



DIOCESE OF YORK

CHURCHYARD REGULATIONS

Churchyards form part of our history. They matter to many people, especially those whose loved ones' remains rest there, but they are also important to parishioners, historians, ecologists, visitors and others. They are consecrated ground, set aside for burials, and places for quiet contemplation and remembrance.

To help protect their special character, the Diocesan **Churchyard General Regulations** and **Churchyard Memorial Regulations** together set out what is allowed in our churchyards and what memorials should look like. (See the '[Churchyards](#)' page of the Diocese of York website, or request copies from the Church Buildings Team (dac@yorkdiocese.org or 01904 699500).

PLACING ITEMS ON GRAVES

Families and friends may wish to visit graves and leave behind floral or other tributes to their loved ones. In order to keep our churchyards looking at their best for all visitors, some items are not permitted.

Items which **MAY** be placed on a grave include:

- Cut flowers – these must be removed as soon as they start to wither
- Removable flower container (not glass) recessed completely into the ground
- Silk flowers – these must be removed when they become faded, dirty, dishevelled or discoloured
- Spring bulbs - these may be placed in the soil of the grave
- Easter and Christmas wreaths and Remembrance Day poppies – these should be removed after a period of not more than 2 months

Items which **MAY NOT** be placed on a grave include:

- Trees, shrubs, planted annual or perennial flowers
- Separate free-standing flower vases or containers
- Artificial flowers (other than silk flowers as above)
- Angel or dove statuettes, garden ornaments, bird baths, solar lights or decorations
- Pictures, textiles or clothes, personal belongings or memorabilia, toys or teddy bears
- Food or drink

If any such items are placed upon a grave then they will be removed.

CLEANING

Cleaning of memorials should only be carried out to allow further conservation work or if the soiling is causing damage to the fabric of the memorial. The aim is not to make the memorial look new but to carefully remove harmful deposits or staining. The mildest and least damaging methods should be deployed to conserve the memorial and protect the many species (lichens, insects) that make a churchyard their home.

For further assistance please contact:
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