


<p><b>PARKS &amp; OPEN SPACES</b> <b>Cemeteries Service</b></p> <p><b>Trevor I Jackson AICCM</b> <b>Cemeteries Manager/Registrar</b></p> <p><b>Janet A Simmonds MICCM</b> <b>Deputy Cemeteries Manager</b></p> <p>Direct Line: 01865 252363 Mobile: 07919 298312 Fax: 01865 553275 E-mail: cemeteries@oxford.gov.uk</p>	
<p>Parks &amp; Open Spaces Cutteslowe Park Harbord Road Oxford OX2 8ES</p>	

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## **OXFORD CITY COUNCIL PROCEDURES FOR ARRANGING UNPURCHASED INTERMENTS IN OXFORD CITY CEMETERIES**

At what is undoubtedly a difficult and traumatic time for any family and friends alike we are keen to make our procedures for unpurchased interments as simple and as practical as possible.

All unpurchased interments are generally conducted at Botley Cemetery. Existing unpurchased graves with sufficient space remaining are usually re-opened to enable the interment to take place.

Unpurchased interments would not normally be undertaken for deceased who were residing outside of the Oxford City boundary at the time of death.

The opening times of the Cemeteries Office are:

Mon to Fri 9.00 am to 4.00 pm

Personal callers should be aware that it is not always possible to deal with people without appointments as Cemeteries Service staff may be attending funerals.

### **Unpurchased Interments**

Funerals are normally arranged directly with a contracted funeral director. The funeral director is then responsible for booking an interment time with the Cemeteries Service and arranging for a celebrant/officiant. The booking time for unpurchased interments is usually 9.30 am or 10.00 am.

Before any interment can take place the Cemeteries Service will require a completed Interment Form, payment by cheque or cash, not credit or debit cards, and a green Certificate for Burial in the case of a coffin burial. These items are to be provided by the funeral director.

If there are any specific needs during an interment these requirements should be passed to the Cemeteries Service at the earliest opportunity and preferably prior to the day of the funeral. Examples of specific needs would be:

- An attendance of more than 4 people.
- Any limousine being used on the funeral.
- More than a 15 minute period needed at the graveside.

Please note that following recent problems caused by balloon and lantern releases in UK airspace the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) have issued guidelines to organisers of events that may use them in a document from the Directorate of Airspace Policy (CAP 736) entitled Operation of Directed Light, Fireworks, Toy Balloons and Sky Lanterns Within UK Airspace dated February 2011. The CAA requires 28 days notice of any planned release of balloons or lanterns to allow time for the request to be considered and notifications made to nearby airfields. Consequently as all funerals tend to be conducted in a timescale inside the 28 day notification requirement this means that we cannot allow balloon or lantern releases from funerals in the Oxford cemeteries.

The Cemeteries Service will ensure that a suitable unpurchased grave is prepared and dressed prior to the scheduled interment time. The grave will be excavated to the necessary depth. Single graves will be at least 4 feet deep and double graves will be at least 6 feet deep. The grave will be dug to a size capable of taking the coffin. The size of the coffin is to be given to the Cemeteries Office staff in good time so that a suitably sized grave can be prepared. Hydraulic shoring will be used to support the grave walls.

A member of the Cemeteries Service staff will be present at all unpurchased interments to answer any questions from those attending and to ensure that the interment proceeds as planned in a dignified manner.

Immediately following the departure of any mourners from the graveside Cemeteries Service staff will remove the dressing mats and boards and backfill the grave either using mechanical or manual means. Any floral tributes and grave marker will be placed neatly on the grave and the area left tidy. The floral tributes will remain in place for at least 21 days following the interment.

## **Memorials**

No memorial may be installed on the grave unless the Exclusive Rights of Burial have been purchased. A memorial plaque may be purchased through a local memorial mason and can only be installed at a location directed by the Cemeteries Manager, but not on the grave.

## **Purchasing Exclusive Right of Burial**

Any family member or close friend of the deceased may contact the Cemeteries Service following the interment to discuss purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial. If the deceased was the most recent interment in the grave the right of purchase remains with family members in the first instance or with close friends. Once any other interment is undertaken in that grave the right to purchase will pass to the family members or close friends of the subsequent deceased.

## **Exceptional Weather Conditions**

Where there are exceptional weather conditions cemetery users or funeral directors should not presume that the cemeteries will be open for normal business and should check in advance using the contact numbers at the beginning of this procedure. Cemeteries staff will make every attempt to open the cemeteries and, where possible, all pre-arranged funerals will take place but this cannot be guaranteed if there is an unnecessary risk to public safety. Opening and closing times may vary from those published during such periods.