

- Water is available at one standing pipe at the bottom of the churchyard.

- It really helps us if you can take all your rubbish away with you when you leave. Thank you.

Except for the periods of Advent and Lent, there are always flowers in Church. Diane Whittaker is our flower co-ordinator and she would be happy to talk to you if you would like your loved one commemorated that way (perhaps on the anniversary of their death).

There is a working party of people who meet the last Saturday of every month at 9.30am who keep the churchyard tidy, and they would be glad of your support. David Brierley (churchwarden) is the contact. Being an open churchyard we receive no financial or practical help from the Diocese or City Council to maintain or improve the churchyard.

If you have any queries about the information in this leaflet, or wish to arrange an interment, please contact **Caroline Audley** (Church Administrator) on steds.stmatts@outlook.com or 01332 552031.

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The Parish of
St Matthew,
Darley Abbey



Burials and Interment of Ashes in the Churchyard

Introduction

There has been a church on this site for over 200 years and many people are buried within the grounds.

The Churchyard at St Matthew's is open for burials and for the interment of ashes. We are only permitted to allow memorial plaques for people whose remains are in the churchyard. The deceased must have had a link with the village, that they lived or worshipped here. There are statutory fees for burials and for memorials, so please ask for that information.

We are happy to talk to anyone or their family about what they would like, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or we can be of any help.

On the Day of the Funeral

If the body is being buried in the churchyard, it is usual that the Funeral Service takes place in church and then we go out to the churchyard for the burial. It may be that a grave is re-opened, or a new plot is started. If it is a new plot, it will simply be the next space, specific plots cannot be reserved. Graves can be dug 'double-depth' if there is a spouse who will be buried there in the future.

If a body is to be cremated, committal takes place at the Crematorium - sometimes after a service there, or after a service in Church (and please do feel welcome to use your parish church even if the deceased was not a regular church attender). Usually the Funeral Directors will collect the ashes



and prose are all suitable sources so long as the quotation is consistent with Christian belief.

7. Memorial Permission

Once you have decided on your memorial, in consultation with the funeral director or stone mason, they will write to the church for authorisation. Alterations may be requested before the memorial can be produced and erected. Any memorials placed without permission will be removed.

Flowers and Maintenance of Graves

We have to get the right balance between allowing people to remember, and keeping a tidy churchyard which we can maintain. On graves themselves there is more space, but the area has to be maintained and the grass cut - a job which cannot be done to a good standard if lots of pots have to be moved first.

Our Churchyard is open all day every day for whenever you would like to visit, but we would ask that you follow these simple guidelines:

- Please do not add anything freestanding to your area - particularly lights, windmills, toys, photographs, lanterns, edging, gravel, plant pots or vases (also see earlier list).
- If you want to sow new grass seed or cut the grass around your loved ones grave, that would be appreciated.
- You are also welcome to bring fresh flowers, preferably out of polythene and set safely into a sunken vase.
- Please avoid long-term planting, as further permission is required, plus trees and shrubs can cause particular problems when roots go deep.

4. Design

A receptacle for flowers may be incorporated in the headstone base or plaque and should be flush with the top of the stone. If you are planning to regularly place flowers this is a helpful option, since freestanding vases are considered to be a safety hazard and will be removed.

The following items are not permitted: kerbs, railings, plain or coloured chippings, containers of any kind (NB free-standing vases or glass in particular are dangerous), figure statuary, open books, birdbaths, pictorial etchings, memorials in the shape of a heart, cameos, portraiture, photographs, black, blue or red granites, marble, synthetic stone, plastic or terracotta.

A stone cross requires more specialised permission from the Diocese.

5. Inscriptions

These should be kept clear, simple and relevant. Lettering may be painted a shade lighter or darker than the natural colour of the stone. Gilded, silvered and leaded lettering, trademarks or advertisements are not permitted. This is because the gilding fades and chips over time - particularly due to standing rainwater - leaving an inferior looking finish. Remember to leave space for a later inscription if you are anticipating a future interment. If you are adding that later inscription, it will need to be consistent with the existing style in wording and lettering.

6. Wording of the Epitaph

Please include the Christian name, surname along with age and date (or year) of death, or the years of birth and death. The object of the epitaph 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. Nick-names are not considered suitable and if 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

for you, store them carefully, and then deliver them to the Office prior to interment. On some occasions the family wish to keep them. They are accompanied by a Certificate confirming they are the ashes of your loved one. Occasionally the ashes will go into a family grave, but usually they go into the Garden of Rest on the south west side of the church.

The Interment of Ashes in the Garden of Rest

The Garden of Rest was opened in 1954 and is an open grassed area to the side of the main church path, surrounded on two sides by beech hedges.

Until now we have allowed people to reserve a place, however we have discovered that this is against churchyard regulations so while we will honour existing reservations we will not be taking any more as from 29th January 2024.

We request that you please visit the churchyard to see the memorial tablets in our Garden of Rest so that you are fully aware of how it will look. This is to ensure the memorials are all in keeping.

The earliest interment of ashes could take place is 48 hours after Cremation, but many families prefer to wait longer. The date of the Interment must be arranged with the Office, and we obviously need sufficient notice to ensure we are free. If you have another family member already buried here, the ashes can be buried in their grave. We bury ashes, either in a cardboard or wooden box, or by pouring them loose into the hole, but the Church of England does not allow the scattering of ashes.



Some families like to come to a normal Sunday morning service and then go out together to the Churchyard; others prefer to meet with just their family and friends, sometimes on a Saturday; others prefer not to be

present. A hole will have been dug before you arrive and the ashes will be poured in at a point during the short service - it lasts about 10 minutes. After we leave, the hole will be filled in and turf replaced.

The hole is dug under one of the quadrants of the marker tablet, and later the initials of the deceased and year of death are then inscribed on the tablet.

We also have a Book of Remembrance which is filled in with the name and dates of the deceased, and is available to view on request.

Flowers and Maintenance within The Garden of Rest

We have to get the right balance between allowing people to remember, and keeping a tidy churchyard which we can maintain. With ashes burials, since we have four burials by each stone, there is a need for everyone to respect other people's space. The rule is, please, just one plant pot per space. The pot should be of no more than 7 inches in diameter, and it is not fair if flowers or other plants are larger than that. Cut flowers can be placed across the tablet and there is an option to buy a flower vase cube from a stonemason that can be engraved and placed on the flagstone area near the yew trees.

Memorials for Ashes on Existing Graves

In the event there is no space on the existing gravestone, a flat slab, laid just below the ground is the only marker permitted for cremated remains. Open books, sloping plaques and headstones cannot be selected, even though there are others in the churchyard. Most stones in the churchyard are 18" x 12" and 2" deep. These are a world heritage feature.

Gravestones

It is wise to wait almost a year for the ground to settle before asking for permission to install a gravestone. The stonemason will provide a

simple wooden cross with the deceased's name to act as a marker. This also allows time for you to decide what wording you want. However, while you may have permission to have a burial in the churchyard, the plot does not actually belong to you. The churchyard belongs to the Diocese of Derby, therefore Diocesan regulations must be adhered to when choosing a memorial to mark your interment. This is to ensure the churchyard is in keeping with its Christian history and that it is safe.

1. Headstones

These have clear restrictions as detailed below. The stonemason will know the regulations for what is permitted as well as the fixing. Be aware that should the headstone become loose in the future (maybe due to the settling of the ground), you will need to have it re-fixed. If there are any headstones which pose a hazard (ie wobbly, damaged or unsafe) we reserve the right to place them flat to the ground and will only move them if absolutely necessary. If you find your stone laid flat and you wish to have it re-erected, you will need to do this at your own expense. Dimensions (inc 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 7.5cms) but in the case of slate 1" thick.

2. Type of Material

You may have your memorial made in any of the following:
Natural stone: limestones (inc Nabresina, Boticino and certain suitable Portuguese stones), sandstones, Stanicliffe or Darley Dale stone, grey granite (no darker than Rustenburg grey) and slate. Woods: teak and oak are permitted but would not be in keeping with the churchyard and would need special permission.

3. Finish

A smooth finish of the stone is permitted but only on the inscription face. Mirror polishing is not permitted.