



**The Parish of Uley  
with Owlpen and Nympsfield**

**Churches of St Giles' St Bartholomew and Holy  
Cross**

***A Guide to Burials and the Introduction of Memorial  
Stones into the Churchyards***

**God's Acre**

This is the ancient name given to churchyards belonging to parish churches. It comes from the fact that the land enclosed for burial has been consecrated to God and therefore belongs to him. Thus plots cannot be bought and do not belong to families whose members are buried in them. It is the right of every parishioner to be interred in the churchyard if space permits.

Burial plots and the memorials erected on them including vases and crosses are governed by rules laid down by the Diocese and the PCC. They are designed to ensure the churchyards are environmentally sensitive and capable of easy maintenance in the long term.

**Burials**

1. The site of a new grave will be directed by the parish priest. Although this does not belong to the family, the family is responsible for the upkeep of the grave. If you have difficulty in tending a grave please speak to the churchwardens.

2. After burial the ground has to settle and is likely to subside. Settling usually takes six months and the ground may need to be levelled to provide a flat surface.

3. The surface of the grave may be turfed or planted. Annual plants are allowed, shrubs and trees should not be planted. Covering with stones or other materials or the use of stone kerbing or plastic fencing around the grave is not permitted.

4. Wreaths and cut flowers may be placed on graves but should be removed once withered. Artificial flowers are discouraged except for Remembrance Day poppies and Christmas wreaths. All need to be removed after a reasonable time.

5. Plant pots and other containers should be taken away after use. Please help to keep the area tidy by taking all flowers etc away with you to dispose of at home.

6. The PCC may at its discretion remove wreaths and flowers if they consider that they have become unsightly.

### **Memorials**

1. There is no automatic right to erect a memorial in the churchyard. No memorials, vases, wood crosses should be placed in the churchyard or removed without permission.

2. A minimum of six months should elapse before a memorial stone is erected in the churchyard; this allows the ground to settle.

3. To obtain permission to erect a memorial first contact the funeral director or stonemason who will submit a full description of the proposed work to the parish priest. No agreement should be entered into with the stonemason or other contractors until permission has been granted by the parish priest.

4. Care should be taken in selecting wording. The parish priest will always be happy to advise.

### **Size of Memorial**

1. Headstones may be approved up to the following dimensions above ground:

Height        4feet (1200mm)

Width         3feet (900mm)

Thickness    6inches (150mm)

A memorial may be of any dimension within these limits. Kerbing of any kind is not permitted

2. Vases should be no larger than 12"x8"x8"

### **Erection of Memorials**

The base of the memorial may be shaped so that it can be inserted directly into the ground to ensure stability.

Alternatively a headstone may stand on a stone base, providing it does not project above ground level. It must be an integral part of the design and not project more than 4 inches beyond the headstone in any direction.

**Materials**

A memorial needs to be made of natural stone. White marble is not permitted, nor granite other than unpolished light grey. Surfaces should remain unpolished with no reflecting surfaces. Nabresina Stone is recommended.

**Lettering**

Inscriptions should be incised or in relief. Lettering may be infilled with lead. No other form of lettering may be applied.

The parish priest is not allowed to permit photographs or ceramic portraits of the person to be commemorated.

**Memorials following interment of ashes**

1. A memorial of natural stone may be laid flush to ground level in the appropriate garden of remembrance. The site of the memorial to be directed by the parish priest.
2. To obtain permission to place a memorial stone contact the funeral director or stonemason direct. The stonemason will apply to the parish priest for permission to lay the stone and for the agreed lettering and inscription.
3. The ground should be allowed to settle before the memorial stone is placed
4. For maintenance, no shrubs or trees to be planted and floral tributes to be placed directly on the memorial stone

**Size of Memorial**

1. The stone should measure 12"x18" and be of natural stone
2. Wherever possible a circle cut out for flowers needs to be incorporated into the memorial stone

**Fees**

There are fixed fees for placing all memorials into the churchyard, for burials and interment of ashes. Fees can be viewed on the church notice board. The Diocesan Regulations which form these guidelines are available in the parish.

Please speak to the parish priest or a churchwarden if you need any further help or advice.

*Revd Diana Crook Priest in Charge 01453 860444  
Uley with Owlpen and Nympsfield Parochial Church Council*