant permission for commemoration in a Book of Remembrance of a person whose remains have been cremated. The Book of Remembrance shall be kept in church.

6.2 Commemoration in a Book of Remembrance usually occurs where the cremated remains are buried in the churchyard of the church where the Book is kept, but a minister may exceptionally grant permission where this is not so. Where the application is limited to the entry of the deceased person's name in a Book, the prescribed form need not be used, but the application should be made in writing to the minister and if permission is granted this should also be in writing. No fee is payable to the minister for obtaining this permission, but the PCC may make an appropriate charge for having the entry written.

GENERAL COMMENT

9. The Chancellor may grant a faculty for a type of memorial which is not within these Rules. The Chancellor welcomes designs for memorials which are artistic and creative but which are also in keeping with the natural peace and beauty of the churchyard. For further information about churchyards and memorials, forms of application to a minister and forms of petition for faculty please consult: the Rector, the DAC Secretary or the Diocesan Registrar

Chair: 

Date: 26th June 2023

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DIOCESE OF YORK

**APPLICATION FOR MINISTER'S AUTHORITY FOR PLACING OF A
MEMORIAL IN A CHURCHYARD OR ADDITIONAL INSCRIPTION
GIVEN UNDER THE CHURCHYARD MEMORIAL REGULATIONS 2018**

PART A

Is this a new memorial OR an additional inscription?

CHURCHYARD.....

Name of deceased.....

Date of Death..... Date of Burial.....

Burial row and number..... Coffin burial Cremated remains

Applicants name and address.....

.....

..... Post code..... Telephone.....

Monumental Mason.....

DETAILS OF MEMORIAL

Description of materials (including shade/colour).....

.....

Dimensions: height..... width..... thickness.....

Details of any decoration.....

.....

Full wording of the inscription.....

.....

.....

SKETCH An attached sketch of the proposed memorial must show the dimensions of the stone, the positioning and dimensions of the base (and foundation slab, if any) in relation to the ground level, the design and extent of any carving, the layout of the inscription and a sample of the proposed lettering. The finish of all exposed surfaces must be indicated. If the site is not easily identifiable by row and number, a simple sketch plan, showing adjacent graves and/or features should be supplied

DECLARATION

I confirm that the memorial will conform to the Churchyard Memorial Rules in every respect.
I fully understand that no work may be put in hand until authorisation has been obtained.

Signature of Applicant..... Date.....

PART B

AUTHORISATION

If the application is approved by the incumbent, the duplicate copy duly signed should be returned to the Applicant

Approved..... Date.....

TWO COPIES OF THIS FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED