
**St. John the Baptist Church
Rowlands Castle**

Churchyard Policy

Our churchyard is a place of beauty and historical value and so the Parochial Church Council (PCC) uses specific nation-wide regulations which are designed to maintain these features with the minimum of bureaucracy. There are also practical reasons for some of the rules to allow for ease of maintenance.

The family of the deceased bear the cost of any memorials and of maintaining them, but they do not own the grave space and the PCC has the task of keeping the churchyard in good order.

Burials

Parishioners (including all those on the Church Electoral Roll) and others who die in the parish have a right to burial in the churchyard if there is still space available. However, requests to reserve grave spaces will only be considered by the PCC in exceptional circumstances and a Faculty from the Diocese of Portsmouth will need to be sought. Permission for the burial of other persons may be granted by the Incumbent and they shall decide where a burial will take place, whilst endeavouring to respect the family's wishes.

Cremated Remains

Cremated remains may be interred in an existing family grave, but otherwise will be buried in a specially designated area in the churchyard. If the cremated remains are to be interred in a container, it must be of perishable material, preferably wood. The scattering of cremated remains is not permitted.

The Chancellor's guidelines relating to cremated remains and memorial plaques must always be adhered to and permission from the incumbent is required.

A parishioner has a right to the burial of his/her cremated remains ('ashes') in a churchyard and the remains of non-parishioners can also be buried there if the Incumbent consents. Applications for the interment of ashes must be made to the Incumbent, who will decide the place of interment.

The names of those whose ashes are interred, together with a record of where they are interred, will be recorded in the Burial Register to be kept in the church safe.

Memorials in the Churchyard

The erection of a memorial in a churchyard or the alteration or removal of any existing memorial, or the introduction of any object (such as, but not exclusively, benches and containers for flowers) into a churchyard is a privilege, not a right.

Materials, sizes, design and inscriptions of all memorials to be erected in a churchyard must follow and comply with the Chancellor's guidelines, and **details of all proposed memorials must be submitted to the incumbent for approval** before any such work is undertaken. A document with guidance on size, materials etc is available from the Incumbent, or by visiting

https://cofeportsmouth.contentfiles.net/media/assets/file/Churchyards_and_Churchyard_Memorials.pdf


In law a faculty is required before the erection of any memorial. But in practical terms in exercise of his jurisdiction the Chancellor has delegated limited power to the incumbent (or in a vacancy to the Area Dean) to permit the erection of grave stones and to allow simple alterations to existing memorials if, and only if, the Chancellors regulations relating to grave stones are fully complied with.

The fees for the interment of ashes are contained in the current Parochial Fees.

Exclusions

There are many practical reasons (e.g. maintenance, appearance) why horizontal ledgers, raised kerbs, railings and stone or other chippings are no longer normally permitted as part of memorials. Similarly, memorials in the shape of a statue or bird bath, or including any image of the deceased or any photograph or coloured drawing are specifically excluded from the delegated authority given to the Incumbent.

The PCC/incumbent reserves the right to remove anything that becomes unsightly, although in rare circumstances the incumbent may allow a limited number of sentimental objects on a plot for a limited period of time.



T. MONAHAN (CHURCHWARDEN)

St. John the Baptist Parochial Church Council
4th March 2019