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# Burials

What you need to know

A list of frequently asked questions

### **Why are graves dug so deep?**

Graves have to be dug to a sufficient depth to allow for future burials to take place. Therefore, each grave needs to be deep enough to allow for the depth of any coffins and to accommodate the legal requirements of undisturbed earth which must be left between each interment.

### **How soon are graves filled in?**

Graves are usually prepared for burial the day before a funeral. Immediately after the mourners have departed the graveside, the grave is backfilled and made tidy. This work is completed on the day of the burial.

### **Some people wait while the grave is filled in. Why is this?**

Some cultures require that the grave is filled in while the family watch or they may wish to undertake the backfilling of the grave themselves. When this is the family's wish, it is essential that the cemetery is made aware of their requirements when the burial is first arranged. This will ensure we can make certain preparations and that the family's safety is protected during the backfilling process.

### **Can anyone witness the grave being filled?**

Yes, but the cemetery will need to be

advised of this before the funeral takes place.

### **When will I be able to erect a memorial onto the grave?**

Where individual foundations are provided for lawn style memorials, these are situated on solid ground at the head end of the grave. In these circumstances and with the use of ground anchors and fixings that comply with any British Standard, the BRAMM blue book and National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM), recommended code of practice, it is necessary to allow six months for any major settlement to occur.

### **Why can't I put a full memorial over the surface of a grave?**

Hull City Council's cemeteries are lawn graves, which are designed on the war grave principle. This means they have a memorial of limited size at the head of the grave, with the rest of the grave laid to lawn.

Lawn graves enable us to maintain respectful and neat surroundings for all families. Our graves are available on the understanding that only lawn style memorials are erected and full memorials are no longer permitted in the cemeteries.

### **Why can't I have what I want on the grave?**

When a new grave is purchased, it is not the ownership of the land itself that is purchased, but the rights to have burials take place in that grave. These rights are sold, or to be more correct, 'granted' together with the rights to erect a memorial on the grave, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the cemetery.

It is important that you make yourself aware of the cemetery rules and regulations so that disappointment and further distress or upset will not be experienced. Breakable items such as glass, vases or fragile ornaments are not permitted, as these fracture leaving dangerous shards that put others at risk. Please contact the bereavement services administration office about the choices and options available.

Can I put an extra coffin into a grave designed for two coffins?

When a grave is purchased to take two full body burials, the depth to which the grave is excavated for the first burial must

take into account the need for the second burial. There are legal requirements as to how much earth must be left on top of the last coffin and it is, therefore, not physically possible to put an extra coffin into the grave without breaking the law. However, after the grave is full for coffins, burial of cremated remains may still be buried within the grave.

I want to bury cremated remains in the grave. Why do I have to decide whether there will be anymore burials before this can be done?

It is against the law to disturb human remains without licence (including cremated remains in a casket or urn), and therefore no further burials will be possible in the grave until a licence has been obtained. Cremated remains can be buried in the grave, at full depth. In this case they will not be disturbed by further full body burials. There will also be an additional charge for opening the grave, as we will need to excavate a grave to this depth.