

# St Peter's Church, Hartshorne



## **A brief guide and explanation for the process and erection of memorials and gravestones, and care of the Churchyard.**

At this sad time of the loss of one dear to you, we extend our sympathy to you. It is only natural that in the pain of your bereavement you are already thinking about how best you may commemorate the life of your loved one. The arrangements for the funeral service and burial or cremation, unwanted though they may be, have to be faced almost immediately and you will be anxious to do things correctly.

These guidelines are given to you now, to explain the regulations and process for erecting a gravestone or memorial. We hope they will be helpful to you.

### **Churchyards**

Our churchyards are a valuable possession and a great responsibility. They can easily be spoiled by unsuitable gravestones and memorials. The Chancellor of the Diocese of Derby (the Bishop's chief legal administrator) has therefore made regulations which are designed to assist all those who are concerned with the erection of memorials and gravestones to ensure that they are appropriate and will harmonise with the natural local landscape. Compliance with the Regulations will enable the formalities to be completed without difficulty.

### **Right of burial & interment of ashes**

Only parishioners, including those on the Church Electoral Roll, or dying in the parish, have a right to burial or interment of ashes in the churchyard, if there is room. Nobody else has that right, although in very exceptional circumstances permission may be granted for the burial of those otherwise excluded.

A right to be buried in a churchyard does NOT however include the right to erect a memorial or gravestone to the deceased.

### **Cremated Remains**

Ashes may be interred in an existing grave if all parties agree and there is room. Please note that the existing Memorial Garden is now full and a new area has been set aside for interred ashes.

In order to blend in harmoniously with the grassed area and for ease of upkeep, only flat stone tablets are permitted in this new 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). One or two holes may be cut into this tablet to hold a



shallow flower receptacle which is flush with the surface. No other flower containers are allowed in this new memorial area. No additional objects to be placed on or around the stone tablets. Wooden marker crosses should only be used temporary measure until the tablet of stone is in place.

### **Gravestones and Memorials**

Permission is always required in relation to the material, the design (including size) and the wording of the inscription. You should not allow the stonemason to commence any work on the stone until your application has been approved by the Minister or the Chancellor.

### **How to obtain permission**

If you want to erect a memorial or gravestone it is necessary to complete an official application form, which must be submitted to the Minister for approval. Monumental Masons hold these forms and the usual procedure is to consult them for advice and assistance. They will complete and submit the application on your behalf. A fee is payable and must be submitted with the application.

### **Regulations**

Full copies of the Regulations are on display in the churchyard. Monumental Masons also have full copies of the Regulations. If the application for a memorial or gravestone conforms to these Regulations, written permission will be given by the Minister. If the application does not comply, you will be informed.

### **Up-keep and maintenance of the Memorial**

A memorial or gravestone remains the property of the "heirs at law" who are therefore responsible for maintaining such monuments. Those who are granted the right to erect a memorial or gravestone are expected to take reasonable steps to keep it clean and tidy.

### **Care of the Grave area**

St Peter's Church tries to take good care of the Churchyard: the grass is regularly cut, the trees trimmed and the whole area is looked after – with your help. We have a duty of care to all those who work in the churchyard, either paid or voluntary, as well as to our visitors

Please do make sure that you keep all flower and plant containers within the area of the headstone so that the grass can be cut easily without any danger of harm to the gardener or of damage to the containers. Please do **not** put plants or bulbs into the area as these make cutting difficult and therefore damage all the churchyard.

We know that loose tributes may be blown by the wind but please do not stake them into the ground as when the tribute is later removed the stake can easily be left and when the area is mown can easily be flicked into the air and seriously hurt the gardener.

We know that many people who visit and leave tributes do not live locally. For that reason, we try to remove flowers that are well past their best and seasonal tributes at the end of that season. If you visit frequently, please do make sure that yours are removed to the bin area, which is next to the south wall of the Church.

**THANK YOU for helping to make the Churchyard a place that all may visit and look after in safety**

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