Benefits of the BRAMM Scheme

You may have heard a great deal about British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons in recent months but are unsure about the benefits such a scheme could bring to your burial authority. So let’s look at what such a scheme can do:

General Benefits
1. Improve the standards of installation and safety within your burial ground.
2. Ensure the consistency of your memorial safety monitoring process with other burial authorities in the UK.
4. Ensure better standards of service to the bereaved.

Detailed Benefits
1. Ensure all masons need to be competent either by reaching the NVQ standard or by passing the BRAMM assessment.
2. Ensure the masons business is capable of operating effectively.
3. Improve the provision of consistent risk assessments, leading to safer working practices.
4. Provide guidance on the monitoring and discipline of memorial masons and an appeals panel where required.
5. Provide an easily referenced insurance monitoring service.
6. Carry out testing and accreditation of memorial masons.
7. Save authorities time and effort in developing their own registration schemes.

Fully supported by all the leading organisations in the industry.

With all these benefits the BRAMM scheme must be worth some consideration in your area. All you have to do is set the date and leave a few basic procedures in place (See the BRAMM Easy Start below). Go on...set the date and be part of a national drive towards the provision of safe burial grounds.

Easy Start Guide to BRAMM

- Whilst you may be waiting for your neighbours to register first as we all do when we see new procedures, ask yourself, what do I have to lose?
- Preparation
  1. Insist on NAMM Code standards of installation
  2. Arrange to have staff trained to supervise masons (ICCM do a half day training)
  3. Discuss your intentions with the masons
  4. Ensure you have a monitoring and disciplinary process in place (See BRAMM/ICCM advice)
  With preparation done the rest is simple.
- 4. Pick a suitable date
- 5. Register
- 6. Give masons 6 months to obtain their BRAMM fixed licences

You will then receive risk assessments to approve (as you have a legal duty to ensure those operating on your site do so safely). Then you are all set to go.

It's as simple as that!

No risks but the benefits of improved levels of service to the bereaved supported by the ICCM, NAMM and other organisations.
Monitoring and Disciplinary Guidance

Monitoring memorial masons means burial authorities need to be familiar with the NAMM Code of Working Practice and receive suitable training, such as that provided by the ICCM. Once trained we recommend random checking and supervision of memorial masons. Should breaches of the Code or your Management Rules and Regulations be breached then here are some guidelines:

1. Check the BRAMM Information guide for a full set of guidance.
2. Treat masons in a similar way to your own staff:
   - a minor breach (e.g., leaving rubbish behind): a word in their ear, continued minor breaches = advise that one more occasion will result in a formal warning.
   - More serious breach (e.g., use of non-compliant dowels) = either a first formal warning, or if more serious progress to a second formal warning.
   - Very serious breach (no ground anchor, non-compliant dowels, filled out of hours to avoid detection) — consider whether to give final formal warning or consider as gross misconduct and suspend the mason from operating within the burial ground.

BRAMM will act as appeals panel at any stage, but remember...your pay the expenses of the panel so consider what actions you take very carefully.

NVQ Route — Is a fixer’s licence required?

Are there any burial authorities out there that want to introduce BRAMM but have been approached by masons who do not want to follow the BRAMM route as their fixers are studying for their NVQ’s? If so does this pose a problem for you...it shouldn’t!

BRAMM, ICCM and NAMM advice in this situation is as follows:

1. Advise the masons that the BRAMM scheme is more than just fixer’s licences, it is also about business accreditation and support of burial authorities in technical matters.
2. Such masons will need to be registered with BRAMM so that their business is properly registered and advice can be given on the types of NVQ their fixers have obtained.
3. BRAMM will issue a BRAMM fixer’s licence to all NVQ holders for a small administration fee only.
4. If the mason insists that they are entitled to work in the cemetery because they employ competent fixers then they should be advised that guidance will need to be sought on their business and on other technical issues as such an assessment would be beyond the expertise of the authority. Such expert guidance is available from BRAMM or other organisations, however, the cost of a visit from an such an expert will be in the region of £500.00. This cost, along with any other additional administrative costs of the burial authority will need to be borne by the mason requiring special dispensation from the scheme.
5. Whilst no-one would want to prohibit potentially competent masons from installing in the burial ground. Masons who insist they do not wish to follow a recognised route must realise that to do this may incur additional costs and these will need to be met by those masons.

So the answer to the question, “Is a BRAMM fixers licence required?” is ideally YES, but if the mason is insistent then the company will need to pay the additional costs for any dispensation. The cost of this may be restrictive to most masons but they will have the choice and the burial authority will not be exposed to any potential court action for restrictive practices.