

All Saints Church

Clifton

Beds

Proposal for

A Garden Of Remembrance

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All Saints Church Clifton – Garden of Remembrance

Background

The Churchyard of All Saints Church Clifton no longer has any allowable space remaining for the burial of ashes, and it is imperative that permission is sought from the Diocese to set aside a new area for this purpose.

Whilst the most common burial practice is the internment of ashes we also need to retain sufficient space for coffin burials into the foreseeable future. To make the best possible use of the unused area of the Churchyard it is proposed that a Garden of Remembrance is created in the north corner of the rear Churchyard.

The Garden of Remembrance will have a distinct grassed area for the burial of ashes, but will not continue the practice of allowing individual headstones. Instead, to provide a tangible memorial of those whose ashes are buried in the garden, a wall will provide space for small plaques to be mounted; these will bear simple inscriptions recording the name and dates of birth and death of the deceased.

The proposed design allows for the wall to be extended when additional space is required for memorial plaques. Extensions can be along two sides of the churchyard and done in stages, allowing future parishioners to adopt a greater feeling of ownership, and defray some of the cost to future generations.

By taking this action now we will provide Clifton with a lasting resting place for the departed parishioners.

Design objectives

It has been our aim to design a suitable burial place for ashes that provides a positive reminder for those in the early stages of bereavement and also for people to reflect on in years to come.

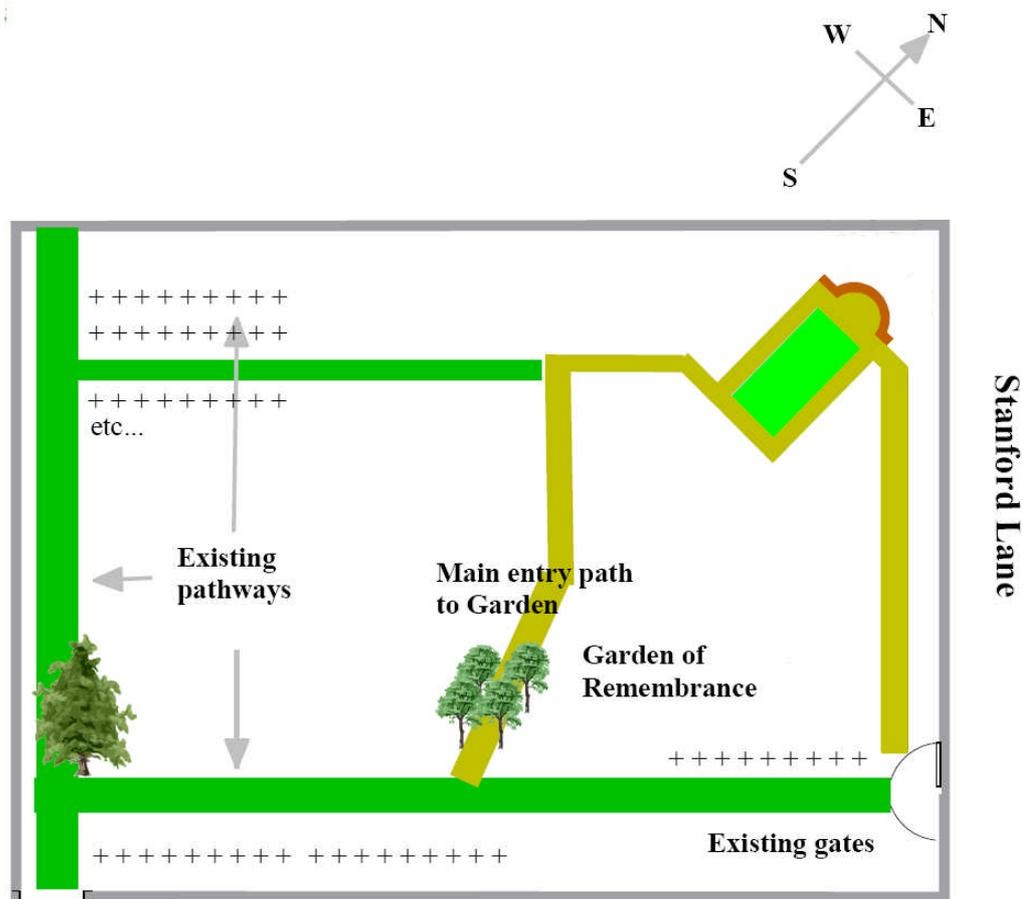
- To provide an area for the burial of ashes that ideally will last in perpetuity.
- To provide a memorial with tangible reminders of those whose ashes are buried.
- Provide a focal point for remembrance and reflection, not only on the departed but also on our lives as Christians.
- Provide a quiet aesthetically pleasing garden appropriate to its use.
- To maximise on the space remaining for coffin burials.
- Provide access for disabled.
- Ensure as far as possible, the safety of people using the garden.
- Minimise on maintenance work required to keep the garden in good order.

Proposed Location of Garden

It is proposed that the Garden of Remembrance is sited at the north corner of the rear Churchyard, adjacent to Stanford Lane, as shown in the following plan.

The area and pathways have been marked out on the ground to allow parishioners to see the location of the garden and help to facilitate informed comment.

This area is in sunshine for the whole day, and allows the existing lines of graves to be extended with minimal interruption. The plan shown below illustrates the placement of the garden in the Churchyard:



The existing trees in the north corner of the Churchyard have been assessed by a horticulturalist and it is recommended they are removed – they are not of any value, and one is a lime that drops a sticky residue that could deface memorials. If they are left in situ the garden will have to be located further away from the corner and starts to become an island. Consideration will be given to planting a single specimen tree in the corner.

At the point where the new path leaves the main pathway, another existing group of trees forms an ideal entrance. A second pathway is provided to allow easy access from the Stanford Lane entrance. All pathways will be formed using hoggin type material compacted to provide a wheelchair friendly self-draining surface.

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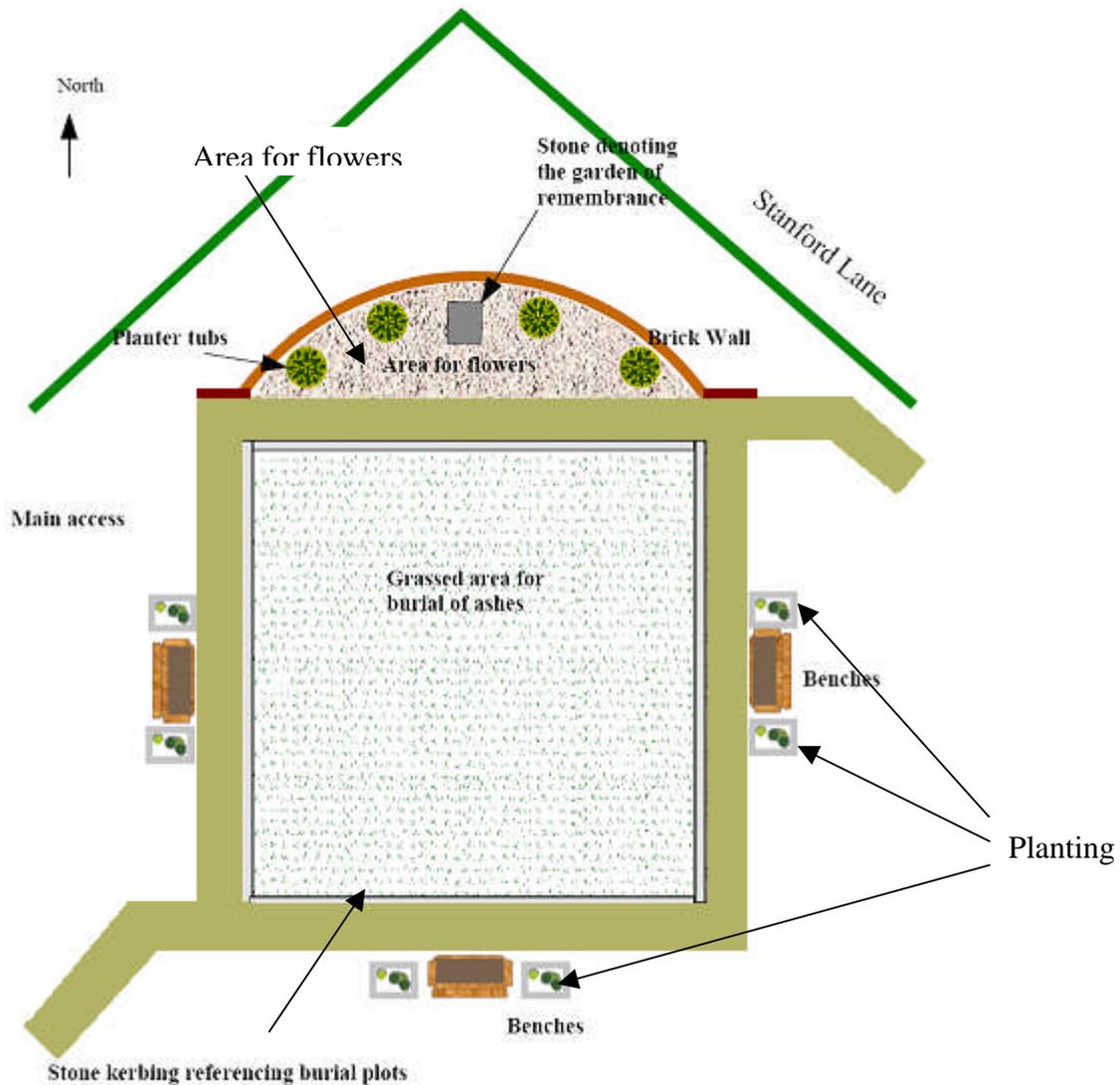
Burial of Ashes

The Diocese allows ashes to be buried in caskets or poured into a hole in the ground. Assuming standard casket sizes, it is calculated that six times as many burials may be achieved by employing the latter method. Our responsibility is to provide burial space for 100 years, only after this period is it permissible to re-use existing plots.

It is therefore proposed to make it a condition that burial of ashes is only done by pouring into a hole in the ground; burial of caskets will not be allowed.

Design

The following diagram illustrates the proposed Garden of Remembrance, and is further explained in the following notes.



All Saints Church Clifton – Garden of Remembrance

Wall

Size shape and material

The wall at the rear of the garden will be shaped in an arc and have a maximum height of 1½ metres at the centre, reducing to approximately 1¼ metres at each side in a style similar to the diagram below.



It will be necessary to use a hard engineering brick to withstand drilling in order to mount memorial plaques and it is recommended they are a light colour to be in keeping with the more mature buildings in the village.

Memorial plaques

Memorial plaques would be of a size that fits onto a single brick, and we recommend they should bear only very simple inscriptions; recording the name of the deceased, their date of birth and date of death.

The material used should be stone, of a type and design according to Diocesan regulations.

The responsibility for fixing suitably inscribed memorial plaques is yet to be decided. An initial count indicates that the wall should accommodate approximately 400 plaques, after which time it will be necessary to extend it as described later in this proposal.

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Stone denoting the garden of remembrance

A single stone bearing an inscription to convey the purpose and feeling of the garden will be placed on the ground at the centre of the arc of the wall.

This will be mounted on a wedge at an angle from the ground of approximately 22.5°.



Possible wording for the inscription is:

GARDEN
OF
REMEMBRANCE

PEACE I LEAVE WITH YOU

MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU

JOHN 14²⁷

Area for flowers

Flowers from mourners

The area immediately in front of the wall would be used specifically for flowers from mourners. People will inevitably leave flowers on the grassed area, but we would endeavour to move them regularly to keep the garden looking tidy. It will be a condition that artificial flowers, lanterns, toys etc., are not allowed.

This area within the arc of the wall will be laid with slate chippings over a weed suppressing membrane.

Evergreens in planter tubs

Low growing evergreens in planter tubs could be used in the early years to take some of the bareness from the wall, until sufficient memorial plaques were in place for it to take on its own character. These have the advantage that they may be moved easily to new locations as the situation demands.

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Pathways

All new pathways will be laid using a hoggin type material that provides a wheelchair friendly surface and will be a minimum of 1.2 metres wide. Hoggin is an aggregate material comprising sand, gravel and clay, that is compacted to provide a firm self draining surface. An illustration is shown below:



Hoggin

Main Approach

The main approach will leave the existing pathway approximately halfway along the length of the churchyard, going through an existing group of trees, and then turn towards Stanford Lane following an existing line between graves, parallel with the hedge on the north west side.

This minimises disruption to the lines of graves used for coffin burials, and once again will ease maintenance as far as possible.

Stanford Lane Entrance

A path will also be provided from the Stanford Lane entrance to enable easier access from the roadway where it is necessary.

Grassed area for burial of ashes

The grassed area will be used for the burial of ashes.

Ashes may only be buried by pouring into a hole in the ground, burial of caskets will not be allowed. The 5 metre by 10 metre plot allows in excess of 2000 burials, and assuming some 25 each year it provides sufficient space for around 100 years. After this time it is permissible to re-use plots.

Parts of this area could be set with spring flowering bulbs to make the area more attractive and natural looking.

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Stone sets, referencing burial plots

The grassed area will be kerbed with stone sets laid level with the turf, and inscribed to reference the burial plots. The inscriptions will be in Roman numerals to blend in better with the garden.

Benches

Three benches would provide ample sitting space for people to use for reflection.

One of the existing Churchyard benches could initially be used, this would subsequently be replaced by three benches funded by donation, possibly as memorials.

Burial Services

Conducted from area in front of wall

Burial services will be conducted from the area in front of the wall, the funeral directors and Minister only needing to step onto the grassed area for the burial.

Mourners

Mourners will stand on the path surrounding the grassed area.

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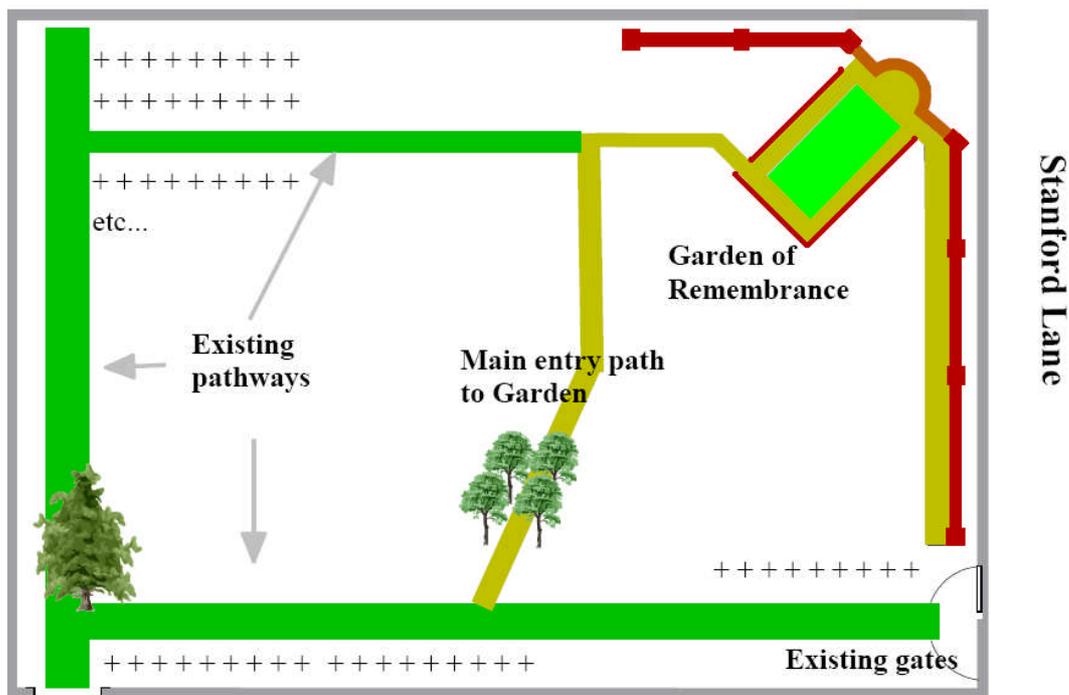
Extension

In the fullness of time, all the space provided for memorial plaques will be used up, and a further decision will be needed on whether and how to allow the practice to continue.

The proposed design does lend itself to extending the wall in stages in a number of ways:

- Extend the wall to the Stanford Lane side and then alongside the boundary hedge to the existing gates
- Extend the wall to the north-west boundary and then alongside the boundary hedge.
- Construct a wall around the garden of remembrance

These are illustrated in the diagram below:



Maintenance

Grass cutting

Regular mowing of the grassed area will be required, but should be straightforward as there will be no headstones or anything similar to negotiate. The kerbing surrounding the plot is laid at turf level and will not cause any obstruction.

Weed control

The paths will be laid over a special weed suppressing membrane and should require no more than treating once or twice each year with a weed killer.

Hedges and trees

Trees may need some annual trimming to ensure suitable access along the main entrance path.

There is sufficient space behind the wall to provide access for hedge trimming.

It is proposed that the hedge on the north-east side of the Churchyard be trimmed to approximately 5 feet in height, but retain the specimen trees. This will help to make the whole area look tidier and more cared for.

Flowers

Regulations

Churchyard regulations will be set down to provide guidance how the Garden of Remembrance should be used in this respect. Undertakers will be provided with a copy of these and it will be their duty to inform mourners.

Area to use

Flowers may be left only on the area immediately in front of the arc of the wall.

Containers

Containers will be provided by the Church to allow cut flowers to be left, and only the Church containers will be allowed.

Natural flowers only

Only natural flowers should be left, artificial flowers, toys, cards, etc., are not allowed.

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Removal of dead flowers

After a burial, flowers and wreaths will only be allowed to remain for a limited period, after which time they will be removed.

A regular duty rota will be established to check on the Garden of Remembrance, removing dead flowers and just making sure that it is being maintained in a suitable way. This need not be an onerous duty, for example, a brief visit to the garden after attending a service would suffice, reporting any problems back to the Rector or a Churchwarden.