

St Peter's Churchyard – Important Information

When booking an interment, please be aware that memorial plaques must comply with these regulations. An application form must be completed, and your proposed memorial agreed by the Team Rector before it can be placed in the churchyard. To avoid inconvenience and expense, please ensure your stonemason is familiar with the rules before commissioning a memorial stone. Your stonemason will need to complete a form setting out the precise nature of the memorial and the wording to be used before permission can be granted. Please contact the church office or KP Memorials for more information and for the necessary forms.

St Peter's Churchyard is a place of history and remembrance and is special to many people. It is also a conservation area, home to diverse plants and wildlife, and requires our protection. The following regulations help us to achieve this.

- In accordance with Bath and Wells Diocesan regulations, the placing of **artificial flowers, glass containers, kerb stones, loose gravel, ornaments, and electronic items (including solar lighting)** is not permitted in our parish churchyards. If you are unsure whether an item is allowed, please contact the church office.
- Planting is not permitted in the ground around the plaque.
- Floral tributes must be removed once flowers or foliage have died.
- Christmas wreaths should be collected each year by 1 February; after this date they will be disposed of.
- Please keep dogs on a lead when visiting the churchyard and clean up any mess they may leave.
- Burials, monuments and exhumations are regulated by law. The design of memorials is controlled to ensure that churches and churchyards remain places that everyone can appreciate.

For further assistance, please contact the Church Office on **01275 846230**.

Please note that as a closed churchyard, grass cutting is the responsibility of **North Somerset Council**. If you have any issues relating to grass cutting at St Peter's Church, please contact North Somerset Council directly.

Families are responsible for maintaining their own family plots. Church volunteers do their best to keep the churchyard tidy and in good order, but they have limited capacity. If you would like to assist, please contact the Church Office.

Please be aware that items that are broken, windblown or prohibited may be removed without notice.

Churchyard Regulations

1. **Headstones** (including any plinth) shall be no more than 1200mm (4 feet) high above ground, 900mm (3 feet) wide and 180mm (7 inches) thick, and no less than 450mm (1 foot 6 inches) high above ground, 500mm (1 foot 8 inches) wide and 75mm (3 inches) thick. They shall not be erected within 1200mm (4 feet) of the outer wall of the church. The stone should preferably be sunk without any plinth, with one-third of its total length below ground level. Alternatively, the headstone may be securely fixed below turf level to a ground anchorage complying with British Standard 8415 or equivalent.
2. **Crosses** must be between 750mm (2 feet 6 inches) and 1200mm (4 feet) in height above ground.
3. **Horizontal ledgers** (over burials) shall be just below turf level and measure not more than 2100mm (7 feet) x 900mm (3 feet) nor less than 1200mm (4 feet) x 600mm (2 feet).
4. **New memorial plaques** over cremated remains shall be just below turf level and measure not more than 300mm (12 inches) square.
5. **Vases** must be separate, measuring not more than 300mm x 200mm x 200mm (12 x 8 x 8 inches). They must not be sunk into the ground but placed on the grave or plaque. Glass vases and pots are not permitted as they are easily broken and dangerous.
6. **Materials:** Monuments may be of natural wood or natural stone. Stones traditionally used in local buildings, or closely similar in colour and texture, are appropriate.
7. Stone shall **not** be polished or reflective.
8. Black and pearl granite, marble of any colour, synthetic stone and plastic are **not permitted**.
9. A monument shall not include any raised kerb, railings, stone or other chippings, picture or photograph, built-in vase container, statuary or bird bath. All monuments shall be simple in shape. No colour shall be introduced except black, white or gold. No fresh chippings should be added to any existing grave.
10. No advertisement or trademark shall be inscribed on the monument, but the name of the mason may be incised at the side or on the reverse of a headstone in unpainted and unleaded letters no more than 13mm high.
11. Responsibility for the safe installation of any memorial rests with the monumental mason. The purchaser of the memorial, and thereafter the heirs of the deceased, have ongoing liability for its safe maintenance. Inscriptions shall be simple and reverent.

Everything in a churchyard, from the memorial stones to the trees and shrubs, should be a matter for care and consideration. The Diocese of Bath & Wells has set out these guidelines so that churchyards may remain neat and tidy throughout the year.

Obtaining Permission for a Memorial Stone

No stone can be placed in the churchyard without permission, and no stone should be removed for renovation without first informing the church office.

To obtain permission, your stonemason will contact the church office on your behalf to seek approval from the Rector, who will act in accordance with diocesan guidelines.