Diocese of Worcester

CHURCH OF ST MARY, KINGSWINFORD

GUIDELINES FOR THE ERECTION OF MEMORIALS IN THE CHURCHYARD

1. The Minister may approve the introduction into the Churchyard of any memorial, provided that:

   (1) an application has been made and the relevant fee paid.

   (2) at least six months have passed since the most recent of the deaths being commemorated;

   (3) the form of the memorial is:

      (a) a vertical headstone,

      (b) a vertical headstone on a horizontal stone base,

      (c) a horizontal stone slab,

      (d) a small raised tablet, or

      (d) a simple timber cross;

   (4) the memorial is adequately secured in the ground so as to ensure that it is stable;

   (5) in the case of a stone memorial, it is

      (a) of natural stone (either sandstone, limestone, granite, or slate), and

      (b) polished stone, in line with local tradition

   (6) in the case of a memorial consisting of a vertical headstone, with or without a horizontal stone base,

      (a) the maximum height of the vertical stone above ground level is between 500 mm (1 ft 8 in) and 1200 mm (4 ft);

      (b) its width is between 500 mm (1 ft 8 in) and 900 mm (3 ft);

      (c) its thickness is, in the case of a slate memorial, between 40 mm (1½ in) and 150 mm (6 in) or, in any other case, between 75 mm (3 in) and 150 mm (6 in);

      (d) any foundation slab is located so that its upper surface is either flush with the surrounding ground level or at least 300 mm (12 in) beneath it;

   (7) in the case of a memorial consisting of a vertical headstone on a horizontal slab,

      (a) the base is an integral part of the design,

      (b) where it incorporates a receptacle for a flower vase, the base does not project more than 200 mm (8 in) beyond the face of the vertical stone; and

      (c) in any other case, it does not project more than 100 mm (4 in);

(8) in the case of a memorial consisting of a horizontal slab,

(a) where it commemorates the interment of a coffin, it is no more than 600 mm (2 ft) wide and 1800 mm (6 ft) long, and

(b) where it commemorates cremated remains, it is no more than 525 mm (21 in) wide and 525 mm (21 in) long, and

(c) in either case, its upper surface is flush with the surrounding ground;

(9) the inscription on the memorial contains at least

(a) the name of the deceased,

(b) the date of his or her death, and

(c) the date of birth or the age at death,

and any factual material in the inscription is accurate; and

(10) the memorial contains no advertisement or trademark other than the name or mark of the mason which, if included, shall be at the base of the side or rear face of the stone and no more than 13 mm (½ in) high.

2. Any other memorial may only be introduced into a churchyard with the authority of a faculty.

3. The Minister will not approve a proposed memorial, notwithstanding compliance with paragraph 1 above, if he or she considers that it is:

(1) likely to be controversial for any reason;

(2) in any way inappropriate,

and in considering what is appropriate the Minister will have special regard to the documents entitled *Churchyard Memorials: a Guide for the Bereaved* and *The Care of Churchyards: a Guide for Parishes*, issued on 1st January 2004, and any documents superseding them.

4. If any memorial is introduced into the churchyard without the written authority of the Minister, he / she will require the ground to be restored to its previous state by the person who introduced it, at the cost of that person.

5. In the absence of a Minister, the functions of the Minister under these Guidelines will be performed by the Area Dean.

6. Where a question about a memorial arises which is not covered by this policy the Diocesan Memorial Guidelines will be used.

Last reviewed by St Mary's Church DCC on 10 September 2025 and Kingswinford St Mary PCC on 24 September 2025.