

Registry

Burial of bodies or ashes in a closed churchyard

Here is a short but hopefully helpful insert from our Diocesan Registrar about burial of cremated remains in closed churchyards. The sub-committee route is appropriate so such faculty applications would never normally have to go to a DAC meeting.

If your churchyard has been formally closed by Order in Council, no further burials of any sort are permitted except in a very limited number of circumstances:

1. Burial of deceased who had acquired a faculty reserving a grave space before their death;
2. Burial of further family member (either full body or cremated remains) in an existing grave, so long as this has been confirmed in the terms of the Closure Order;
3. Burial of cremated remains in a new plot after permission has been granted by private faculty for that interment;
4. Burial of cremated remains in a new plot within a designated area for interment of ashes, after the PCC has obtained an overarching faculty for the entire area, to avoid the need for applications for individual faculty permission.

Any parish which has a closed churchyard but believes interments of cremated remains will be sought in the future should check their records or contact the Registry to see if a faculty giving blanket permission for interment of cremated remains in the specified area in the closed churchyard has already been granted. If not, the PCC may apply for one (Diocese pays the fee as usual) to do this and the Chancellor has indicated that she will welcome such applications.

The process is dealt with by a shorter faculty procedure than usual, though public notice for four weeks is still required. This saves families the cost of a private faculty fee (£305.40 at present) for each future application for permission to inter cremated remains in a closed churchyard. Please contact the Registry for advice and guidance if this might be useful to your parish.

With best wishes,

Sue

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