



T H E P A R I S H O F
S T W I L F R I D
H A R R O G A T E

**From the Team Rector
Fr Gary Waddington**

The Rectory
51b Kent Road
Harrogate HG1 2EU

07920 464818
Teamrector@stwilfrid.org

June 2019

Dear friends in Christ,

Churchyard plans and regulations

I wanted to take a long-overdue opportunity to write to you to let you know about plans we will shortly begin thinking about as part of our development works, on the area of the churchyard at the East end (from the driveway entrance, up to the main door and to the side of the church, including where cremated remains are interred through to the back of the Hall).

It is also an opportunity to update everyone to clarify the Chancellor of the Diocese of Leeds directions on churchyards, to remind everyone what is or is not permitted. I hope that will be useful information that you will read carefully and help us to carry out.

We're looking to begin planning a major overhaul of lighting throughout the site. The existing lighting scheme in the church has remained essentially unchanged since the late 1960s. However, it now shows significant signs of age, and technology has moved on, and new lighting would also allow us to both lower our carbon footprint and reduce our lighting bills.

One area which has been on our 'list' for some time for improvement is external lighting. Improvement might be an oxymoron – since in reality, there is no lighting in front of the church nor any lighting from the Duchy Road to the main entrance. We think that as part of any new lighting scheme, this should be resolved.

At the same time, we also think it would be good to look at improving the planting and design of the gardens on the very easternmost edge of the church. This will have also the opportunity to enhance this area, clear back overgrowth, deal with trees which need maintenance and provide a range of much needed greenery for flower arrangers. We very much want to ensure that in improving this area, we enhance it and make it a more accessible.

I very much hope that as we develop plans, you might want to take an interest. Whilst it is unlikely that there are any solid design plans in place before the middle of next year – its always advantageous to let people know where our thinking might lead us!

As with any part of the church or churchyard, this of course is regulated by Faculty Jurisdiction – the Church of England's planning mechanism. Any alterations have to be approved not only by the PCC, but by the Chancellor (the principal court officer of the diocese who decides to approve or reject any plans, and who has the powers to enforce such decisions).

I explain this by way of introducing the Chancellor's churchyard regulations. These are re-issued every few years and the chancellor issued revised regulations last year.



The regulations exist to help maintain good order in and around our places of worship. They apply to all the parish churches of the Diocese – and importantly are directed regulations, not ammendable guidelines. If a parish wishes to depart from them, then this can only be achieved by the creation of a scheme under faculty – i.e. neither I nor the PCC have the powers to regulate on our own, or to ‘make it up as we go along.’

The chancellor strongly recommends therefore that every parish church should have a set of churchyard regulations – based of course on his directions.

What is therefore attached to this letter are a set of regulations for the churchyard at St Wilfrid’s, specifically for the area where cremated remains are interred. These match the chancellors directions and the only additions I have made are to clarify the wording in one or two small places. These are ‘in draft’ until they have also been considered by the PCC.

If in the course of your reading of the regulations you have any questions – or indeed ideas for how they could be further improved, then please do get in touch, I would be delighted to hear from you.

Please do also understand that I have great sympathy for those who find any proposal for regulations irritating or emotive, especially when they concern areas where cremated remains are buried. I do understand that these are places where we grieve, celebrate lives lived and contemplate death. But they are shared areas, both with other families who gather there, with the wider worshipping community, and with the wider community who live work or visit here. What I might find attractive, useful or desirable might be a cause of dissatisfaction or distress to you. What the chancellors regulations recall us to us a common sense of purpose, a level playing field and an important reminder that this area is set apart for everyone, and is not the prerogative of any individual to do with as they wish.

I want to thank you for the care shown in the way that this area has been managed – and to remind you of the responsibilities we each have so that we can continue to enjoy this area for generations to come.

Might I also take the opportunity to suggest that if there are other ways you might seek to remember our loved ones, then there are an additional range of opportunities in church: from the sponsorship of votive and sanctuary candles or of the seasonal flower arrangements, through to the recording of names in our book of remembrance or donations to ongoing or new development projects.

As I have said, if you have any questions, ideas or offers of help as we both plan to enhance this area, or in regard to the chancellor’s directions, please do get in touch either directly or through the parish office.

With my very best wishes,



Fr Gary Waddington
Team Rector, St Wilfrid Harrogate





Churchyard Regulations

Every parish church is encouraged by the Chancellor of the Diocese to create a common set of regulations for the use of a churchyard, including the burial of ashes. These help with the appropriate and proper maintenance of the churchyard, create a seemly appearance and help make sure that a common standard is kept.

1. The scattering of ashes in the churchyard is forbidden.
2. Marker stones must conform to the same size, material and inscription format as those already in existence.
3. “Pet” names, images, etc may not be used on the marker stone.
4. bulbs and small spring flowering plants may be placed in the soil by any grave; larger shrubs, bushes etc may not be planted.
5. plants or cut flowers (removed from any plastic or other wrapping) may be placed in a removable sunken container (of an unbreakable material, preferably unpolished aluminium) in the soil of any grave;
6. wreaths and cut flowers placed on graves and plants and flowers in containers (as described above) may be removed, when withered, by those authorised to do so by the incumbent;
7. no artificial flowers or foliage may be placed on or about graves (except for Remembrance Day poppies) and, if so placed, will be removed.
8. no flowers or plants in pots (other than as described in (5) above may be placed on or next to any grave and, if so placed, will be removed.
9. Other objects, including railings, chippings, pebbles and similar materials, statues, keepsakes, solar lamps or similar, toys and other mementoes, including cards are not permitted on a grave.
10. Every 75 years, graves may be re-used, starting with the oldest grave. No grave may be re-used until cremated remains have been buried for 75 years.
11. The decision of the Incumbent is final. If a family disagree, they may seek the permission of the chancellor through the lodging of a private faculty.
12. Families or next of kin of those interred should provide the parish office with contact details so that the parish can easily contact them, if necessary.

June 2019

