

# A Guide to Materials, Finishes and Design for Memorials

## General Regulations for the Erection of Memorials and Gravestones in Churchyards (1990)

### Materials

- a) Materials must harmonise with the natural local landscape and local stones are preferred.
- b) The following materials will generally be permitted:
- Natural stone: limestones, sandstones, Stancliffe or Darley Dale stone, grey granite and slate.
  - Woods: teak and oak.
- c) The following materials are **not permitted**:
- Black, blue or red granites
  - Any marble, synthetic stone, plastic materials, metal or terracotta

### Finishes

Polishing shall not be greater than that required to give a good, smooth finish and must be confined to the face of the gravestone on which the inscription is to be cut.

Mirror polishing and colouring is not permitted, neither are all granites which have had all their surfaces polished.

### Dimensions

- Headstones (including base):  
No larger than 48" high, 36" wide and 6" thick (120 x 90 x 15cms); no less than 30" high, 20" wide and 3" thick (75 x 50 x 7.5 cms), but in the case of slate 1 ½" thick.
- Horizontal slabs:  
No larger than 84" x 35" (210 x 90 cms) including base flush with the ground extending not more than 5" (13 cms) round the stone.
- Vases:  
should not be more than 12" (30 cms) high, firmly sunk into the ground and not left freestanding on the grave.

### Design

- a) Headstones may be placed on a base of the same material and fixed so that the base:
- does not project above the ground more than the thickness of the gravestone
  - does not project more than 4" (10 cms) beyond the headstone
  - a receptacle for flowers may be incorporated in the base, in which case it should be flush with the top of the base and might extend up to 8" (20 cms) in front of the headstone.
- b) Carving may be allowed, but the design must be submitted with the application form. Colouring is not permitted.
- c) The following are **not permitted**:
- Curbs, railings, plain or coloured chippings, containers of any kind, freestanding vases or glass which are particularly dangerous, figure statuary, open books, birdbaths, pictorial etchings, memorials in the shape of a heart, cameos, portraiture or photographs.

## Inscriptions

### a) Details:

The Christian name and surname of the deceased should be given, with age and date (or year) of death, or the years of birth and death.

### b) Epitaphs:

The object of epitaphs is “to identify the resting place of the deceased, to honour the dead, to comfort the living and to inform posterity”. They should, therefore, be simple and relevant. Nicknames are not considered suitable and if a scripture text is used it is unnecessary to give the reference. Quotations may be taken not only from the Bible; the prayer book, hymns, poetry and prose are all suitable sources so long as the quotation is consistent with Christian belief.

### c) Lettering:

May be painted a shade lighter or darker than the natural colour of the stone. On some sandstones and granites, raised lettering standing out from the cutaway stone can be effective. Gilded, silvered and leaded lettering; trademarks and advertisements are **not permitted**.

d) The mason’s name may be inscribed at the side or on the reverse of the headstone in unpainted and unleaded letters not larger than ½” (15 mm) in height. There should be no other inscriptions on the reverse or sides.

## Cremated Remains area

A properly bedded tablet of stone, rectangular or square in shape, laid flush with the ground is permitted. The size should not exceed 21” x 21” (53 x 53 cm).

## Later Additions to the Memorial

These may be made to an inscription following a subsequent interment in the same grave, but approval is required, as above, and the wording must be consistent with the original inscription.

## Memorials without Permission

If a memorial or gravestone is erected without permission or does not conform to the details of the application form or faculty, the Minister will refer the matter to the Archdeacon. The Minister may apply to the Chancellor for a faculty to remove the memorial or gravestone. A hearing in court before the Chancellor is likely. Even if the Chancellor decides not to authorise the removal of the unauthorised memorial or gravestone in all the circumstances, the Chancellor may still order those responsible to pay the costs.

## Appeal Process

If you wish to appeal an application which has been refused because it does not comply to the regulations you may seek permission only by seeking a Faculty (a certificate of legal permission) from the Chancellor, for which a fee is chargeable.

Please note that the faculty is not automatic and the Chancellor will require good reasons to be shown for departing from the Regulations. In some cases a hearing will be required, for which an additional fee will be payable.

The application form for a faculty can be obtained from:

The Diocesan Registrar, Derby Church House, Full Street, Derby DE1 3DR