

St Paul's Church, Tupsley  
with St Andrew's, Hampton Bishop

January 2023

Dear friend

Happy New Year. And as we wish and pray for you every blessing for this New Year, please forgive this being a letter impersonally to many. Let me explain.

I'm writing, as vicar of St Paul's Hereford, to you and others with a close relative having a plot in our **Garden of Remembrance**. Many have commented on it being a special place, continuing to bring a little comfort through a long emotional journey following death of a dear family member or close friend. We are committed to enabling this support to continue as well as we can.

As you may know, the great care taken of our [churchyard](#) relies on a wonderful team of volunteers, and at some stage you should have received the attached regulations. These add to the Diocesan regulations (Google [Hereford Diocese Churchyard Regulations 2008](#) to read these), but are specific to our own St Paul's Churchyard. We wrote them especially to enable us all to balance the need to mark special occasions with the need also to keep the space tidy and dignified through volunteer help. We see the whole churchyard as a shared space, enjoyed and cared for by many people, creatures and plants.

In the Garden of Remembrance, we have managed until now mostly to avoid enforcing the rule asking for nothing generally to be placed within it, to allow the area to be mown or strimmed during growing season. Now that there are many graves within the Garden it is a major task to move the many flower vases and other items and particularly to ensure the large number of flower vases and other items within the Garden are returned to the correct grave after grass cutting is complete.

We are all thoroughly looking forward to Spring – accompanied of course in the next month or so with a new growing season. Having discussed carefully (including at the Church Council), we know that the GofR is now too large to continue in this way, and the time has come start keeping it more possible to mow, through removing all items *except* fresh seasonal flowers (as in 2.8 in *Churchyard, Remembrance & Burials Regulations* (Issue 1.2) – also copied overleaf).

So I am writing to you now, in case you would want to move anything before our team start to **on 1 March**. The key information after that date is in the attached regulations, and copied on the reverse of this letter for convenience.

In the meantime, please do contact our office (see above) if you have any particular questions or concerns, or if you would like to help us with a donation towards looking after our shared churchyard.

Thankyou so much for your understanding, and may our churchyard and the Garden of Remembrance continue for you and others to be a place of restoration and hope through times ahead.

With my warmest wishes on you and yours

Rev Preb Nick Armstrong

vicar



Excerpt from the St Paul's *Churchyard Remembrance & Burials Regulations Jan2023 (Issue 1.2)*

- 2.5. ...the plot may be marked with a **flat** tablet Memorial Stone, **not exceeding 15 inch square**, and otherwise complying fully with 1.2 above. No raised memorial is allowed. Any of the *Materials for Memorials* listed in the *Diocesan Churchyard Regulations* is acceptable.
- 2.6. No other object or material is allowed except as detailed in 2.8: for example flower vases or loose stones since they obstruct grass cutting.
- 2.7. We encourage fresh flowers to be placed on the plot immediately, or soon, after interment and on the anniversary of death but those for the latter will need to be removed by the Church after one month to enable grass cutting to take place. Please note that *artificial* flowers are strongly discouraged, with the exception of Remembrance Poppies and Christmas or Easter wreaths which the Church will remove, typically after one month. See below.
- 2.8. While we are mindful of the long slow journey of bereavement, **after 24 months** from the interment, ***we will remove*** extra objects or material ourselves. If we move fresh flowers to mow the grass, they will be carefully placed at row ends. Other objects will be carefully placed in a box nearby, but of course we could not be sure whether they may be moved then by others, so would not advise people to rely on this.
- 2.9. We are an **Eco Church** and seek to take great care of our churchyard working towards carbon neutrality and promoting biodiversity with minimal footprint. Please use our **composting bins *only* for fully compostable material**, taking care to remove any other materials.