



Cemeteries Out of Hours Procedure

Bridgwater Town Council

May 2025

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Service Explanation	2
3. Burial Arrangements	2
4. Funeral Times	3
4.1. Same Day Bookings – Monday to Friday	3
4.2. Next day bookings – Monday to Friday	3
4.3. Out of hours – Beyond the normal working day and weekends	3

1. Introduction

This policy sets out Bridgwater Town Council's position in the provision of burials to be undertaken at short notice or outside of normal working hours in order to meet the Religious or Cultural needs of the local population.

This policy is effective from 1 April 2020 and will be reviewed on a regular basis and any changes or amendments duly published.

This Policy Document relates to the provision of the Registration Services provided by Somerset Council.

2. Service Explanation

Short notice does not mean Same Day. The service enables a burial to take place **as soon as possible after death** providing that certain criteria are met as set out in this policy document. It must be accepted that due to the legislative process that has to be followed after a death and the preparation for a burial the notification times in this policy **are not flexible**.

If any of the criteria cannot be met by any person making the funeral arrangements, then the service will be withdrawn until such time as the notification times can be met. It must be remembered that this could result in the delay or cancellation of a funeral service and the person making the funeral arrangements must be confident that the requirements of this policy can be met before committing to informing mourners of the date and time of the funeral. Bridgwater Town Council cannot accept any liability for the delay or cancellation of a funeral if this policy is not met.

Out of Hours means provision of the services Weekdays beyond the normal day working hours and weekends. The services will be unavailable on all bank holidays.

Traditionally no Cemetery staff are available on bank holidays and no level of service can be provided.

All bookings are subject to the availability of funeral slots and staff. No Guarantee is given that a funeral can go ahead in all cases, confirmation will be given at the time of booking.

Under no circumstances will any funeral already booked be cancelled or delayed to accommodate a short notice funeral.

This service will be reviewed annually, and any amendments discussed with stakeholders before implementation.

Burial Arrangements:

For any funeral to be arranged at short notice the Registration process must have been completed and Bridgwater Town Council Administration Office contacted by

10.30 AM – note that any call received after this time may only be booked for the following day.

In terms of providing the agreed level of service the above is not flexible to any person under any circumstances.

The office will insist on being given the Reference Number from the Registrars Certificate before making a booking for the burial, if this is not given or available a booking cannot be made.

Funeral times will only be offered at short notice if:

- Bridgwater Town Council Administration Office had been contacted before 10.30am on any day of the week (except those days where the service is non-operational).
- The Death had been properly Registered, and the correct Certification has been issued by the Registrar.
- The Application for the burial wishes to utilise a grave at St John Cemetery, Bristol Road, Bridgwater.
- The fees are paid upfront unless arrangements are being made via a Funeral Director.

If it is not possible to comply with **ANY** of the above for **ANY** reason, a short notice funeral cannot be offered, and arrangements must be made for the following day. Note that this service does not allow for the burial of Cremated Remains.

3. Funeral Times

4.1. Same Day Bookings – Monday to Friday

Funerals to be arranged for the same day service will only be permitted at 1.30pm. 2.30pm (Monday to

Thursday) and 1.30pm (Friday only) or 3.00pm (note 3.00pm time is only available 1st April to 30th September)

4.2. Next day bookings – Monday to Friday

Funerals to be arranged for the next day can be made for any available time. Available times are as follows: - 9.30am to 2.30pm (Monday to Thursday) and 9.30am to 1.30pm (Fridays) Also 3.00pm is available Monday to Thursday (1st April to 30th September)

4.3. Out of hours – Beyond the normal working day and weekends

Funerals arranged for beyond the normal day will be available as staff permits along with additional fees to be paid.

Funerals arranged for weekends will be made for either 2.00pm or 3.00pm as staff permits along with additional fees to be paid.