

DIOCESE OF BATH AND WELLS

RESERVATION OF GRAVE SPACE or CREMATION PLOT in a churchyardRight to burial

You have a right to be buried or interred in your parish churchyard if, at the time of death, you live or die in the parish or are on the church electoral roll, provided there is a churchyard with sufficient space. The only way to reserve a *particular* plot is to obtain a Faculty for that purpose. These are granted at the discretion of the Chancellor of the Diocese, subject to payment of a faculty fee. This is to reserve the right of burial or interment in a specific plot in the churchyard, for the use of specific people in the future.

Process

A petition needs to be completed, signed and dated **and** the parish (either the incumbent, priest-in-charge or a churchwarden) needs to complete and sign the Schedule, and add a copy of relevant Parochial Church Council (PCC) minutes once the request has been considered. A plan of the churchyard may be needed if a plot number or clear description of the site is not available. Please complete as much of the petition as possible, ensuring that the full names of the intended occupants are clearly included. If you have an e-mail address, that is usually a quicker way of dealing with any queries that might arise. It is important to be clear whether this is for a burial or cremation plot, and whether you are seeking single or double depth.

The lodgement fee of £317 (from 1st January 2023) is payable upon application but please note that the fees may increase if correspondence is unusually lengthy. For an on-line bank payment, details are:

Name: Stone King LLP

Sort: 20-47-06

Account No: 635 03 895

SWIFT: BARCGB22

IBAN: GB36 BARC 2047 0663 5038 95

Any cheques should be made payable to "Stone King LLP"

When you have filled in and signed and dated the petition, you should pass it to the parish for the Schedule to be completed.

When signed by the parish, either the incumbent or the churchwarden, the papers should be returned to the Diocesan Registry at the address below and they are then sent to the Chancellor of the Diocese who decides on these matters. If he is content with the information provided, public notices will be sent to the parish for display at the church for at least 28 days. Once that has completed, and if no objections are received, the Faculty can then be issued to reserve the grave space/cremation plot.

While the matter is being processed, you may want to discuss with the churchwarden what means you will use to mark the reserved spot until such times as you may need to use it – some churches use wooden pegs or stone markers.

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Duration of reservation

Each churchyard varies in the amount of space it has and how quickly it is used up. Depending upon the space that is available in the churchyard, the right to use the reserved plot may be limited to either 30 or 50 years. This is to prevent some churchyards becoming fully reserved but not being used for current burials or interments.

Ongoing maintenance of the churchyard

The PCC is responsible so far as its funds allow for the care and maintenance of an open churchyard. In this Diocese, and it is a customary condition of a gravespace reservation that the person for whose benefit the plot is reserved should make a contribution towards PCC funds for this purpose. The suggested contribution will be £75 and you should talk to the churchwarden or parish office about this. Any markers placed to note the reserved plot may be temporarily removed during maintenance work such as grass-cutting.

Closure of Churchyards

In some rare cases, churchyards will need to be closed to further burials if they become too full. It would then be a criminal offence to carry out burials but any plots that have been reserved by faculty will be an exception to this.

For further assistance, contact:

Mrs Janet Saxon 01225 324404 Janetsaxon@stoneking.co.uk

Diocesan Registry

Stone King

Upper Borough Walls

BATH BA1 1RG