

Memorials – diocesan framework for review

Introduction

1. Memorials may now require review for a variety of reasons, reflecting changes in the cultural context and moral framework since the memorial was introduced. It is expected therefore that memorials requiring review will be historic.
2. The main issues concerning memorials are (a) identifying memorials it is now appropriate to review; and (b) responding appropriately in each case.
 - a. Cases so far have been raised by PCCs or in response to an enquiry from a member of the public. Records of separately-listed memorials have been provided from the Church Heritage Record.
 - i. It is not reasonable for parishes to undertake a comprehensive review of memorials, given that there are many thousands in churchyards and many are to parishioners about whom little is known, even if the inscriptions can still be read.
 - ii. It will however be helpful to improve records of memorials in churches and churchyards, and parishes are encouraged to explore ways of doing so, including cross-reference to plans of church and churchyard.
 - iii. Progress with the gathering of information on memorials and recording their location in church and churchyard will be regularly reviewed as part of the Archdeacons' Visitation and Inspection scheme.
 - iv. Where cases are raised by enquiry, a diocesan record should be kept of the enquiry and the outcome of the parish's review.
 - b. Responding appropriately will depend on the circumstances in an individual case. The following is offered as a framework for PCCs.
3. The Church of England has provided resource papers *On Memorials* and *BLM and Monuments* which the DAC Secretary can provide on request.

Framework for responding appropriately

Step 1 – Identify

The need for a memorial to be reviewed may be identified by the PCC or by a member of the congregation or the public.

The PCC will want to consider what the issues are, what further information and input may be needed and any particular questions on which advice is needed.

The PCC should identify the memorial and make arrangements for the following, which may be needed later in the process: good-quality digital photographs of the memorial, its context in the church or churchyard and the inscriptions on the memorial; a transcript of the inscriptions; readily-available information on the history of the memorial (e.g. listing description for a separately-listed memorial). The PCC should also identify whether descendants of those to whom the memorial is dedicated are likely to have an interest.

Step 2 – Logging the enquiry

In all cases, the PCC should then log the enquiry by uploading the case as a new case via the DAC part of the diocesan online portal at <https://portal.stalbans.anglican.org>. The DAC will respond to any enquiry in a timely manner. Please ensure that you include the following information:

1. Memorial type (e.g. headstone; wall memorial), location and photos
2. Brief description of reason for logging: this may be *reactive* – arising from public or media interest or *proactive* - review resulting from within PCC

In most cases, it will be sufficient initially to respond to an external enquiry by letting the enquirer know that the Church is doing something about the issue in a timely way and to follow this staged process. If it appears likely that the monument may be at risk from direct action, the PCC should apply to the Chancellor via the Diocesan Registry for directions about safeguarding the memorial until the issues can be properly addressed.

Step 3 – Wider consultation

The DAC should be approached for advice about whether to engage with groups particularly affected by the memorial or more widely. Where relevant, contacts may helpfully be made via faith leaders or community associations.

It may be helpful for the PCC to arrange a consultation giving opportunity for input from those who have raised the enquiry, those from the group most affected by the memorial and from descendants of those to whom the memorial is dedicated.

Step 4 – PCC proposal for response

In the light of the earlier steps, the PCC should consider which of the following will be an appropriate way to respond.

If further action is required, diocesan policy is that the preferred response is to maintain the memorial in place and to provide a suitable explanation (Option 2)

1. Take no action in respect of the memorial.
2. Propose providing an explanation about the memorial, referring to the context in which it was erected and the text which is now seen as problematic, and explaining how this historical perspective can shape our lives and behaviour for the good.
3. Propose amending the memorial to remove or cover part of it.
4. Propose removing the memorial.

For proposals 2-4, the PCC should consider what cost will be involved, by obtaining quotations from stonemasons or other professionals, and how the cost is to be met.

Step 5 – Implementation

For any proposal to explain, amend or remove the memorial (options 2, 3 and 4 above), the PCC will need to update their logged enquiry to make a formal application to the DAC for advice leading to a faculty application or other permission.

Recording the review process and outcome

In all cases the PCC should

- record in its minutes the decisions and proposals it has made and the outcome
- update this information to the case via the online portal
- take steps to notify the original enquirer and other interested parties about the outcome
- inform the Archdeacon and the DAC Secretary that the permitted outcome has been implemented.

The DAC Secretary will ensure that the outcome of the memorial review is retained in case of future enquiries.