



## **Bridgwater Town Council Muslim Burial Policy**

### **Review cycle**

**Every two years or at a committee meeting immediately following a necessary amendment**

<b>Date of Adoption/renewal</b>	<b>Resolution number</b>
<b>16<sup>th</sup> March2023</b>	<b>TC/2023/31</b>

Quantock Road Cemetery and St John's Cemetery, Bristol Road are administered by Bridgwater Town Council's Cemetery Services in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s214 and Schedule 26, the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 & the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order (amendment)1986.

All enquiries to the Cemeteries should be addressed to;

Cemeteries Administrator  
Bridgwater Town Council  
The Town Hall  
Bridgwater  
TA6 3AS

Telephone 01278 427692

Email: [cemeteries@bridgwater-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cemeteries@bridgwater-tc.gov.uk)

The office at the Town Hall is open 9.00am to 5pm Monday to Friday. It is advisable to make an appointment if you wish to visit the office because cemetery staff may not be available during burials or on other occasions.

## Introduction

This policy document is supplementary to the Cemetery Policy Document and contains additional information useful when a Muslim burial is required.

In this document you will find information regarding:

1. How to book a burial
2. Types of graves available
3. Purchasing the burial rights
4. Cemetery fees
5. Legal requires
6. How the actual burial takes place
7. Contact details including Mosque representatives

## How to book a burial

When a burial is required, please telephone the office on 01278 427692, as soon as possible, to book a provisional time and day. Interments may take place **between** the hours of 9.00am to 3.00pm Monday to Thursday, 9.00am to 2.00pm on Fridays. April to September. 9.00am to 2.30pm Monday to Thursday, 9.00am to 1.30pm on Fridays, October to March. Outside these times on weekdays, weekends, and bank holidays cover is subject to the Council's 'Out of Hours' policy.

### The information we require when a burial is booked:

**Funeral date and time:** the date and time the funeral cortege will arrive at the cemetery gates.

**Details of the deceased:** Full name, address, and age.

**Type of burial:** Whether a coffin, casket, or shroud is to be used. If a coffin or casket is to be used, we must have the coffin size to ensure the grave is the correct size. Coffin size must be given in writing, and we cannot be held responsible if this information is later found to be incorrect. Burials without coffins are

permitted provided the deceased is brought to the grave in a temporary coffin and screening is used to afford decency during the burial (screening by mourners is acceptable). If it is to be a shroud burial then the Council will provide a wood layer, so that earth will not be put directly on the body when the grave is filled with earth. Shroud only burials are not permitted if the deceased has a contagious or notifiable disease.

Please note that the graves will be dug as normal and will not be dug on an angle to face MECCA this is due to space within the cemeteries being premium.

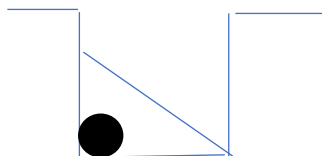
### **Notice of interment:**

A completed Notice of Interment must be received to confirm the booking. The form is available from the Office or on the Council's website and must be completed by 10.30am on the day of the burial. The person applying for the burial (the applicant) will be responsible for payment of the relevant fees. In the case of the applicant not being a Funeral Director fee **MUST** be paid BEFORE the burial can take place.

### **Type of grave: whether an earth grave or wooden line is required**

**Earthen graves** are usually single depth (4ft 6") in the Muslim section unless a specific request is made for a double depth grave for two. The grave will be shored for Health & Safety purposes and this needs to be removed prior to closing the grave.

**Wooden layer graves** are as earthen graves, but they will have a wooden layer to accommodate shroud burials.



### **Purchasing the burial rights:**

**Purchasing the Exclusive Right of Burial** ensures that no other burials may take place in the grave. A Grave Deed will be issued following the completion of the relevant form there can be a maximum of four owners, however they must understand that they all must act together. A memorial may be placed on the grave subject to the completion of a Memorial Permit application and payment of the appropriate cemetery fee. The Exclusive Right of Burial does not include the ownership of the actual land which remains with the Council.

**Unpurchased graves** can be provided in all cemeteries. These graves have no burial or memorial rights and non-family members may be buried in the same grave. It is important to consider the implications of a burial in a general grave.

### **Cemetery fees:**

The fee for a burial must be paid to the Council or a funeral director prior to the burial taking place. The fees are calculated by adding the interment and purchase fee together plus any 'out of hours' fee plus a

wooden layer grave fee (which is at cost). Receipts will be issued for any money paid to the Council. A list of the current Fees and Charges can be obtained from the Council's website or through the Council's Office. Fees usually change each April. For non-residents of Bridgwater Town Parish, the full price is double the subsidised figure for Bridgwater Town Parish residents, except for the Transfer of Burial Rights and Search fees. If a person has lived outside the Parish, had to be moved for medical reasons that were beyond their control and died outside the district, then the residents' discount will be applied on the fees to be charged. The Council may ask for documented evidence of these circumstances.

## **The Legal requirements:**

A Registrar's Certificate or Coroner's Order for burial must be delivered to the Cemetery Office before a burial can proceed. The burial cannot proceed if the Certificate has been forgotten except where the funeral director has signed a declaration (Form 18) in accordance with the Birth and Deaths Registration Act 1926.

## **How the actual burial takes place**

A member of the Council's staff will meet the cortege at the cemetery gates at the time arranged for the burial. They will witness the burial, advise and assist whenever required. Also, the family must nominate one person to be a point of contact for the cemetery staff.

### **Lowering the body into the grave**

'Webs' are provided to go under the coffin/shroud and to enable the 'bearers' to carefully lower the coffin/body into the grave. It is also acceptable for a sheet to be used for lowering a shrouded body and this must be provided by the Funeral Director or family. The webs/sheet must then be removed and left to the side of the grave. The Council's staff will then remove the shoring. In case of a wooden layer grave the wood will then be placed in the grave by Council staff.

### **Returning the soil to the grave.**

In many cases families and mourners wish to return the soil to the grave, however due to Health & Safety regulations this is not allowed. The initial filling is done by the family and mourners who wish to so this using shovels. The balance is filled by the Council's machinery. The grave will be left mounded to allow for settlement.

### **After the burial.**

After a period of settlement, the grave space will be levelled off and grass seeded.

## **Useful contacts**

Bridgwater Islamic Centre, 10 Friarn Street, Bridgwater TA6 3HL  
Tel Nur Miah 0794640841, Karim Miah 07581460571, Awal Miah 07588511543

Taunton Islamic Centre, 2 Tower Lane, Taunton  
Tel 01823 33464