

CHURCHYARD REGULATIONS

Our churchyards have been a place of Christian burial for hundreds of years. They are a very special place. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) are custodians of these ancient and historic sites and have produced these guidelines to help in maintaining our treasured churchyards. All plots in the churchyard remain the ownership of the Church of England. Management of the churchyard is the responsibility of the PCC including any work that is required on trees.

There are well defined Rules and Regulations as laid down by the Diocese of Chichester and the Church of England for Burials in our churchyards. Anyone who is on the Electoral Roll and/or lives in the Parish has a right to be buried or their cremated remains interred if there is space.

There are very strict Diocesan Rules and Regulations regarding Graves and Memorials. Nothing can be placed in the churchyard that does not have permission in writing and does not comply with the Rules and Regulations. Incumbents have discretion to authorise the erection of any headstone which falls within the types and classes authorised. They may refuse to permit the erection of an authorised headstone if they believe it would be detrimental to the churchyard. However, they have no discretion to allow the erection of a headstone that falls outside those authorised. If a family (or executor) wishes to erect a memorial which falls outside the Incumbent's discretion, they may apply for a Faculty giving the grounds for their request. The Incumbent will advise them how to approach the DAC.

No memorial should be erected within six months of a burial. Permission is always required and no work should be ordered or put in hand until permission has been granted. In the event of any memorial being erected or placed in the churchyard without the written consent of the Incumbent or a Faculty granted by the Chancellor, those responsible may be required to remove the same and pay the costs.

The PCC, together with the Incumbent, are occupiers of the churchyard for the purposes of the Occupiers' Liability Acts 1957 - 1984. These Acts place upon the occupiers a duty of care to see that the visitor in the churchyard will be reasonably safe. Therefore, there is a duty to ensure, particularly but not exclusively, that walls, trees and memorials are regularly inspected, and the PCC will take reasonable steps to reduce or minimize foreseeable risk. Such an inspection should typically form part of a regular inspection and should also be carried out following exceptional weather conditions. We ask visitors to always advise us of any problems or safety issues you may become aware of within the churchyards.

It is the PCC's policy not to reserve a particular plot in the churchyards for specific graves.

The upkeep of individual graves is the responsibility of the family. The upkeep of a churchyard is a considerable burden upon the limited resources of PCC funds.

Monuments, headstones and memorials. These Regulations are designed to encourage best practice and to eliminate bad practice. It is unlawful for a monument to be introduced into a churchyard without permission. Generally such permission derives from the chancellor in the form of a faculty. However, for administrative convenience and to minimise expense, the chancellor delegates to the incumbent the authority to permit the introduction of a monument provided it is of a type which complies with the detailed provisions contained in the Regulations of the Diocese. Please contact either the Parish Office (admin@beaconparish.co.uk) or your Funeral director for an application form. We advise that applications for memorials should generally not be made until six months after the burial or interment. This allows the ground to settle, and we hope will also allow you time to reflect on what you want the memorial to look like.

PROHIBITIONS For the avoidance of doubt, the following are not permitted:

- **Glass jars or bottles**
- **Kerbs, railings, fencing or chippings**
- **Memorials in the shape of vases, hearts, open books**
- **Memorials incorporating photographs or portraits**
- **Mementoes, windmills, toys or little animals**
- **The use of 'pet names'**
- **Artificial flowers or foliage to be placed on or around a grave.**

If any of these items that are not permitted are found in the churchyard they will be removed.

PERMITTED ORNAMENTS Ornamentation is limited to fresh flowers with no wrapping should be placed on the designated plot. Any dead or deteriorated flowers will be removed. Any rubbish and waste material must be removed and disposed of privately. There are no facilities for disposing of waste materials in the churchyard.

Gravestones will be regularly checked for stability. The removal of gravestones or monuments, or alterations to the churchyard requires a faculty.

Only biodegradable confetti may be thrown in the churchyard and is not permitted in the church without permission.

22 April 2026