

Bickenhill & Marston Green Parish Council

Guidance for Funeral Directors

Bickenhill & Marston Green Parish Council (the “Council”) has drawn up this guidance note to draw the attention of funeral directors arranging interments in the Marston Green Burial Ground to key issues that must be observed. All interment bookings and general enquiries should be directed to:

The Clerk to the Council, Bickenhill & Marston Green Parish Council, Parish Office, Recreation Ground, Bickenhill Road, Marston Green, Birmingham B37 7ER

Phone Number: 0121 779 4040
Email: clerk@bmgpc.org

This guidance note should be read in conjunction with the Burial Ground Regulations and the Memorials Policy and all documents are supplementary to the provisions of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order (1977) and any other appropriate regulations currently in force.

General Regulations

From 1 April 2023 the Council resolved that the sale of grave and ashes plots would be reserved for residents of the Parish only. A resident is defined as somebody who resides within the Parish of Bickenhill & Marston Green.

The scale of fees will be published annually. The Council will determine the appropriate fee to be paid for the funeral and issue an invoice which is payable on receipt and must be paid fully in advance of the interment. An interment cannot take place until payment is received and cleared.

Graves

Graves will be allocated on a next available basis at the final discretion of the Council.

The Exclusive Right of Burial is issued for a period of 75 years and may only be transferred to another person or persons who are entitled via the legal process adopted by the Council.

All graves will be excavated and prepared for interment by Mark Barry (07725 723 876). Funeral Directors should liaise with Mark to arrange this. The depth of each grave will be determined by the Parish Council in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order (1977). Graves may contain:

- 2 coffins, or
- 1 coffin and up to 6 cremated remains, or
- 2 coffins and up to 6 cremated remains; or
- 6 cremated remains

Ashes plots accommodating up to two interments are available for cremated remains and these are excavated by the Council's groundsmen.

After a period of approximately 6 months, the Council will level the grave and re-turf or seed as appropriate. Works to level graves are usually carried out during Spring or Autumn.

Booking of Interments

A provisional booking for a funeral may be made by telephone to the Clerk to the Council. The provisional booking must be followed by the submission of a completed Notice of Interment form at least 10 working days in advance of the interment date.

The funeral director is responsible for determining the dimensions of the grave to be excavated.

As much information relating to the funeral as possible must be given to the Clerk in advance, especially

if it is unusual, e.g. a large number of mourners are expected.

Coffins

Coffins and urns for burial must be made from suitable bio-degradable materials such as wood, wicker, bamboo, cardboard etc. Handles will typically be made of metal or biodegradable materials. The Parish Council may, at its discretion, approve alternative materials on a case-by-case basis.

Interments

Interments take place on weekdays only between the hours of 10.00 and 15.00 (excluding Bank or other Public Holidays). The time appointed for an interment must be punctually observed.

All funerals will be subject to the control of the Council's designated officer who will meet the cortege and direct it to the grave as appropriate.

Funeral flowers will be placed on top of the grave following backfilling and will remain in situ for a minimum of 5 days before being cleared by Council staff (unless previously cleared by the family)

Requests for mourners to lower or backfill must be made to the Council and a risk assessment provided in advance of the interment. The funeral director must also sign an indemnity form (available from the Council) which should also be submitted ahead of the interment. If the risk assessment and indemnity form are not provided prior to the interment, mourners will not be permitted to lower or backfill.

Playing Music at Interments

The Council has resolved to allow music to be played at interments provided that:

- an application is made to the Council at the time of booking stating the title of the music and performing artist for each piece of music requested.
- consideration will be given to the request and the funeral director advised if the request is approved or not prior to the interment.
- where an application is approved, music must be played at a volume agreed with the designated officer which is respectful of the location and does not disturb visitors at the burial ground.

Scattering of Cremated Remains

The scattering of cremated remains is not permitted. Cremated remains must be interred in a designated grave or ashes plot.

Release of birds/balloons/inflatables

Given the proximity to Birmingham Airport, the Council does not permit the release of doves or any other birds or inflatables including balloons.

Memorials

Before a memorial may be erected or works undertaken to an existing memorial, an application must be submitted to the Clerk on the appropriate form. All fees are to be paid to the Council prior to installation. On approval, a permit will be issued to the responsible stone mason.

It is the responsibility of the person making the funeral arrangements to ensure that any memorial is removed from the grave at least 48 working hours prior to the date and time of the funeral.

All memorials fixed in the Burial Ground must comply with the latest British Standard. Ground anchors and fixing systems must have a certificate of compliance with BS8415 (latest version). Only holders of current BRAMM or NAMM Fixer Licences will be permitted to work in the burial ground.

In relation to a grave plot, memorials may not be fitted for a period of nine months following a burial. The maximum size of a lawn memorial is 3' by 2' by 12". A memorial tablet on a cremated remains plot must not exceed 16" by 12" (landscape) by 4".

The Council reserves the right to amend this Guidance Note and to deal with any circumstances or contingency not provided for herein.