



FAQs

How do I make arrangements to be buried?

It is important to make your wishes known to your representative i.e. your next of kin or your executor. If you do not make your wishes known it may be assumed at the time of making the funeral arrangements that you had no preference towards burial or cremation and therefore your wishes may not be carried out.

Can I have a burial service in my local church?

Yes. You should make your wishes known to your next of kin or other personal representative who will be responsible for making your funeral arrangements.

Do I have to purchase a grave?

No. Burial can be arranged in an unpurchased grave, selected by the local authority, specifically for the purpose of burying unrelated persons. No memorial can be erected upon an unpurchased grave.

Can I buy a grave before I die?

Yes. The Exclusive Right of Burial can be purchased for a grave in South Bristol Cemetery, for future use.

What evidence do I have that the grave is purchased?

It is the Exclusive Right of Burial that is purchased and not the grave itself. We (the Burial Authority) will have a record of all rights purchased to graves in our Cemeteries. In addition the owner will be issued with a Grant of Right of Burial which will state the owner's name, the grave number/section and the term of years that the right exists. It is only the owner of the right who can authorise a burial or the placement of a memorial.

Can I have a temporary marker on the grave?

Yes, but you should advise the Cemetery office that you intend to place a marker on the grave and confirm the size and type of material which is acceptable. Temporary markers are permitted for no more than one year, prior to a permanent memorial being erected. A stonemason may be able to provide a temporary vase until such time as the new memorial has been erected.

How do I make arrangements for a new memorial?

A memorial can only be placed upon a grave where the Right of Burial has been purchased, and with the authority of the grave owner. In most cases a monumental mason will make the application for the permit and supply a sketch, inscription details and fee on your behalf.

Is it necessary for my new memorial to be removed if the grave is to be reopened?

Memorials are removed from many graves prior to opening, for Health and Safety reasons and/or to prevent unnecessary damage. The memorial will be removed by a monumental mason, to his premises, to await instructions from the family to reinstate.

What can I do about my family's old gravestone?

There are many gravestones in our cemeteries which are neglected and in a poor state of repair. As the families concerned provided the memorials, the council does accept responsibility for repairing them. If requested, the council will remove a memorial, either partially or completely free of charge. Alternatively, the family may make arrangements with a stonemason for a memorial to be restored, modified or cleared. In most cases the removal of old kerbstones from the graves enhances the appearance of older headstones.

Will the council maintain my grave?

Yes, the council has a 'grave maintenance scheme'. For an annual payment individual graves are planted with flowers twice a year. Contact the cemetery office for details.

Can I have my cremated remains buried in my family grave?

Yes, providing this is authorised by the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial. The cremated remains must be buried in a wooden or other biodegradable container and we can no longer arrange loose burials (scatters) in a family grave.