

DIOCESE OF ELY

RESERVATION OF A GRAVESPACE IN A CHURCHYARD

Notes to Intending Petitioners

1. Thank you for your recent enquiry about gravespace reservation. Please read these notes carefully before you decide to proceed, and then complete the Petition form on the pages following. Keep these notes after lodging the Petition.

Right to Burial – Plot Reservation

2. You have a right to be buried in a Parish Churchyard if, at the time of your death you live in that Parish, or are on its Church Electoral Roll, or if you have died in the Parish (always provided that there is a churchyard with sufficient space). The only way to reserve a particular plot for a person's burial is to obtain a Faculty for that purpose. Faculties are granted in the discretion of the Consistory Court, and good cause must be shown. If you are acting on behalf of a minor, a person who is registered blind or disabled and for whom you hold a Power of Attorney, please indicate so clearly.

Each application for a reservation will be considered by the Chancellor on the information placed before him and on its individual merit. One factor which he will consider is the age of the applicants; an application to reserve a gravespace which it is unlikely will be required for a matter of decades is unlikely to be granted unless there are exceptional grounds for doing so, particularly where the number of gravespaces available are limited and/or the applicant does not have a legal right to burial in the churchyard. The fact that the applicant has relatives who are buried in the churchyard would not normally amount to the exceptional grounds which would be needed to justify the grant of a faculty. The grant of a faculty is entirely at the Chancellor's discretion.

The Chancellor has issued a Practice Direction which provides information and background explaining what is taken into consideration when considering an application to reserve a gravespace. It can be viewed on the Ely Diocesan Registry website.

Seeking a Faculty

3. If you wish to reserve a gravespace, you should first contact the Incumbent or Priest-in-Charge responsible for the churchyard in question and through him/her seek the support of the Parochial Church Council. Then complete Part A of the Petition Form and after that take the form to the Incumbent or a Churchwarden, who is in a position to complete Part B of the form. When fully completed, the form should be sent to the Diocesan Registry, accompanied by a certified copy of any PCC resolution in support. A **non-refundable** fee will be payable (currently **£327.40** (including VAT), and subject to change from the beginning of 2025) and you will be asked for this when your Petition has been received.

Marking and Recording a Reserved Space

4. If a Faculty is granted, it will require the reserved space to be marked in such a way that it can be located when required. Responsibility for marking will lie with you as Petitioner, after you have agreed the method of marking with the Incumbent. You will be required to mark the space within three months of the granting of any faculty, and thereafter to ensure that the marker remains adequate for its purpose. Looking after the marker will not be the responsibility of the Incumbent, Churchwardens or PCC.

5. The normal method of marking is to place a durable wooden (or metal) stake at the head of the gravespace, marked with the initials of the person to be buried, followed by the year of reservation in brackets; e.g. 'A.B.C. (01)'. If some other method of marking was in use in the churchyard in question prior to December 1990, that method may be used provided it constitutes a permanent record and gives the same details. Other methods may only be used if approved by the Chancellor.
6. Markers should not be placed before a Faculty is granted. Such markers have no legal effect and may be removed during routine churchyard maintenance.
7. The Registry will write to the Parish Officers in due course about the making of an appropriate record on the Churchyard Plan.

Churchyard Maintenance

8. The Parochial Church Council is responsible, so far as its funds allow, for the care and maintenance of an open churchyard. In this Diocese it is a customary condition of a gravespace reservation that the person(s) for whose benefit the gravespace is reserved should make a contribution to PCC funds for this purpose. A receipt by the appropriate Parish Office must be endorsed on the back of the Faculty to bring it into full effect. The level of contribution is settled by the Chancellor in each case, but from 1st January 2015 £200 for one person (i.e. a single-depth plot) and £300 for a married couple (i.e. a double-depth plot) are the current standard figures. (This is quite distinct from the Registry fee mentioned at 3 above, which is laid down by law and covers the costs of the Faculty procedure).

Monuments

9. Reservation of a gravespace does not authorise the placing of any monument over the grave after burial. Application must be made, when the time comes, to the Incumbent then in charge of the churchyard.

TO THE CONSISTORY COURT OF THE DIOCESE OF ELY

PARISH OF: _____

**PETITION FOR FACULTY FOR THE
RESERVATION OF A GRAVESPACE IN A CHURCHYARD**

[Form approved pursuant to Rule 19(6)(2) of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013]

*Petitioner(s) must complete PART A and then ask the Incumbent or Priest-in-Charge
(or if unavailable a Churchwarden) to complete PART B*

*Petitioner(s) must then return the completed form to the Diocesan Registrar
at 1 The Sanctuary, Westminster, London SW1P 3JT*

I/WE, _____
the Petitioner(s)

Apply for a Faculty authorising the reservation of a gravespace in the churchyard
of

PART A

Information to be supplied by the Petitioner(s)

1. Full name(s):
.....

Address:
.....

Email:.....

Age(s):

2. Relationship of Petitioner(s) to each other:
(If you are applying on behalf of someone else please state why the person concerned is
unable to apply him/herself)

3. Reasons for the application and connections of Petitioner(s) with the Parish
.....
.....

4. Is the Petitioner(s):
(a) Resident in the Parish ? YES/NO:
(b) On the Church Electoral Roll ? YES/NO:
(c) Attend the Church ? YES/NO:
(d) Subscribes to Parish funds ? YES/NO:

5. Does the Petitioner(s) have any other connection with the Church ? If so, please give details:

.....

6. Does the Petitioner(s) own property in the Parish, if so please give details:

.....

7. Does the Petitioner(s) have a relative buried in the churchyard ? If so :

(a) Give name of relative:

(b) State relationship of relative to the Petitioner(s):

(c) Give position of grave of the relative:

The statements in this Petition and the answers to the questions above are true to the knowledge and belief of each one of us.

Signature(s) of Petitioner(s) *(The form must be signed by all the petitioners)*

.....

.....

.....

Date

PART B

Information to be supplied by Incumbent, Priest-in-Charge or a Churchwarden

- 1. For how many years do you think the space in the present churchyard will fulfil the needs of Parishioners?

.....
(If the answer to this question is less than 5 years, please state whether the PCC has any plan to extend the churchyard, or if not, what provision will be made for future burials)

- 2. Does the Parochial Church Council support this application ? YES/NO

****(Please attach a copy of the relevant PCC Resolution, indicating whether it was passed unanimously or by a majority (with voting figures) and the total number of members of the PCC).***

- 3. State the position of the gravespace to be reserved either:

(a) by reference to a number on the Churchyard Plan..... or

(b) by a description of its position.....
(please attach a copy of the relevant part of the Churchyard Plan)

- 4. What will be the number of this reservation in the Churchyard Plan?

- 5. What are the dimensions of the gravespace?

- 6. What is the population of the Parish (approx)?

- 7. What is the number of gravespaces available now for future burials (excluding plots reserved by faculty)?

.....

- 8. How many gravespaces are currently reserved by faculty for future burials?.....

- 9. Please give the average yearly number of burials in the churchyard for the last three years:

.....

Signature of Incumbent/Priest-in-Charge/Churchwarden/Area Dean :

.....

Date:

Parish contact details:

Name:

Address:
.....
.....

Email:

Telephone No: