

Welcome to the Churchyard

St Mary's, Haynes, Bedfordshire.

The churchyard is covered by the **Diocese of St Albans Churchyard Regulations**, in the same way as all Church of England churchyards in the Diocesan area (Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and part of Barnet). The Regulations are issued by the Diocesan Chancellor and enable us to support bereaved families and to encourage good practices in order to create and maintain a place of peace, dignity and respect for the departed, as well as a haven for wildlife. The Regulations cover all aspects of the Churchyard, including rights of burial, what sorts of memorial can be introduced and what can go on the grave.

This churchyard should be regarded as belonging to God, representing to us God's love and compassion for the whole community, and available to the whole community.

We welcome and encourage:

- Bulbs and/or small annual flowering plants
- Fresh flowers
- Graves can be grassed, but should be kept level

Items not permitted In the Regulations:

- Perennial flowering plants, shrubs or trees (including conifers) because the roots of shrubs and trees will disturb the grave and may eventually damage the memorial stone or an adjacent grave.
- Artificial flowers are not permitted apart from in exceptional circumstances (see the Regulations for more detail).
- Loose items – stone chippings, kerbs, stone urns, railings, slabs, artificial grass, sculpture, sun dials, bird baths, fencing, obelisks, glass jars, photographs, portraits or other similar mementos. This is not just for aesthetic reasons; they also present a danger to those operating equipment such as lawnmowers and strimmers. Items of value may be vulnerable to theft.
- Lights of any description are not allowed by the Regulations (including solar powered lights and other lanterns). These also pose a risk to the wildlife in the churchyard.

Please contact rector4clifton@gmail.com for any enquiries about this churchyard [or to sign up for regular updates]

Items which are not permitted will be removed by the local church. However, the local church will take reasonable steps to notify families. This may include letters affixed to individual memorials. Where loose items are left on an unattended grave, the PCC may arrange for them to be placed in a suitable container or location for collection by the family.

Temporary items: In the days immediately following a burial, at the discretion of the Parish Priest, the family and friends mourning the loss of a loved one may wish to place items on a grave in commemoration and as tokens of their love. Such items may be left in place for a reasonable period not normally exceeding 6 months. The Parish Priest will ask the family to remove any Items which may be inappropriate, cause distress to other visitors, or be stolen.

For the benefit of those involved in visiting and maintaining the churchyard, visitors are kindly reminded:

- Memorials are owned by the family but not the 'plot'. This means that the family have responsibility for maintaining the memorial in good repair but the plot is maintained by the local church.
- Ashes after cremation must not be scattered or strewn but, with the consent of the Parish Priest, shall be buried in a suitable perishable or biodegradable container or poured into the ground and covered.

Please see the full **Regulations** and the **Guide for Families** on the Diocesan website for more information:

<https://www.stalbansdiocese.org/life-and-faith/funerals/>

