The original appeal of the BRAMM register was a simplified approach to the registration process that memorial masons go through, often with multiple burial authorities, in order to access burial grounds and thereby provide their service to the general public. The introduction of just one national scheme was designed to enable masons to go through the process just once, significantly reducing their administration time and associated costs, and for burial authorities, freedom from having to administer small, costly registration schemes. BRAMM was, and still is, a win-win for all parties.

Now, some years on, and in the same spirit, we have been reviewing the processes that enable the BRAMM scheme with the same intention of streamlining our own processes, to ensure that the experience of engaging with BRAMM, from both the perspective of a memorial mason and a burial authority is as straight-forward and simple as possible. This attention to procedure will result in time/cost savings for the scheme which are being passed on to memorial masons. On the following page we outline some of the many changes that you will experience in the coming months.
SIMPLIFIED ADMINISTRATION FOR MEMORIAL MASONS

1. Additional Branch Fees
   We have changed how we charge for companies with additional branches, incorporating traditional branch fees into the annual registration fee as follows:
   - Single Registration Fee = companies with 5 or less branches
   - Double Registration Fee = companies with 6 to 10 branches
   - Triple Registration Fee = companies with 11 to 15 branches
   Companies with 16+ branches will be referred to the BRAMM board.

2. Annual Paperwork
   Rather than requiring you to supply us with your employer’s liability insurance and public liability insurance certificates as and when these policies renew, we now simply request evidence of current documentation at the time of your BRAMM renewal. This allows you to complete our renewal process in one annual interaction, saving you time later in the year when insurance policies renew.

3. Certa Fixer Qualification transformed into a one day intensive
   The Certa course that quickly enables unqualified, yet experienced fixers the chance to gain a necessary, and worthy qualification to hold a BRAMM Fixer Licence has been condensed into a one day intensive course. This allows fixers to get back to work quicker and reduces associated costs for accommodation etc.

4. Revision of Fixer Licence renewal fees
   Fixer Licence Renewal fees have now been incorporated into the Annual Business Registration Fee removing a level of complexity and streamlining the process. Standard Annual Registration Fee is now set at £125 per company (based on a company with 5 or less branches).

5. Online CPD training
   5 year CPD training will now be carried out online through a multi-choice style assessment. This saves fixers time, not being away from work and the associated business costs of travel/accommodation etc.

6. VAT De-registration
   By de-registering for VAT we further simplify the administration of BRAMM and reduce costs for those masons operating below the VAT threshold.

7. A simplified new website and database
   A new system is being developed which will automatically prompt and enable you to update your details, helping to ensure the register is kept up-to-date.
BRITISH STANDARDS 5 YEAR REVIEW

British Standards will soon be having a scheduled review of BS8415 which sets out the standards to which BRAMM registered masons are required to adhere. If you wish to play an active role in shaping this standard you are able to comment in a consultation period directly with BSI. Here are the important dates:

Draft Start Date: 23 Nov 2017
Public Comments Start Date: 15 Jan 2018
Public Comment End Date: 23 March 2018

http://standardsdevelopment. bsigroup.com/projects/2017-00046

INTRODUCING OUR HONORARY TREASURER, BRENT STEVENSON

I used to say I am a 5th generation memorial mason since 1883, until recent family research proved our stone masonry heritage goes back a further four generations to the 1750s in Neilston, Scotland.

My father did not want me to join the family business due to the risk of silicosis (which killed him at the age of 63 years in 1983). However, after gaining a cost accountancy degree at Preston University, I managed to persuade both my father and my uncle. I had always worked in the family business during school holidays, mainly cleaning memorials or using the polishing machines, but in 1979 I joined the business full time. Today my two sons Daniel and James, together with my nephew Greg are also part of the family business, Stevenson Memorials. We all share in high hopes for James’ son Harry, but he is only one!

I was Honorary Treasurer of BRAMM when it first started some 15 years ago and at the same time was Honorary Treasurer of NAMM, as they both resided under the same roof. Last year my second six year term of office as Honorary Treasurer of NAMM came to an end. Under the Memorandum and Articles of NAMM it is a requirement to stand down for 12 months from holding office. Phil Potts, the then NEO of NAMM suggested that I apply for the vacant position at BRAMM, as it may assist with negotiations to form a single register again, overcoming politics that exist. I therefore agreed to put my name forward to serve on the BRAMM Board. I was then re-appointed Honorary Treasurer of BRAMM at the end of last year. I also serve our industry on the MAB Board – Memorial Awareness Board.

It is my personal view that our industry is too small for two fixing registers, however, whilst there are two registers then they should work in harmony wherever possible.

I have enjoyed the opportunity to put something back into our industry over the last 30 years’, especially our only trade association NAMM and have made many lifelong friends.
We are in the process of addressing how burial authorities check the status of masons on the BRAMM register.

Currently there is a log-in process that provides the authority access to a private area within the website and to digital copies of masons’ up-to-date insurance, risk assessment and health and safety policy paperwork.

We’ve decided this level of access is no longer necessary. Ultimately all the burial authority needs to know is whether or not the mason is registered. If they are, the burial authority can rest assured these documents are in place, if not, then the memorial mason should be denied access to the burial ground.

We will soon launch a new, very simple website that will allow anyone to search for a particular mason, or registered masons in a particular vicinity (a feature that does currently exist on the website) and the search result will determine if a mason is, or is not, registered.

This feature was traditionally used to promote registered masons to the public but will now also become the means by which burial authorities can check a mason’s status.

This means the log-in process is no longer needed! No more user names and passwords to remember. No more checking of scanned documentation.

Only in the event of a mason disputing their current status directly to the burial authority, or an incident in your grounds, will there be need to contact the BRAMM office, where upon a mason’s documentation can be reviewed.

Of course, we will expect burial authorities to check a mason’s status with every job application, just in case their registration has not been renewed or has been revoked.

AN EASY-TO-CHECK BRAMM REGISTER

CAN YOU POINT ME IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION?

If a member of the public approaches you, wanting a recommendation of a memorial mason, or to ask questions about what sort of memorials they’re allowed to have erected in your burial ground, this is the perfect time to direct them to the BRAMM website. Here they can access information on all BRAMM registered masons within an allocated radius.

This is an easy way to direct the public, highlight your scheme registration and fairly promote all BRAMM masons in your locality.

Remember to highlight the BRAMM scheme and the registered mason online search facility to the general public in any literature you produce.