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Registry Clerks

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

OXFORD DIOCESAN
REGISTRY

Reservation of Grave Spaces

Grave spaces may only be reserved by Faculty issued by the Chancellor of the Diocese. Informal arrangements with local clergy are not enforceable. The maximum period of reservation permitted by law is 100 years; however, the Chancellor's policy is to reserve for a much shorter period, generally 25 years.

A Faculty merely reserves a right of burial in a particular grave space, it does not transfer ownership of the grave space or the land, which remains vested in the Incumbent of the benefice and managed by the Parochial Church Council of the parish.

Any application ('Petition') to reserve a grave space must be in the form authorised by the Chancellor. This should be completed by the applicant ('Petitioner') in conjunction with the Rector/Vicar and churchwardens of the parish.

Notes for completing the Petition

1. The Petition must contain a detailed plan of the churchyard showing the location of the requested grave space (**page 2**). The plan must contain precise measurements in metres or feet relating the position of the requested grave space to at least **two fixed points** in the churchyard (such as the church building, paths, walls, war memorials and other fixed features). This is to ensure that no other burials take place in this grave space as a result of any confusion in the future.
2. The description of the requested grave space on **page 1** of the Petition should contain reference to each measurement set out on the plan.
3. The Petitioner confirms in **section 4** of the Petition that he or she is aware of the standard condition to be observed if a faculty is granted and agrees to observe them. Save in exceptional circumstances, any faculty granted will be made subject to the following standard conditions:

Standard conditions

- i. Within two months of the date of the faculty being granted, the Petitioner shall pay the sum of £200 (Two hundred pounds) to the Parochial Church Council responsible for the maintenance of the church and churchyard as a contribution towards such maintenance;
 - ii. The Petitioner shall provide the Incumbent with a suitable marker for the gravespace, to be approved by the Incumbent, and in default by the Archdeacon (such marker must not be a safety hazard);
 - iii. The PCC shall maintain a clear record of the gravespace so reserved;
 - iv. The reservation shall be effective for a period of 25 years from the date of the faculty, but with Liberty to Apply for an extension of time, if need be, at the end of that period.
4. The Rector/Vicar and churchwardens must complete and sign **section 5** of the Petition once the

Petitioner has completed sections 1 to 3.

5. The Petition must also be referred to the Parochial Church Council for its consideration and ask to set out its views in a PCC resolution if:
 - (a) The Petitioner is not resident in the parish or if the Petitioner's name is not on the church electoral roll of the parish;
and/or
 - (b) The Rector/Vicar and churchwardens certify in section 5 that, following the grant of a faculty to the Petitioner, the remaining burial space in the churchyard will only serve the needs of the parish for 10 years or less.
6. The PCC's certified resolution must accompany the Petition and the Vicar/Rector or churchwardens should then also complete **section 6** before returning the Petition to the Petitioner to file with the Diocesan Registry.

Fees

A statutory application fee is payable on submission of the Petition with the Diocesan Registry. The fee for 2017 is **£291.40**. A cheque for this amount made payable to 'The Registrar of the Diocese' should accompany your Petition.

Please send these to:- Ms Helen Lambourne
Oxford Diocesan Registry
16 Beaumont Street
Oxford
OX1 2LZ

Notes

If the Chancellor grants a Faculty, this will be subject to a Public Notice being displayed at the church giving details of the Petitioner's request. This will be issued by the Diocesan Registry to the Rector/Vicar and Churchwardens to display for 28 days. If no objections are received from members of the public during this period, the Diocesan Registry will then issue the Faculty.

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