

**The Benefice of Inkberrow with Cookhill
and Kington with Dormston**



A POLICY FOR THE CARE AND UPKEEP OF GRAVES AND MEMORIALS

Agreed Policy

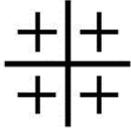
The Benefice seeks to provide the churchyards as a place of precious memories, prayer and peace. In order to ensure that the graveyard and cremated remains sections are kept tidy and beautiful for everyone, we are providing these requirements for all those who tend and visit graves.

Families are reminded that there are no rights of ownership with the reservation of any plot.

If you have any concerns, or need help or advice on any of these matters, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the vicar or their representative in times of interregnum.

General Rules for all Graves

1. The Church asks families and friends of the deceased to keep their graves tidy and well-tended, as far as they are able.
2. Floral tributes and wreaths should be removed as soon as the flowers have died. Christmas wreaths should be removed in any event by the end of January.
3. The Church will consider requests to allow appropriate items of remembrance, symbols or artefacts to be placed on the grave and can only remain for up to the first 12 months after the death of the deceased or until a permanent memorial is erected (whichever is the sooner). In such cases, permission should first be sought from the vicar or churchwardens. After 12 months, only floral tributes will be allowed.
4. Families must not introduce any chippings, fencing or edging as these cause serious health and safety issues. The Church Council may remove any such items without warning.
5. Plastic flowers are not permitted – please do not leave them in the churchyard. *Environmentally friendly displays may be used.*
6. Please ensure that all non-recyclable packaging and oasis from arrangements etc is taken home. However, dead flowers may be placed in the brown compost bin situated within the churchyard.
Please do NOT place plastic, glass or wreaths containing metal or plastic on the compost heaps or compost bins.



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Burial Plots (full-sized graves)

1. It is not permitted to plant anything in or around the plot or anywhere in the graveyard without permission from the vicar and/or the Parochial Church Council.
2. It is the responsibility of the relatives of the deceased to make sure that the grave surface is kept level.

Garden of Remembrance Plots for Cremated Remains

A maximum of one environmentally friendly display and NO LARGER than the memorial plaque boundary is allowed on the plot at any one time. At times, for maintenance purposes, these displays will be removed to the shelves along the graveyard North Wall. They can then be repositioned to the appropriate plot by relatives or friends of the deceased at their convenience.

Garden of Remembrance for Cremated Remains without Memorial

1. No permanent memorials to be left in this area.
2. A permanent memorial can be recorded by way of application for entry into a Book of Remembrance.

Diocese of Worcester - Rules for the Introduction of Churchyard Memorials

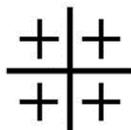
Memorials

All four of our churches have churchyards which are 'open' - that is, there is space in each for burials and cremated remains,

The introduction of memorials, to mark places of burial, are subject to Rules set by the Chancellor of the Diocese of Worcester (see below). These rules seek to ensure that churchyards are both reverent and beautiful, and are kept wisely for future generations; and, that memorial stones match their surroundings and can gradually weather with the passing of time.

Reservation of a grave space

It is often possible to arrange for the reservation of a grave-space, although, if the applicant resides outside the Parish, they must show a relevant connection with the church or churchyard concerned, and the Parochial Church Council must agree to



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support their application. This is because there is limited space in the churchyard, and priority must be given to residents of the Parish.

Reservation is arranged through a legal process which involves fees. Anyone requiring information about this should, in the first instance, contact the Vicar of the Parish or a representative. The form of Petition can be obtained from the Diocesan Registrar, SME Solicitors, 8 Sansome Walk, Worcester WR1 1LW (01905 723561) (stuart.ness@smesolicitors.co.uk).

Standards for memorials

1. Dimensions of Headstones

a) Headstones should be no larger than 4 ft (1200 mm) high measured from the surface of the ground, 3 ft (900mm) wide and 6 ins (150mm) thick. They should be no less than 1 ft 8 ins. (500mm) high, 1 ft 8 ins. (500mm) wide, and no less than 3 ins. (75mm) thick, except in the case of slate materials, which may be thinner but no less than 1 ½ ins. (38mm) thick.

b) Horizontal slab stones not exceeding 2 ft (600mm) wide and 6 ft (1800mm) length, sunk so that the surface of the whole is level and flush with the surrounding earth.

c) Simple crosses not exceeding 3 ft (900mm) in height.

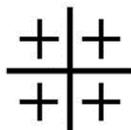
2. Base and Foundation Slab

A headstone may stand on a stone base, provided that it is an integral part of the design and does not project more than 4 ins. (102mm) beyond the headstone in any direction, except where a receptacle for flowers is incorporated. The vase must be flush with the top of the base, which may then extend up to 8 ins. (200mm) in front of the headstone. The base must be fixed on a foundation slab set flush with the ground and extending from 3 ins. (75mm) to 6 ins. (150 mm) all round so that a mower may pass freely over it. The base of a memorial may be so shaped that it can be inserted directly into the ground at sufficient depth to ensure stability.

3. Materials

a) All memorials must be made of natural stone with no reflecting finish, or of hardwood. Stones traditionally used in local buildings, or stones closely similar to them in colour and texture, are to be preferred. Black, green, blue or red granite are not permitted under these terms and conditions, nor granite darker than Rustenberg grey, no black nor white marble, synthetic stone or plastic.

b) An Incumbent or Priest in Charge may propose to the Diocesan Advisory Committee that stones of other types and colours should be permitted in a particular churchyard



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and, when the proposal has been considered by the D.A.C. he may seek the authority of the Chancellor to introduce such stones into the churchyard. If the Chancellor authorises the introduction of such stones, he will specify the further types and colours which may be used.

4. Designs

Headstones need not be restricted to a rectangular shape, and curved tops are preferable to straight-edged tops. Memorials in the shape of a heart or a book are not permitted, nor are photographs, portraits, kerbs, railings, chains, chippings or glass shades.

5. Sculpture

Figure sculpture and other statuary can only be authorised by faculty.

6. Epitaphs

Inscriptions must be simple and reverent, and may include appropriate quotations from literary sources. Inscriptions should be incised, or in relief, and may then be painted. Plastic lettering is not permitted.

7. Trademarks

No advertisement or trademark should be inscribed on a headstone. The mason's name may be inscribed at the side in unlead letters, no larger than ½ in (13mm) in height.

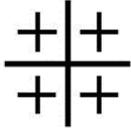
8. Flowers and Vases

Except where the design of a headstone includes an integral receptacle, any flowers must be placed in a removable container sunk completely into the ground. Small stone vases not exceeding 12 ins. (300mm) x 8 ins. (200mm) x 8 ins. (200mm) may be permitted- Consent for these must be obtained and the appropriate fee paid- The use of plastic and other artificial flowers is not permitted.

9. The Parochial Church Council may level any grave mound at its discretion at any time more than twelve months after the latest interment in the grave.

10. Prior to any headstone being erected, the person responsible for installing that stone shall make the grave free of any dip or mound.

11. Commemoration after cremation and burial of ashes: The Parochial Church Council (PCC) encourages the use of a Book of Remembrance (available at St Peter's, Inkberrow and St Paul's, Cookhill). However, individual memorial stones are allowed; they should be of standard material, size and design. Such memorial tablets may be



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erected vertically or horizontally, and must not exceed 21 ins. (520mm) x 21 ins. (520mm). The total surface of a horizontal stone must be level and flush with the ground.

The PCCs of Inkberrow, Cookhill, Kington and Dormston, have each agreed to a policy to reflect each parish's concern for the environment:

All four parishes have passed resolutions implementing a no plastic policy in each of their churchyards. This applies below or above ground level and includes but is not exclusive to, plant pots, plastic flowers, vases and other items placed upon graves and or memorial tablets

The Benefice Council meeting on 1st December 2019 agreed to implement these resolutions benefice wide and to continue moving forwards.