



Planning a Garden of Remembrance

DAC Guidance Note

The Churchyard Regulations 2014 are available on the Diocesan website and should be referred to when planning a Garden of Remembrance

Introduction

Cremated remains may only be buried in a part of the churchyard set aside for the burial of ashes or in an existing grave with the consent of the parish priest. To set up a Garden of Remembrance, a Faculty is needed. Please contact the DAC Office (contact details below) at an early stage in the development of your proposals. A site visit can be arranged to offer you help and guidance, and facilitate discussion.

Purpose

Even before starting to make any plans, it's a good idea to get the PCC to think about the context of your Garden of Remembrance and list the various purposes that it should fulfil. For example it is likely that it should fulfil one or more of the following - a place of burial, a pleasant garden, a place for relatives and friends to come, and/or a place for reflecting the Christian message.

Your PCC members will also have their own experience and views, which should be discussed together with the incumbent.

Location

Once you have agreed the general framework of ideas, you will need to see if a particular site is suitable, and then consider some more detailed questions:

- is our proposed area large enough to meet projected needs?
- is it away from trees and tree roots?
- will it be readily accessible for those attending interments and for subsequent visitors?
- is there good access for the elderly and disabled?
- is there an existing path to the area, or will a new path be needed?
- where will the path run and what materials will be used?
- will the area be visually defined, e.g. by a wall or planting?
- is an actual garden to be created or is the area to be grassed?
- who will look after the area and what level of maintenance will be required?

Practical matters

You may want to inform visitors about the purpose for which the area has been set aside:

- what form will the notice take?
- what will be the most suitable position?
- what will be the most appropriate wording?

Flowers

Visitors will often bring flowers and plants. You will need to allow for this in a communal way, which does not become untidy or interfere with maintenance. This could be:

- a paved or gravel area to one side
- a ledge around a central memorial

Local practice should encourage fresh flowers as the symbol of the gift of creation and of the brevity of life. However, artificial flowers may occasionally be permitted by the incumbent for a temporary period. The PCC can remove dead and artificial flowers to keep the Garden of Remembrance tidy. Rose bushes and shrubs cannot be planted on individual plots.

Methods of commemoration

Methods of remembrance may include:

- a book of remembrance in which families can record their memories of the deceased [bearing in mind access to the church]
- a central memorial stone or cross
- other methods on a case-by-case basis

A book of remembrance and/or a central memorial or cross should be considered first before other options. A beautiful and natural Garden of Remembrance can be a peaceful place for quiet reflection and prayer, which should be easy to maintain. Markers, such as stone quoins at each corner, can be used to map and locate individual plots together with a plan of the ground.

FAQs

- **Does the land have to be consecrated?**
Yes; a new area being set aside for the burial of ashes does need to be consecrated. If the area is not consecrated, or you are uncertain of its status, you should contact the Diocesan Registrar as soon as possible so that the matter can be clarified and consecration arranged if required.
- **Do ashes have to be buried in caskets?**
The Churchyard Regulations 2014 states that ashes may either be buried in a suitable perishable or biodegradable container or buried loose in an appropriately sized hole in the ground. Ashes must be covered with soil. They may not be scattered or strewn.
- **What are the practicalities of interring ashes from caskets?**
It is important to allow sufficient depth for a burial in case room is required for a further burial above. The top of the buried remains should be at least 300mm below ground level.
- **Do we need to keep a plan of burial of ashes?**
Yes, as with full burials, ashes should be buried in plots according to a detailed accurate plan, kept with other burial records. This ensures that if there is a request for exhumation this can be properly carried out. Also, if further burials take place close to existing ones, buried ashes are less likely to be disturbed.
- **Do we need planning permission to create a Garden of Remembrance?**
As well as the Faculty, you will need planning permission (for change of use), if the churchyard is not already used for burials. For planning permission, contact your local planning authority at an early stage.

And finally....

Please remember that the burial of human remains is always a sensitive issue. It is worth taking plenty of time in the planning of a Garden of Remembrance, particularly for initial discussions. There is no single scheme which will be appropriate for all situations, so do discuss alternative ideas during a DAC site visit at the earliest stage.

DAC contact details

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2019, adapted from a guidance note kindly provided by the Diocese of St Albans.

Garden of Remembrance photos

These photos may help inform discussion and planning, but each Faculty application will be considered on a case-by-case basis. With thanks to St Nicholas Church, Ringwould.



Stone quoins mark the plot



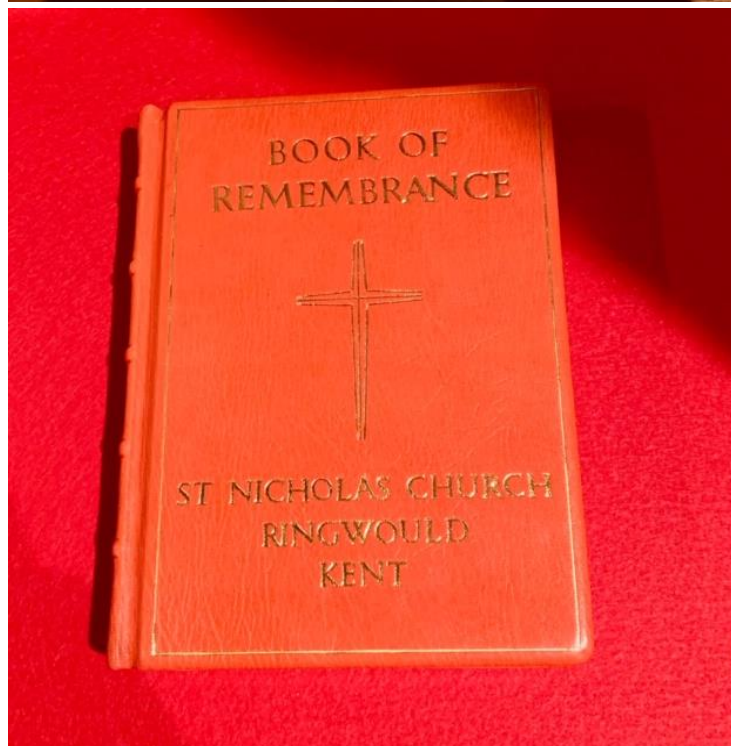
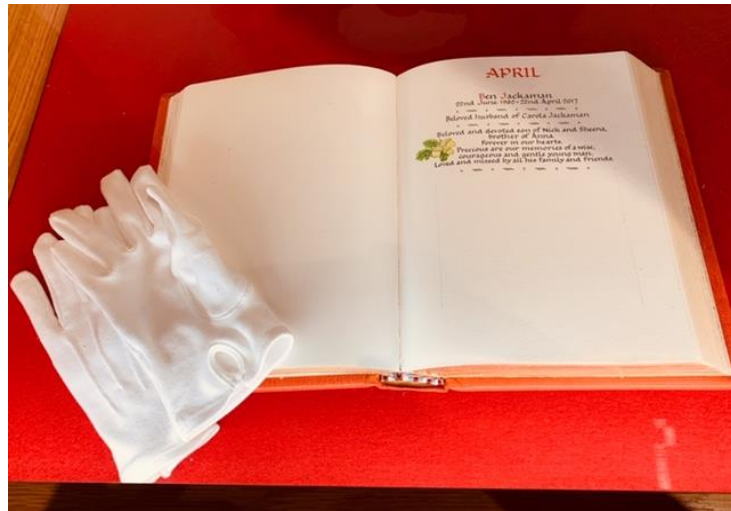
Central memorial

New Ashes Plot– St Nicholas Church, Ringwould, Kent 2017 onwards

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I |
|---|------|---|---|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Name | | | | | | | | |
| | Date | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | CENTRAL MEMORIAL | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | |

MEMORIAL BENCH
'IN MEMORIAM'

Example of Garden plan with plots



Book of Remembrance