



Welcome to the Churchyard of Great Gaddesden

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.

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.

Taking care of graves and ashes plots - Please note the following, for the benefit of everyone who visits and maintains the churchyard.

- **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 may ask the family to remove any Items which may be inappropriate, cause distress to other visitors, or be stolen.
- **Memorials** must be approved. They are owned by the family, but not the 'plot'.
 - Once a memorial has been placed on the grave, the plot will normally be grassed.
 - We welcome and encourage small annual flowering plants and/or bulbs and fresh flowers.
 - Graves must be kept level.
 - The family have responsibility for maintaining the memorial in good repair, but except where the family has planted bulbs or annual flowers, the grassed plot will be maintained as part of the wider churchyard by the local church.
- **Ashes burials** - Ashes after cremation must not be scattered or strewn but, by arrangement with the Parish Priest, shall be buried in a suitable perishable or biodegradable container or poured into the ground and covered.
- Ashes will normally be buried in the area set aside for the interment of Ashes. This has its own rules for memorials. Ashes may also be buried in an existing grave.

The Regulations do not allow:

- **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** - only permitted in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Parish Priest.
- **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** (including solar powered lights and other lanterns). These also pose a risk to the wildlife in the churchyard.

Items which are not permitted will be removed by the PCC. However, we 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.

Please contact a Churchwarden: peter_king@btinternet.com or Parish Priest: vicar@greatgaddesdenchurch.com for any enquiries about this churchyard.

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/>

