

Explanatory Note

1. With effect from 1st January 2026 a new set of Churchyard Memorial Regulations (“the Regulations”) for the Diocese of Durham will come into effect, replacing the existing diocesan Churchyard Rules. The Regulations specify in Schedule 1 the type of memorials that may be erected in a churchyard, and also the repairs or alterations that can be carried out on an existing memorial, without the need to apply for a faculty. The Regulations provide for the shape, dimensions, type of stone, colour, and the inscriptions that may be permitted by the minister without a faculty.
2. The Regulations are part of a process designed to bring a degree of consistency for memorial applications across the country, albeit there will still be some minor variations among dioceses to take account of particular local customs or conditions.
3. The procedure to be followed by an applicant before any work in respect of a memorial is undertaken is set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulations. If an applicant wishes to erect a memorial, form A must be completed, signed by both the applicant and the memorial mason. The form must then be submitted to the minister. If an applicant wishes to repair or alter an existing memorial, form B must be completed instead. If the minister is satisfied that the proposal comes within Schedule 1, the minister may give permission for the work to be done and must endorse the form accordingly in the relevant section.
4. If any question arises as to whether a particular proposal for a memorial comes within Schedule 1, the minister should refer the matter to the Chancellor, and the Chancellor will decide if the proposal can be implemented without a faculty.
5. If an applicant’s proposal falls outside Schedule 1 so a faculty is required, then the completed form A (or form B as the case may be) will be treated as the petition if the applicant wishes to proceed.
6. A Handbook for the Bereaved has been produced as a guide to burials in churchyards and to explain about the Regulations. A copy of the handbook should be given to all applicants when they first enquire about a proposed burial in a churchyard.
7. Copies of the Regulations, forms A and B, and the Handbook for the Bereaved are attached to this Explanatory Note, but they can also be downloaded from the Diocese of Durham’s website at [Churchyards - Diocese of Durham](#).

October 2025