

City of Wolverhampton Council

BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

Rules and Regulations

In respect of the Cemeteries and Crematorium

Introduction

Rules and Regulations are a necessary requirement for the management of the City of Wolverhampton City Council's Cemeteries and Crematorium. Whilst every effort has been made to avoid restricting individual rights and choices, the need for safe and tidy grounds and the provision of cemeteries as places for peaceful contemplation are also important considerations.

The Council adopted the Charter for the Bereaved in 2004 which contains 35 rights and sets standards of service related to burial, cremation and funerals generally.

Under this Charter, you have the right to be given a copy of our rules and regulations, together with a written explanation why a particular regulation has been used to restrict or otherwise influence your rights.

A reference copy of the Charter can be borrowed from the Bereavement Services office and a further leaflet detailing the rights is also available upon application.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

1. Terms

- a. "The City Council" means City of Wolverhampton Council.
- b. "The Manager" means the Bereavement Services Manager or any person empowered to act on behalf of the Council.
- c. "The Cemetery" means the City of Wolverhampton Council's cemeteries, these being Beacon Hill, Bilston, Bushbury, Danescourt, Hall Green, Merridale and Penn.
- d. "The Crematorium" means Bushbury Crematorium.

2. Cemetery/Crematorium Opening Times

All Cemetery grounds except Bushbury are open to visitors throughout the year as follows:

April through to September

Weekdays 08.00am – 7.00pm

Weekends and Bank Holidays 08.00am – 7.00pm

March and October

Weekdays 8.00am to 4.00pm

Weekends and Bank Holidays 08.00am to 5.00pm

November to February

Weekdays 8.00am to 4.00pm

Weekends and Bank Holidays 08.00am to 4.00pm

NB: Bushbury Cemetery and Crematorium grounds opens as follows:-

April through to September 08.00am – 7.00pm

March and October 08.00am – 5.00pm

November to February 08.00am – 5.00pm. (At weekends and Bank Holidays, this reverts to 4.00pm)

Please note that the locking up procedure will commence 15 minutes prior to the stated closing time.

3. Vehicles

- a. Vehicles shall keep strictly to the cemetery roads avoiding grass areas at all times.
- b. The speed limit in the cemetery grounds is 5 miles an hour.
- c. Parking is allowed on the cemetery roads, but priority must be given to any funeral corteges.
- d. The City Council accepts no responsibility for any theft from vehicles parked in the cemetery.

4. Children

Children under 14 are advised to be under adult supervision when visiting a cemetery. This is for their own safety.

5. Dogs

- a. Dogs are allowed within the cemetery grounds but must be kept on a leash.
- b. Assistance dogs only are allowed in the Crematorium chapels or cemetery buildings

6. Photographs

No person shall take any photograph of any grave, memorial, building or funeral gathering within the cemetery without the permission of the manager. This is to ensure the privacy rights of individuals.

7. Sale of Goods

The sale of goods and/or the soliciting of orders within the cemetery is strictly prohibited, so as not to cause any distress to other users.

8. Responsibility for Damage

The City Council accepts no responsibility for any damage to a grave or memorial either by natural causes or by a third party.

9. Plants on Graves

The City Council reserves the right to prune or remove any trees, shrubs or plants growing on graves, if they are deemed to be causing an obstruction to grounds maintenance or the public or affecting memorial stability.

10. Responsibility for Orders

The City Council will not be held responsible for any misunderstandings that arise from orders or instructions given over the telephone.

11. Fees

All fees and charges must be paid before the funeral, except where account facilities have been arranged with the funeral director or monumental mason.

12. Gratuities

City Council staff are not allowed to accept any gifts or money from the public or from representatives of companies.

13. Amendments

The City Council reserves the right to make amendments to these rules and regulations at any time.

BURIALS

We have adopted the Guiding Principles for Burial Services as issued by the Institute of Cemeteries and Crematorium Management (ICCM).

14. Booking Burial Service Times

Applications for burial must be made to the Bereavement Services office (Telephone 01902 554994) between the hours of 9.00am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday, except Bank and Council Holidays.

15. Interment Notices

- a. Completed interment notices must be received at the Bereavement Services office by 10.00am at least two clear working days before the planned day of burial.
- b. The coffin or casket size must also be clearly stated in writing.
- c. Failure to complete this form correctly **may** result in the postponement of the funeral.
- d. Any late alterations to the coffin/casket size, which results in an amendment to a grave, **may** incur an additional charge.

16. Times of Burial

The normal hours for interments to take place are between 9.00am and 2.30pm throughout the year. (Burial of cremated remains can take place at 3.00pm).

17. Certificate for Disposal

The Registrar's Certificate for Disposal or Coroner's Order must be received at the Bereavement Services office prior to the funeral.

18. Re-opening Graves

- a. Where a grant of exclusive right of burial has been issued, the grave or vault cannot be opened without the written permission of the registered owner, unless the burial is to be that of the registered owner.
- b. Where a request to bury the registered owner in his/her grave is received, the name of the deceased as shown on the Registrar's Certificate for Disposal must be exactly the same as the name on the coffin plate. Any

variation will require the submission of a written declaration before the burial can take place.

- c. If you cannot find your grant of exclusive right of burial, the burial **may** not be allowed to proceed before a written declaration has been prepared and received at the Bereavement Services office.

19. Coffins

Bodies must be enclosed in a suitable coffin or casket on arrival at the cemetery and must not be removed for the purpose of interment.

20. Grave Excavations

Grave owners are advised that it **may** be necessary to temporarily store excavations from a neighbouring grave on to your grave until any forthcoming interment has taken place.

21. Bearers

The funeral director or family are responsible for providing a minimum of four bearers to carry the coffin from the hearse to the grave and to lower the coffin into the grave.

22. Floral Tributes

Floral tributes from graves will be removed when they have withered or are unsightly, but in any case not until at least fourteen full days after the interment.

23. Brick Graves

Requests for brick graves should be submitted in writing to the manager for approval, including a risk assessment and method statement at least 7 days before the anticipated funeral date.

24. Turfing of Graves

Graves will not be turfed during the late spring and summer seasons and will instead be seeded where requested.

CREMATION

We have adopted the Guiding Principles for Cremation Services that are issued by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM). Every cremation is undertaken in accordance with the Code of Cremation Practise as determined by the Federation of British Cremation Authorities (FBCA).

25. Booking Cremation Service Times

Cremation bookings must be made to the Call Centre (Tel 01902 554995) between the hours of 9.00am and 4.30pm. Monday to Friday, except Bank and Council holidays.

26. Cremation Papers

We must receive completed forms with the Order for Cremation at the Bereavement Services office by 10.00am at least two working days prior to the

cremation. This is to allow the Medical Referee sufficient time to peruse the papers and undertake any checks required before authorising the cremation.

27. Service Tenure

- a. Services should ideally be timetabled for around thirty five minutes in length in order to allow for entering and vacating the chapel within the allocated forty five minute schedule.
- b. If it is known that the service is to be attended by a lot of mourners, families are encouraged to book a double service time.

28. Music

- a. The industry known Wesley Music Media system is used at Bushbury Crematorium. All music requests should be recorded on Wesley Music form and submitted to the Crematorium at least two working days prior to the service.
- b. An organ is available in both chapels, but the Funeral Director/family is expected to organise the use of an organist. They are no longer provided by the Crematorium.

29. Curtains

The curtains will close around the coffin towards the end of the service unless otherwise instructed.

30. Coffins

- a. Each body whether an adult or child must be brought to the Crematorium for cremation in a wooden or suitable environmentally friendly coffin or casket. (Biodegradable coffins **must** have a rigid base of at least 25mm thickness).
- b. The maximum size of any coffin including any handles fitted is as follows:
 - West Chapel – 30” wide, 83” long, 23” deep.
 - East Chapel – 36” wide, 83” long, 23” deep.
 - Caskets can be accepted in the East Chapel up to 36” wide.
 - The coffin must bear a nameplate stating the full name of the deceased, which shall be checked by the chapel attendant before entry into the chapel. Any variation from the order for cremation details will require the submission of a written declaration before the cremation can proceed.
- c. Funeral Directors and families should refer to our separate leaflet on coffins for any special requirements pertaining to the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

31. Bearers

The funeral director or family are responsible for providing a minimum of four bearers to carry the coffin from the hearse to the catafalque.

32. Flowers

- a. The funeral director or family shall ensure that any floral tributes placed upon the coffin are removed to the flower terrace at the conclusion of the service.
- b. Floral tributes will be removed from the terrace by 8-00am a week following the cremation. This is to make room for tributes for forthcoming funerals.
- c. Should you wish to collect flowers or cards before they are removed, please do so before the time stated above.

33. Viewing the Committal

Facilities are available for you to view the coffin being placed into the cremator (max 6 persons). If you wish to take up this option, you must inform us at the time of booking the cremation.

34. Disposal of Cremated Remains

- a. We can store cremated remains up to one month after a funeral. If at the end of this period we have not received your instructions, we will contact you in order to obtain your preference for disposal.
- b. For further information on the options available to you, please request a leaflet.

35. Disposal Certificate

If you require the interment of cremated remains within one of our cemeteries, and the cremation did not take place at Bushbury Crematorium, we require a disposal certificate from the appropriate cremation authority.

36. Cremation Memorials

Certain cremation memorials are only available for purchase or lease from the City Council. Other memorials are, of course, available from a memorial mason. Please ask for a leaflet.

37. Garden of Remembrance

- a. The placing of floral tributes and other items are not permitted in the Garden of Remembrance, Woodland Garden and Granite Cross feature in the Bushbury Crematorium grounds. This is in order to retain the natural appearance of the areas and to aid grounds maintenance.
- b. Facilities are available at the Crematorium for such tributes on the East Chapel Terrace, Flower room and in the flower troughs at the base of the Granite Cross feature.

MEMORIAL REGULATIONS

This section should be read in conjunction with our leaflet – Guidance on the Erection and Maintenance of Memorials in Cemeteries.

38. Exclusive Right

Except for the Babies Memorial Garden, memorials can only be placed upon graves for which an exclusive right of burial has been granted.

39. Authority

The installation of new memorials, renovation of existing memorials and added inscriptions to memorials can only be carried out with the authority of the registered owner and with the authority of the City Council.

40. Installation Standards

All new memorials and any removed for re-inscription purposes shall be installed to the National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) latest Code of Working Practice.

41. Registration Scheme

Only masons registered under the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM) scheme shall be permitted to carry out work within the cemetery.

42. Permits

Applications for new memorials and/or additional inscriptions to existing memorials must be submitted to the Bereavement Services office prior to any memorial being erected. Applications should include a drawing showing the dimensions of the memorial, the type of material to be used and proposed construction methods.

43. Fees

No permit will be issued unless the appropriate fee has been received, except where account facilities have been arranged with the funeral director or monumental mason.

44. Inscriptions

- a. Details of inscriptions proposed are also required in order to prevent any possible offence being caused to other cemetery users. However, we welcome the use of nicknames, local dialect and/or non-standard verse.
- b. All new memorials must be inscribed with the grave number, on the bottom right hand corner at the front of the memorial.
- c. Any trade names shall be inscribed on the bottom left hand corner of the memorial.

45. Concrete Plinths

- a. Where concrete plinths have been provided for memorials, all tributes, mementos, etc including vases and ornaments must remain within the channel provided and not encroach onto the grassed area in order to

ensure that grounds maintenance tasks can be undertaken without the risk of causing damage.

- b. Nothing should be placed in the channel in front of memorials at Bushbury, Beacon Hill, Bilston and Merridale cemeteries

46. Lawned Areas

Any kerb sets, fencing or other delineation of a grave space onto a lawned area will be removed following a period of notice given, where possible, to the registered owner in writing. This is to maintain the uniform lawned appearance of the cemetery and to aid grounds maintenance. The following Cemeteries are classed as Lawn Plot Cemeteries: Penn, Hall Green, Danescourt, Beacon Hill, Bushbury and some areas within Bilston and Merridale cemeteries.

47. Tributes

Decoration, tributes, wind-chimes, ornaments etc should be confined to the individual grave and not placed onto City Council property, including trees, fence lines and buildings. The City Council reserve the right to remove any tribute deemed likely to cause offence to other cemetery users without prior notification. Such items will be retained for a period of two months for collection by the owner.

48. Safety Hazards

Items deemed to present an immediate safety hazard to cemetery visitors and staff will be removed without any prior notification and will be retained for a period of two months for collection by the owner.

49. Responsibility for Theft

The City Council accepts no responsibility for the theft of memorials, ornaments, mementos etc from graves.

50. Materials

All memorials should be constructed in natural stone. The City Council, however, welcomes alternative design requests, all of which will be viewed on their merits, but reserves the right to refuse for aesthetic or other reasons.

51. Protective Frames

Protective frames, up to a maximum width of 2" for flat-stone memorials are permitted in Bilston and Beacon Hill Cemeteries only and must bear the appropriate grave number.

52. Photographs

Ceramic photographs are permitted on all memorials, subject to approval.

53. Vases

Flower vases can be built into the base of a headstone or provided at the top or bottom of a flatstone memorial. Free standing vases are permitted in accordance with the detailed site memorial regulations.

54. Management of Memorials

The City Council, as part of its Memorial Management policy, will routinely inspect all memorials within our cemeteries. Details of the policy are available upon request.

55. Removal of Memorials

The City Council reserves the right to remove any memorial from display, following a reasonable period of notice to the owner, if these regulations are infringed or the memorial is in a state of disrepair.

56. Working Hours

No work to or fixing of memorials shall take place at weekends/bank holidays or after 4-00pm Monday to Friday.