

Parishes wish their churchyards to be places of peace and refuge for those who mourn and places where the mortal remains of their loved ones can rest safely. This desire expresses the care and love of the church for the whole community and underlines our belief that the welfare of both the living and departed is important to God.

As far as possible the church tries to ensure that all users of their churchyards are treated with fairness, equity and consistency. To that end, each churchyard is governed by Regulations issued by the Diocesan Chancellor, which say what is or is not generally allowed by way of memorials, unless special permission has been given in a particular case after application to the Chancellor. The Regulations also govern the placing of flowers and planting after burial.

Sometimes families express surprise that their memorial to their loved one cannot be solely a matter of private choice but has to fit in the Regulations. There is some room within the Regulations for individuality and imagination in the design of memorials but this is within certain limits which are set to preserve the special nature of Churchyards.

Parish clergy have no power to authorise anything which departs from the Regulations and will in all cases start by seeking to apply them. If the Chancellor is presented with what appear to her to be good reasons for allowing a memorial which is outside the regulations, then she may grant a Faculty (permission). Faculty permission can only be given by the Chancellor, and the local clergy are required to respect the Regulations.

The final authority for deciding which memorials can or cannot be placed in a churchyard lies with the Chancellor and if a family is not content with the decision of the local church or if they wish to have a memorial which is different from those which are permitted by the Regulations they can apply directly to her via the Diocesan Registry:

<https://www.stalbansdiocese.org/directory/diocesan-registry/>

The unique qualities of churchyards:

- *An extension of the church's witness to God and his promise of eternal life through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.* What is put in churchyards therefore needs to be consistent with the spiritual values of the Christian faith.
- *Historical places.* The clergy are stewards of a very long heritage which needs to be preserved and passed on to the next generation.
- *Shared spaces.* Here the differing tastes and traditions of many families need to be kept in harmony with each other, so that discord and conflict can hopefully be avoided.

In short, the Regulations aim to maintain the churchyard as a haven which in appearance and atmosphere ensures that all can find space for peaceful reflection and dignified remembrance of their loved ones. We recommend you read the Churchyard Handbook - Guide for Families on the St Albans Diocesan website at: <https://resource.stalbansdiocese.org/courses-events-resources/churchyard-regulations/> or ask your parish priest for a copy. You can read the Regulations for yourself by visiting the same Registry page at <https://www.stalbansdiocese.org/about-us/diocesan-registry/>

Below you will find an application form for the simple amendment or repair of a memorial. Please read through it carefully and follow the instructions before sending **two copies if on paper** to your local Parish Priest. If you are unsure about any part of it, do contact him or her and they will be happy to help you. The form is also at <https://resource.stalbansdiocese.org/courses-events-resources/churchyard-forms/> if you wish to submit a single copy electronically, but it must be signed and scanned.

Application Under Churchyard Regulations:
PARTICULARS OF THE EXISTING MEMORIAL: The applicant will be a representative of the family (not the funeral director or monumental mason)

Before you apply to amend the memorial, and before permission may be given, you must wait at least six months after the date of the burial, or in relation to cremated remains six months from the date of cremation.

Please PRINT details in the column on the right:

Name and address of churchyard.	
Name and address of applicant. <i>(The result of this application will be sent to the applicant). Please tick if you would prefer the result to be sent to the:</i> Funeral Director <input type="checkbox"/> Monumental Mason <input type="checkbox"/>	
Email address of applicant	
Phone number of applicant	
Name and address of appointed monumental mason. <i>(To reduce the chance of misunderstanding or disappointment you are strongly advised to seek advice from the parish priest of the church where you wish to amend or repair a memorial <u>before</u> you make any arrangements with a monumental mason. The priest will be able to explain what the Chancellor's Regulations do or don't allow).</i>	
Email and phone number of mason	
Plot number of existing plot/memorial, with reference to the churchyard plan <i>(if not known, please contact the local clergy, or provide as much information as possible regarding the location of the memorial)</i>	
Details of those interred in the plot <i>(including full names, dates of birth and death)</i>	

Details of the existing memorial <i>(including details of inscription as existing)</i>	
Who owns the existing memorial (if known)?	
If the amendment is the addition of an inscription to another person interred within the same plot, please provide:	
Full name of deceased	
Date of death of deceased	
Date of burial of deceased	
Are you the next of kin to the deceased?	YES/NO
What is your relationship to the deceased? <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Please tick this box to indicate you have the agreement of the family to act on its behalf</i>	
Are you aware of any objections that may arise from this application? <i>(Please make all reasonable efforts to consult with all known family members of the deceased who may be expected to have an interest in the memorial so you can confirm that no family member has raised an objection to the proposal).</i>	YES/NO (If yes, please give details on a separate sheet)

PARTICULARS OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE MEMORIAL – the right-hand section to be completed by the Funeral Director or Monumental Mason

<p>Proposed change to wording, decoration and layout of inscription</p> <p>Please refer to the guidance notes on page 7 below <i>(Please also see 3.3-3.5 of Churchyard Regulations 2020 before choosing the wording, type of lettering or amendment as inappropriate wording or changes are unlikely to be permitted. If there is insufficient space here, please attach a separate sheet of paper.)</i></p>	
<p>Type of inscription <i>(Incised/Flush Lead/Raised Lead/Relief Carving/Hand cut/Other (please specify))</i></p>	
<p>Size of lettering</p>	
<p>Colour of lettering</p>	
<p>Details of any other changes to the memorial (such as extensions as covered by 3.4 of the Churchyard Regulations 2020)</p>	

A photograph of the existing memorial and a full sketch of the proposed memorial that shows the ground level in relation to every part of the memorial and also particulars of any vase to be incorporated, should be drawn and attached to this form

<p>Name and address of funeral director</p>	
<p>Email address of funeral director</p>	
<p>Phone number of funeral director</p>	

TO BE COMPLETED BY MONUMENTAL MASON

Certificate of Compliance (one copy must be given to customer)

☐ We have read the current edition of the Churchyard Regulations 2020 and explained them to the applicant.

☐ We confirm that the memorial/amendment described in this application will be erected in accordance with the current NAMM (or equivalent body) Code of Working Practice compatible with the Regulations and the British Standard for memorial safety (BS8415).

☐ The memorial will be supplied in strict accordance with the details described on the diocesan Memorial Application form.

☐ We undertake to return the memorial to the plot within 6 months.

Either:

☐ I am aware of the Diocese of St Albans' requirement on the ethical sourcing and processing of stone and I certify that the stone has been ethically sourced and processed.

Or:

☐ I have existing stocks of stone not known to be ethically sourced and understand that I have until 31st December 2022 to use up this existing stock.

Or:

☐ Not applicable

☐ The statutory fee has been paid.

Name of
Customer.....

Name of
Churchyard.....

Name of
deceased.....

Name and address of the
monumental
mason.....
.....
.....

Name..... Signed.....

Date.....

Monumental Mason: ☐ I confirm I have Public Liability Insurance to £10 million.

FOR COMPLETION BY THE APPLICANT

Please ensure each box is ticked

☐ I have read the Guide for Families / I have had explained to me the Churchyard Regulations (*Edition 2020*) * and believe the proposal complies with the Regulations.

** delete whichever does not apply*

☐ I understand that the person receiving this application on behalf of the parish can permit the amendment of the memorial described in this application, into the above-named churchyard, and I apply for permission for it.

☐ If permission is granted I will ensure the memorial will be amended as described in this application. I understand that the Chancellor has a right to order the removal of any memorial which does not conform to this application. I also undertake to indemnify you against all costs and expenses which you may incur in respect of any departure from this undertaking.

☐ I agree at all times to comply with the Regulations and acknowledge the right of the Parochial Church Council to remove all items from the Churchyard that are not permitted by the Regulations.

*Signature of Applicant

Date

***Please Note: this must not be signed by anyone other than the applicant. If the form is not signed it will be returned.**

FOR COMPLETION BY INCUMBENT
(or Priest in Charge, Rural Dean or Archdeacon)

I am authorised under the delegated authority granted to me by the Chancellor of the Diocese of St Albans to permit the amendment of the memorial described above.

Printed Name

Signature Date

I am not authorised/prepared* to grant permission for the amendment to the memorial described above. Permission will have to be sought from the Chancellor of the diocese by way of Petition for a Faculty.

***delete where not applicable**

Printed Name

Signature Date

Note:

The Incumbent, Rural Dean or Archdeacon will sign both forms and return one to the applicant (*or funeral director or mason as appropriate; see page 2 above*) and retain the other.

Definitions:

Archdeacon:	Senior Priest working with the Bishop.
Chancellor:	The Senior Legal Officer for the Bishop of the Diocese of St Albans.
Diocesan Registrar:	Legal Advisor to the Bishop of the Diocese.
Incumbent:	Vicar, Rector or Priest in Charge of a parish.
Rural (or Area) Dean	Presides over a deanery, which is a group of parishes
Diocese:	The Diocese of St Albans covers Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Luton and Barnet, and is under the jurisdiction of the Bishop.
Faculty:	Special legal permission granted by the Chancellor of the Diocese.
NAMM:	National Association of Memorial Masons (or an equivalent body)

Please note:

1. No application should be made for the introduction of a memorial, nor permission granted, until at least six months after the date of the burial or in relation to cremated remains six months from the date of cremation.
2. It is recommended that an order is not placed with or accepted by a stonemason until permission to amend the memorial has been obtained. Inscription wording is to be agreed with the incumbent.
3. The Diocese of St Albans Churchyard Regulations 2020 clearly state the regulations governing the amendment of memorials and additional information can be found in the Guide to Families. Both documents can be downloaded from <https://resource.stalbansdiocese.org/courses-events-resources/churchyard-regulations/>
4. Consent for a memorial cannot be granted outside the scope of conditions set below by the Incumbent even if there are existing memorials in the churchyard that are broadly similar. The Chancellor is not bound by past practice in the churchyard.
5. The Chancellor has power to require the removal of unauthorised memorials.

Guidance notes on inscription and decoration:

1. Full names are to be used. Any name by which the deceased was usually known may be permitted in inverted commas after the Christian name provided that an explanation of the reason for requesting this accompanies this application.
2. Wording must be consistent with Christian belief in life after death and should not simply be an expression of personal loss or sorrow without any indication of an expected reunion in eternal life. You may be asked to alter the wording if it does not meet this requirement. An appropriate quotation from the Bible may be used. It would be wise to discuss this with the parish priest first.
3. You are encouraged to use wording which you believe describes the best in the life or character of the person to be commemorated. Relationship to others (spouse, children and family members buried nearby) can also be set out.
4. The inscription should be incised or may be in relief. Lettering may be picked out in black, gold, silver, grey or white. The use of decorative motifs (which should be uncoloured) requires the permission of the Chancellor by Faculty and will only be approved on a case by case basis if appropriate to the churchyard context and relevant to the commemoration of the deceased.

Our thanks to Chelmsford and Lichfield Dioceses for their assistance in producing this document.