

BRAMM

Spring Update 2019

BRITISH REGISTER OF ACCREDITED MEMORIAL MASONS



BRAMM



COMPETITION OPENS 31 MARCH 2019

Cemetery of the Year Awards 2019 is free to enter and open to any burial authority (cemetery or churchyard) within the UK. Apply on the website at www.cemeteryoftheyear.org.uk
The categories of cemeteries are:

- A** | Small/Medium Burial Grounds up to 10,000 graves
- B** | Large Burial Grounds above 10,000 graves

There will also be three new categories in 2019:

- 1** | Separate categories for Parish, Town and Community Councils, who will have a separate question bank.
- 2** | Natural Burial Ground Provider.
- 3** | Special category 'Design & Innovation of Memorials'. Open for any memorial fixed within the last 5 years. Cemetery Managers, with permission from the family, to send photos (max of 3) and a short description (max 250 words) of why it should be considered for an award. Entries to be judged on design and innovation qualities.

The application form is designed to enable applicants to be marked objectively with pre-defined points allocated in each section. This will allow feedback to be given to each entrant showing their overall competition marks and how they can improve and develop their cemeteries.

DEADLINE: Completed online forms to be received by the Cemetery of the Year Awards Committee by 31 July 2019.

The best entries will receive notification in writing that they have reached the short-list of finalists. An adjudicator will visit short-listed burial grounds.

The winner in each category will be presented at the ICCM conference in September and will receive a 'Gold Certificate' along with a CYA press release that can be used to promote their work and achievements. Runners-up in each category will receive a 'Silver Certificate' and a CYA press release.

These awards will help generate interest for our cemeteries as places of beauty and leisure and contribute towards the concept of memorialisation in stone.

LATEST STATS

APPROVED
REGISTERED
BUSINESSES

467
COMPANIES

LICENSED
FIXERS

754

REGISTERED
BURIAL
AUTHORITIES

193

129
BRANCHES



March 2019

TECHNICAL ADVICE GIVEN BY BRAMM SINCE JANUARY 2019

1

A memorial company from the South East asked BRAMM about re-using a frame landing and how to refix cross and dies with a kerb set. A BRAMM technical advisor gave them assistance after the company emailed photographs.

2

A burial authority, co-incidentally from the same region, asked BRAMM about the installation of concrete beams (rafts). We put them in contact with a nearby authority who had just carried out similar work.

3

A memorial company asked BRAMM about installing monuments on private company premises and the method of installation for monolith memorials. The advice was to construct a concrete beam and use the correct size stainless steel dowels.

CONSISTENCY OF BRAMM TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT

An interesting question was recently asked by a BFL candidate during his practical BRAMM Fixer Licence assessment along the lines of: *"How do BRAMM make sure that all of their trainers and assessors deliver the same standard of training and assessment, no matter which one of them carries out the process?"*

It was a fair question and deserves a proper answer ...

Firstly, all of BRAMM's trainers and assessors are experienced memorial masons who have achieved a nationally recognised qualification in work based practical assessment and all that goes with it in terms of both objectivity and subjectivity. These courses generally take about five or six months to complete.

It is important to understand that BFL accreditation is for experienced memorial fixers only. It is not in any way a 'How to fix a lawn memorial' course ~ the candidate is expected to be competent in that particular skill set, based upon his/her existing job knowledge and trade experience.

The BRAMM Fixer Licence accreditation course is basically a one-day training and assessment session. The morning session deals with the theory element, delivered by an assessor, via BRAMM's Power Point training presentation. This presentation ensures consistency of content delivered, and is followed by a written test, based upon both the information given and the candidate's trade experience.

The afternoon session centres on the candidate proving competence in correctly erecting a lawn memorial – usually in a nearby cemetery. Consistency of assessment is ensured by a unique 'BRAMM Assessors Check List' comprising of 35 checks which must be met when erecting a lawn memorial to the National Standard – BS 8415. This check list is also underpinned by photographic evidence showing the candidate carrying out some of the tasks to confirm authenticity.

To further ensure consistency, the BRAMM T&A Team have two mandatory 'Moderation & Standardisation Meetings' per year, chaired by their Lead Assessor, to deal with any training or assessment issues, and to make sure everyone is 100% up to speed with the process as a whole.

In addition to all that, all BRAMM's Training & Assessment Team use exactly the same documentation and methodology to ensure consistency and, furthermore, the above procedures and processes are strictly controlled and monitored by BRAMM's educational awarding body – the Open College Network (West Midlands).

Hopefully this answers the question about the consistency of BRAMM's training and assessment processes and procedures. The picture below shows BRAMM's Centre Manager, Phil Potts (seated centre) surrounded by many of BRAMM's Training & Assessment Team at a recent Moderation & Standardisation Meeting.



BRAMM FORUM

We regularly receive letters from BRAMM registered companies and burial authorities who would like to comment on industry matters. The BRAMM FORUM will feature some of the correspondence received. If you would like to submit an opinion, tips or advice please forward your letters to bramm@bramm-uk.org



NAMM NEWS | FEB | FIXER REGISTERS

February's NAMM NEWS states "A single register in an ideal world would make sense, but in reality, this could create a monopoly. History has shown organisations with a singular authority can overstep their remit and impose restrictive practices and exorbitant fees." Oddly, on the cover of the same publication is an advert from 1934, showing the annual subscription to NAMM costing 4 guineas – a huge comparative difference to their recently increased fees (6% on last year to £420+VAT). One possible conclusion is that the writer is referring to NAMM having an industry monopoly and would therefore presumably welcome competition from another trade association(!?)

The BRAMM board intentionally has 50% mason and 50% burial authority representation, ensuring that the register will not overstep its remit, we must work with burial authorities, not against them, as with masons! The NAMM writer is correct in saying a single register makes sense, we could probably reduce our annual subscription rate for masons below £100, as well as simplifying the registration process – beneficial to masons, burial authorities and the bereaved. Pushing 'project fear', NAMM's writer is not listening to the vast majority of masons who want a simple life and a lot less politics. Our trade is too small and declining, we should all be working together. Why don't we put it to a vote – a single register or stay with two registers? Or do NAMM fear losing their monopoly?!

MASON REPRESENTATIVE REQUIRED ON BOARD

A memorial mason representative position on the BRAMM board is available at the AGM this June, to maintain equal representation by 4 Burial Authorities and 4 Masons. If you are interested in contributing to our industry and can attend the 4 BRAMM Board meetings per annum and are prepared to serve for a 4 year term, then please apply in writing giving your experience and relevance for the role. The position is unpaid.

Apply to bramm@bramm-uk.org before 12th June 2019.



NEW, SIMPLIFIED, BURIAL AUTHORITY REGISTRATION

In order to *Improve Standards* within the industry and encourage safer burial grounds, we have decided to make it easier for burial authorities to join the scheme.

Burial authorities will simply need to agree that:

- All memorials should be erected to British Standard 8415.
- Recognise the BRAMM Register and allow BRAMM competent Masons to erect Memorials in their Cemeteries.

In return we will provide all the benefits of being a BRAMM Registered Authority, which include:

- Instantly check online to ensure masons/fixers entering your burial grounds are BRAMM registered – this is a very quick process with no account log-in required.
- Assurance that the BRAMM registered mason business is insured, has a risk assessment and a current health and safety policy.
- Confidence that the BRAMM registered mason will give a guarantee for the stability of the memorial.
- Certainty that those carrying a BRAMM Fixer Licence have achieved a recognised qualification in the safe fixing of memorials and will work in compliance with BS8415.
- Knowledge that those carrying a BRAMM Fixer Licence regularly engage in Continuous Professional Development to ensure skills are kept up-to-date and a culture of learning is maintained.
- Free access to the BRAMM Blue Book – a guide to the installation of memorials in accordance with BS8415. You can reference this guide in your regulations.
- Access to a dedicated liaison officer to provide support and guidance in monitoring and disciplining masons. BRAMM takes action when instances of non-compliance are reported by you. An equally represented appeals panel (as and when required) ensures your voice is heard, aiming for fairness and consistency throughout the UK.
- 50% local authority representation on the BRAMM Board to ensure your interests are protected in a fair and democratic manner.
- BRAMM has representation on the British Standards Committee – revisions to BS8415 are clearly communicated to burial authorities and registered masons, helping to remove any ambiguity and saving you time checking with British Standards.
- Regularly printed newsletters to keep the industry connected and up-to-date.
- Experience a huge saving in time and expense as you no longer need to run your own registration scheme.
- There's no charge for a burial authority to adopt the scheme.
- BRAMM has no commercial interests, only a desire for improved standards in the memorial masonry industry.

BRAMM

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The office is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays between the hours of 9.30am and 5pm

WE'D LIKE
TO WELCOME
STONEGUARD
AS THE PRINCIPAL
SPONSOR OF THE
BRAMM
NEWSLETTER
2019



THE UK'S LEADING MEMORIAL INSURANCE NOW SHINES OUT THAT LITTLE BIT MORE

Insurance is a sensible choice amongst customers wishing to protect their memorials against risks like subsidence, accidental damage or vandalism. It offers extra peace of mind that should the memorial be damaged, the potentially expensive repair will be covered.

StoneGuard, provided via Bridge Insurance Brokers Ltd, is the leader in this specialist field and has been protecting memorials for over 35 years. In this time, the package has kept in step with new risks and recently introduced upgrades to the policy to help it meet changing customer requirements.

Jason Kidd, Client Services Executive for StoneGuard, tells us how they are continually developing their cover:

"StoneGuard is a really popular package with customers because we understand what they need from insurance.

We also recognise that things change and we need to adapt accordingly. That's why we've boosted the cover with five brand new enhancements to protect memorials against new risks, in addition to the existing ones covered, at no extra cost."

Jason tells us the innovative memorial insurance now covers against tree sap damage, frost damage cover, non-weather staining damage and council topple testing fails. It also includes access to a bereavement counselling helpline for relatives. He concludes: *"These five new cover enhancements demonstrate our commitment to ensuring StoneGuard offers genuine peace of mind when relatives need it most."*



StoneGUARD
Memorial Insurance

The UK's favourite memorial insurance specialist is proud to sponsor the BRAMM newsletter

stoneguard.uk.com



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