

CHURCHYARD MEMORIALS - REGULATIONS

Memorials to be fixed in Church of England burial grounds must conform to the Churchyard Regulations issued by the Diocese of Exeter. The current regulations were formulated in 1992 and specify the nature of memorials that are permitted. Some churches have their own regulations that further restrict your choice of memorial, please consult us if you need more information.

This is a summary of the regulations, if you wish to see the full document we can supply a copy or it can be found on the Diocese of Exeter website:

www.Exeter.Anglican.org

Before any memorial can be fixed in a churchyard or an additional inscription added to an existing memorial the permission of the Incumbent (vicar) must be obtained and the appropriate fee paid to the church. The fee varies according to the type and size of memorial involved.

In many churchyards it is possible to find memorials that do not conform to these regulations. These may have been sited prior to the current regulations when such memorials were permitted or permission was given in error. **The presence of any type of memorial in the churchyard should not be taken as an indication that permission will be given for a similar memorial in the future.**

The Incumbent will only give permission if the memorial conforms to the regulations, the main points are:

Upright headstones must be no more than 4ft (1.2m) high, no more than 3ft (900mm) wide and no more than 6in (15mm) thick. Slate memorials must be not less than 1.5in (38mm) thick. For infant burials the maximum dimensions are 1ft 3in (375mm) wide and 2ft 9in (825mm) high and the minimum dimensions are 1ft (300mm) wide and 1ft 7in (475mm) high.

Base. A headstone may stand on a base made of the same material provided it does not extend more than 4in beyond the headstone in any direction unless it has a receptacle for flowers in which case it may extend up to 8in in front of the headstone.

All memorials must be made of natural stones. They should be made in stone similar in appearance to that which the Church and local buildings are traditionally made. The following are **not permitted: Black and Blue granites, white marble (except in the case of infant burials) synthetic stone and plastic. "Red" granite is only permitted where the Church and neighbouring buildings are built of similar coloured stone.** Permitted finishes are rustic, fine rubbed (honed or eggshell finish) **but not mirror polished.**

Memorials in the shape of a heart or book are not permitted. **Photographs, porcelain portraits, kerbs, railings, chains, chippings or glass shades are not permitted.** Cross memorials, sculptures and statues require the authority of a faculty (a special permission issued by the Chancellor of the Diocese).

Inscriptions must be incised and lettering may be black, white or silver paint or goldleaf.

Many churchyards have special regulations regarding cremation memorials, please consult us for accurate information regarding the churchyard where you are considering placing a memorial. Most churches only permit flat memorials for cremation, the general regulation is that these memorials should be no larger than 18in square. The regulations regarding materials and inscriptions are the same as those for other memorials.

If you require any further information or if you have any query regarding churchyards or other memorials please contact us.