

St Peter's Churchyard

Guidance for Families and Visitors



St Peter's Churchyard is a place of history, beauty and remembrance, and is special to many people. It is also a designated conservation area, home to a wealth of plants and wildlife. The churchyard is now closed for new burials, although it remains possible to inter cremated remains here. As we steward this limited and treasured space, the guidance below helps us protect it for everyone who visits to remember a loved one, or simply to find a few moments of peace.

Need help or have a question? Call the Church Office on 01275 846230. We're glad to help with memorial applications, permissions, or anything else relating to the churchyard.

Burials

St Peter's Churchyard is set aside for the burial of those who live in the parish or who have very strong local connections.

The Churchyard has been closed to new burials. If a close family member is already buried in the churchyard, it may be possible to make an additional interment in the same grave. Your funeral director will be able to discuss this with our office.

We do still have limited space for the interment of cremated remains. Your funeral director will be able to arrange this with us. Alternatively, please contact the Church Office. Cremated remains are interred with a short service by a member of our ministry team. The plot will then be marked with a memorial stone.

Arranging a Memorial

Before a memorial stone is placed or altered, approval must be given by the Team Rector and must comply with diocesan and local regulations. The process is straightforward:

- Contact the Church Office for an application form.
- Your stonemason completes the form, setting out the exact nature of the memorial and the wording to be used.
- The Church Office passes this to the Team Rector for approval, in line with diocesan guidelines.
- Once approved, your stonemason can prepare and install the memorial.

To avoid inconvenience and expense, please make sure your stonemason is familiar with the regulations below before any work begins. **No stone may be removed for renovation without first informing the Church Office.**

Memorial Stone Specifications

The Diocese of Bath & Wells sets out these guidelines so that our churchyards remain neat, dignified and welcoming throughout the year.

Memorial Type	Maximum Size	Minimum Size	Notes
Memorial plaque (cremated remains)	300mm (12") square	—	Set just below the level of the turf.
Headstone (incl. plinth)	1200mm (4ft) high × 900mm (3ft) wide × 180mm (7") thick	450mm (1ft 6") high × 500mm (1ft 8") wide × 75mm (3") thick	Not within 1200mm (4ft) of the church's outer wall. Sunk so one-third of its length is below ground, or fixed to a ground anchorage meeting BS 8415 (or equivalent stability).
Cross	1200mm (4ft) high	750mm (2ft 6") high	—
Horizontal ledger (over burial)	2100mm × 900mm (7ft × 3ft)	1200mm × 600mm (4ft × 2ft)	Set just below the level of the turf.
Vase	300 × 200 × 200mm (12" × 8" × 8")	—	Separate, standing on the grave or plaque (not sunk into the ground). Glass is not permitted — it breaks easily and will be removed.

Materials & Style

- Monuments may be of natural wood or natural stone, matching (or closely similar to) the stone traditionally used in local buildings, in both colour and texture.
- Stone must not be polished or reflective.
- Black or pearl granite, marble of any colour, synthetic stone, and plastic are not permitted.
- Monuments must be simple in shape, with no raised kerbs, railings, loose stone or chippings, pictures or photographs, built-in vase containers, statuary, or bird baths.
- Colour is limited to black, white, or gold. No fresh chippings should be added to an existing grave.

Inscriptions

- No advertisement or trademark may be inscribed on the monument.
- A mason's name may appear in unpainted, unleaded lettering no more than 13mm high, on the side or reverse of the headstone only.
- Inscriptions should be simple and reverent.

Responsibility & Maintenance

The monumental mason is responsible for the safe installation of any memorial. The person who purchased it — and, after their death, their heirs — carries an ongoing responsibility for its safe upkeep.

General Churchyard Rules

These rules help us protect the churchyard's beauty and its wildlife for everyone:

- Artificial flowers, glass containers, kerb stones, loose gravel, and ornaments are not permitted, in accordance with Bath and Wells Diocesan regulations. If you're unsure whether an item is allowed, please ask the Church Office.
- No electrical ornaments (for example, solar-powered lights) are permitted.
- Planting in the ground around a plaque is not permitted.
- Floral tributes must be removed once the flowers or foliage have died.
- Christmas wreaths should be collected by 1st February each year; after this date, they will be disposed of.
- Please keep dogs on a lead, and clean up after them.
- Items that are broken, windblown, or prohibited may be removed without notice.

Burials, monuments and exhumations are regulated by law. The design of memorials is controlled so that our churches and churchyards remain places everyone can appreciate.

Caring for the Churchyard Together

As a closed churchyard, grass-cutting is the responsibility of North Somerset Council. If you have concerns about grass-cutting at St Peter's, please contact the Council directly.

Families are responsible for maintaining their own family plots. Our church volunteers do their best to keep the wider churchyard tidy, though their capacity is limited — ***if you'd like to help, we'd love to hear from you***, so please contact the Church Office.

Contact Us

- **Church Office:** 01275 846230 — memorial applications, permissions, and general churchyard queries.
- **North Somerset Council** — grass-cutting at St Peter's (closed churchyard).

Thank you for helping us care for this peaceful and sacred place, for all who come to remember.