

Flowers and maintenance

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. We prefer you to use the hard standing area under the tree. 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. 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. We do not allow garden or other ornaments, separate engraved flower stands, artificial flowers (with the exception of Remembrance poppies or Christmas wreaths (as long as they are removed after a few weeks)), nor written tributes and other memories. We are aware that not everyone follows these rules, but we would be very grateful if you would do so. We will keep the plots tidy (removing dead flowers), and reserve the right to move anything unsuitable.

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 keep the churchyard tidy, and they would be glad of your support. David Brierley (churchwarden) is the contact. We receive little financial or practical help from outside the congregation. There are statutory fees for burials and for memorials, so please ask for that information.

Please talk to us

If you have any queries about the information in this leaflet, or wish to arrange an interment, please phone **The Reverend Peter Barham** on 01332 551404

PB 111218



The Parish of
St Matthew
Darley Abbey



Burials and Interment of Ashes in the Churchyard

Introduction

The Churchyard at St Matthew's is open for burials and for the interment of ashes. The deceased must have had a link with the village, that they lived or worshipped here. We do offer the opportunity to request burial here before you die, and can provide a simple form. Peter the Vicar is happy to come and talk to anyone or their family about what they would like and, while it is usually the Funerals Directors who make the arrangements after death, please do not hesitate to contact him 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 if 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 for you, store them carefully, and then deliver them to the Vicar 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 Memorial Garden on the north west side of the church.



The Interment of Ashes

The earliest interment of ashes could take place is 48 hours after Cremation, but many families prefer to wait longer - until friends and relations can gather again, or sometimes in the hope of better weather. The date of the Interment must be arranged with the Vicar, 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 we do 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 by one of the quadrants of a stone, and later the initials of the deceased and year of death are then placed on the stone tablet. You can reserve the next quadrant for a next of kin if you so wish.



Gravestones

It is wise to wait almost a year for the ground to settle before asking for permission to install a gravestone. This also allows time for you to decide what wording you want. There are rules and regulations set by the Chancellor of the Diocese which you can find at <https://stmatthewschurcharleyabbey.wordpress.com/funerals/>. Many of the older memorials in our churchyard (including the angel on the front cover) would not be given permission these days, and we do not allow kerbstones (as they impede mowing the grass). You must work with the funeral director, approved stone mason, or the church, and written agreement must be obtained (and the appropriate fees paid). As a rule of thumb, the gravestone must fit in with those around.