

This leaflet is a brief summary of information issued by the Diocese of Truro.

For more detailed information, consult the following leaflets:

Churchyard Guidelines: Guidance Notes for the Bereaved, 2010

and

Funeral, Headstone, Memorial & Flower requirements

Both available on the Diocese of Truro website or from Church House, Woodlands Court, Truro Business Park, Threemilestone, Truro TR4 9NH

Veryan PCC 2018

VERYAN PARISH CHURCH

Looking after our churchyard

Churchyard regulations are not the same as those for public cemeteries.

They are intended to ensure that churchyards remain places of beauty and peace.

Memorials and flowers can enhance the beauty and tranquillity of churchyards, which are, as part of the environs of the parish church, consecrated ground.

In order to maintain the atmosphere and peaceful surroundings it is necessary for every church to apply certain regulations regarding headstones and floral tributes.

Anyone who lived or died in the parish has the right to be buried there or to have their ashes interred.

This right is confined to that of burial; the erection of a memorial is a privilege and requires the authority of the Chancellor of the Diocese who has compiled regulations concerning size, type and wording.

In most cases permission can be granted by the parish priest, churchwardens and Parochial Church Council provided that the memorial meets the Chancellor's regulations.

Memorials

Memorial headstones may be erected six months after a burial, after the ground has settled. [This does not apply to cremated remains].

The permission of the parish priest must be obtained before any memorial is ordered from the funeral director or monumental mason. A special form is available for this.

Memorials must be of approved natural stone or hardwood. In Cornwall the appropriate and approved stones are smooth or unpolished granite [grey, preferably quarried in Cornwall or Devon] or slate [Cornish or Welsh for preference]. *Details of other sources are available.*

Not permitted: coloured granite, white marble, synthetic stone, plastic, or highly polished granite or slate.

The size, shape and design of a memorial must comply with the approved guidance: [height: between 4 feet and 2 feet 6 inches from ground level, width: between 3 feet and one foot 8 inches; thickness between 6 and 3 inches, or 1½ inches for slate]. Some permitted designs can be carved into the face of the stone, if they are of high quality and appropriately reverent.

Inscriptions must be reverent, though literary quotations may be included if appropriate and approved. References to members of the bereaved family are restricted to parent/child, spouse, or (if the only relatives) siblings.

In addition photographs or pictures are not permitted, nor are kerbs, railings, chains, or chippings. Any sculpture, statue or carved or moulded figure must be approved by a faculty [the priest will advise]. Faculties are however usually only granted in very exceptional circumstances.

Cremated remains may have memorials not less than 10 inches by 12 inches, slate or granite, and guidelines on style, materials and wording are as for headstones..

Flowers

If the headstone does not include a flower vase, a removable container may be used, but it must be sunk flush with the ground.

Fresh flowers can greatly enhance the appearance of a churchyard, and visiting a loved one's grave with flowers can be a help and comfort to bereaved families. We welcome the placing of fresh flowers in the churchyard, but they must be removed when they are withered.

NO artificial flowers are allowed except for Remembrance Day poppies and traditional Christmas wreaths, which must be removed within two months.

Shrubs and trees cannot be planted on graves, but there may be an area in the churchyard where a memorial tree or shrub can be placed. The churchwardens should be consulted and the permission of the Parochial Church Council may be required. A list of suitable trees and shrubs is available from the Diocesan Advisory Committee.

Fees

Fees are payable for burials and for the erection of a memorial: these help to support the parish's ministry.

Responsibility

Once a memorial has been erected it is the responsibility of family or friends to keep it in safe order.

More information

More detailed information can be found on the Diocese of Truro website, under 'churchyard regulations', or from your parish priest and churchwardens. Contact numbers can be found on the church's notice-board.