

FAQ re the St. Nicholas churchyard.

I have some ashes that I would like to be buried in the churchyard what are the choices?

They can go in the Garden of Remembrance which is a grassed area with a low box hedge. In that case the only memorial is in the Book of Remembrance that is in the church.

Alternatively there are ashes plots available to the north of the church where a ledger (a horizontal stone) should be arranged through a stone mason. They measure 12" x 18" (portrait)



Can I buy a burial plot?

This is a common misconception as the church owns all of the churchyard and so cannot sell burial plots, nor are any ownership rights conferred to relatives by burials or memorials. There is only a right for local people to be buried in the churchyard. Any fees paid for burial go towards the upkeep of the churchyard.

Can I choose where the body or ashes are buried in the churchyard?

It is the church's choice where, but there is some flexibility.

Can I have my ashes scattered in the churchyard?

The Church of England treats bodies and ashes in the same way and so ashes are buried.

What happens when ashes are buried?

There is a short service during which the ashes are placed in a pre-dug hole. This service includes a Bible reading, prayers and the committal of the ashes. It can include a poem or other items at the minister's discretion.

What container can the ashes be in?

The Church of England prefers ashes to be poured into the ground, but a biodegradable container is allowed, except in the Garden of Remembrance where they must be poured.

What can I plant or put on a grave?

There are limits to what is allowed so please see the Churchyard Rules that are on the church website (Harnish.org.uk). In general no objects should be placed, all plant containers should be buried and no hard or soft borders are allowed. The objective is to allow easy mowing and strimming of the whole Churchyard. There is no requirement to plant anything and it can be levelled after six months and left as grass.

Can I donate a tree or bench in memory of someone?

Anything of this sort has limited possibilities and needs a request submitted to the PCC for approval of style, material and location. Trees are very unlikely to be approved.

What memorials (headstones etc.) are permitted?

We recommend looking at the Churchyard Rules on the church website (Harnish.org.uk) and talking to a Stonemason. There are legal limits set out in the Diocese Churchyard Regulations which can be found on the Bristol Diocese website (www.bristol.anglican.org), but for easy use we have incorporated these into the Churchyard Rules. Please note that this includes any item with engraving on it.

How does a memorial get approved and when is it put on the grave?

A memorial requires an application normally done by the stonemason with a fee to the church and then it needs to be approved by the Priest in Charge (Vicar). Ashes memorials can be put into position anytime after the burial but body burial memorials are only put into position by the Stonemason after six months when the ground has settled.

Can I reserve a plot for my future burial?

Sorry this is no longer possible.

It should be noted that this document is for information only and the Churchyard Regulations and the Churchyard Rules are the binding documents.