

# Cemeteries Rules & Regulations – 2025/26

Made by the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, for the General Management, Regulation and Control of Council Operated Cemeteries provided by Council and prescribing the Rules and Regulations under which the exclusive right of burial may be purchased in such parts as may be appropriated for that purpose.

The rules apply to the Council Cemeteries and should be read in conjunction with the Burial Grounds Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992. As amended.

In these Rules “The Council” means the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.

MADE BY THE LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL FOR THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT, REGULATION AND CONTROL OF THE COUNCIL CEMETERIES PROVIDED BY THEM, AND PRESCRIBING THE RULES AND REGULATIONS UNDER WHICH THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT OF BURIAL MAY BE PURCHASED IN SUCH PARTS AS MAY BE APPROPRIATED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

1. Allocations into Proprietary and Other Ground
	1. The Burial Grounds shall be divided into Sections and numbered in sequence as determined by the Council.
	2. Sections shall be allocated for use as Proprietary Ground and any other use determined by the Council.
	3. An area will be set aside for welfare burials whereby cremated remains will be committed, except when advised otherwise by the Police Service for Northern Ireland (PSNI).
2. Proprietary Ground
	1. In the proprietary ground the exclusive right of burial shall be granted in perpetuity to the purchasers and shall confer upon the purchasers, their heirs and assigns the right to erect headstones, subject to the conditions hereinafter contained. (Rule 17 refers)
	2. A person desiring to purchase the exclusive right of burial in a grave in the proprietary ground shall conform to the Burial Grounds Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992 and to all rules and regulations in force at the time of purchase and to any rules and regulations to be made thereafter by the Council for the regulation, management and control of the Burial Grounds, and upon payment of the prescribed charge for the grave the Grant shall be issued to the purchaser in due course, signed by the Director of Environmental Services.
	3. The Council reviews its Cemetery fees on an annual basis.
3. The Council will determine the section and grave number of the burial plot. Only new plots are available within Lisburn New Cemetery Extension.
4. An entry of the date of each grant of a right of burial in the proprietary ground, and of the purchaser’s name and residence, the number on the plan of the grave, the section of the ground in which the right of burial has been purchased, shall, upon the execution of each such grant, be made in the Register. The Register may be perused at all reasonable times by a grantee or assignee of any such right.
5. No sub-division of a family plot or alterations to a grave lease can be made without the prior consent of the Council.
6. If the registered proprietor of a right of burial in the proprietary ground shall prove by statutory declaration to the satisfaction of the Council that he/she has lost the Grant, he/she shall be entitled, upon payment of the prescribed fee, to be reviewed annually, to receive a duplicate Grant. Provided that if the original Grant be discovered the duplicate Grant shall be returned to the Council and cancelled.
7. On the demise of a proprietor, his/her heir or assign entitled thereto shall have his/her name entered in the register of the Cemetery on production of evidence of his/her right to the Grant, and shall receive a Grant for which a fee, reviewed annually, will be charged.

Proprietors wishing to dispose of their Grant otherwise than to a member of their family, or by will, are required to offer it first to the Council

# Opening of Graves for Interment

1. No grave in the proprietary ground for which a Grant has been issued shall be opened for interment except on the application of the registered owner or someone acting on his/her behalf and producing the Grant.
2. A person requiring to have an interment made in any grave shall sign an application for that purpose giving the following particulars for registration, full forenames, surname, date of death, sex, age, date of birth, religious persuasion, occupation or rank in life, last place of residence, place of death and marital status of the person to be buried, name of lessee, grave number and section.

The Council shall stipulate the time for interment in the Order for Interment. This shall be the time that the funeral shall arrive at the burial ground and must be observed.

All applications for interments must be accompanied by a statutory certificate of death issued by a Registrar of Births and Deaths or the Statutory Order for Burial issued by a Coroner or Cremation Papers.

1. An application for interments including cremated remains must be made at least 48 hours before the interment takes place.
2. Upon receipt of an application and on payment of all fees the Cemetery Administrator shall make out an Order for the opening of the grave, and shall pass one copy of the Order to the person managing the arrangements for the interment.
3. The Council shall not cause or permit a body to be buried in a grave in such a manner that any part of the coffin is less than 70 centimetres below the level of any ground adjoining the grave.

# Exhumation

1. No grave shall be opened and no body or the remains of a body be removed from a grave to be transferred from one place of burial to another place of burial or exhumed except under the circumstances and subject to the conditions specially provided in law. The Council will not consent to an exhumation unless there are exceptional circumstances and upon payment of all relevant fees.

# Register of Burials

1. All burials shall be duly recorded in the Electronic Register by the Cemetery Administrator.

# Hours for Interment

1. The hours during which the Cemetery shall be open for interments are as follows: Monday – Thursday ………… 10:00am – 3:30pm

Friday …………………………. 10:00am – 3:00pm Saturday & Sunday ……………… 10:00am – 3:00pm

# Testing Graves for Opening

1. On receiving an application to open a grave for burial the opinion of the Director of Environmental Services as to whether the interment can take place or not shall be final.

Testing of graves will take place during weekdays 9am -12.30pm and 1pm – 3pm.

# Erections on Graves

1. (a) Monuments and Headstones

All monuments, headstones a maximum of 4ft tall and 4ft in width, memorials to be placed on the foundation and all inscriptions thereon shall be subject to the approval of the Council. Rules 17(g) and 17(h) refer.

1. Headstones

Headstones only will be allowed to be erected as Memorials and no other commemorative items shall be permitted in the Lisburn New Cemetery Extension. The headstones must comply with the specifications set by the Council and detailed at Rule 17(c).

1. Materials for Headstones/Tablets

All such erections shall be of stone or other non-perishable material and shall be located only on the solid foundation.

1. Every erection placed on a grave shall bear the distinctive section and number of the grave marked in clear characters.
2. The Council does not accept any responsibility for the loss of any moveable memorials or floral arrangements whether placed by consent of the Council or at a proprietor’s own initiative.
3. The proprietor or agent acting on behalf of the proprietor must provide Public & Employers Liability Insurance to the Council prior to any application for a Memorial, including sub-contractors.
4. The proprietor or someone acting on behalf of the owner of a grave proposing to place any erection on a grave shall first submit to the Council for its approval a drawing with particulars of the dimensions and of the proposed inscription together with grave lease and appropriate fee.

All additional inscriptions must have the approval of the Council before being inscribed to an existing memorial as appropriate. The inscription particulars to be retained by the Council. A permit will be issued by the Council on approval to the proprietor or an agent acting on behalf of the proprietor.

1. Where sketch plans are submitted for the Council’s approval for proposed erections on any grave or graves, the measurements will not be accepted as being accurate by the Council. In order to avoid any error proprietors or those acting on behalf of the proprietor are required to present the permit issued by the Cemetery Office to a nominated Council Officer at the cemetery prior to any works commencing. The

Council officer will accompany the proprietor or agent to the appropriate ground for measurement and approval of installation.

1. Any erection placed on a grave without the prior approval of the Council shall be removed. Any erection that falls into disrepair and is deemed to be unsafe may be removed by the Council. The cost of works so carried out by the Council, will be recovered from the registered owner of the grave or his/her heirs or assigns.
2. No flags or political emblems to be erected/installed on any grave. Any such items will be removed.
3. Any unsafe head stones will be laid flat with the inscription facing upwards. The owner of the grave will be contacted to address the matter. If owner of the grave cannot be contacted after a reasonable period of time, then a stone mason will be engaged, or immediately if in the opinion of the Cemetery Supervisor it poses a health and safety risk. A charge will be placed on the grave and will requirement payment prior to any future burials or installations on the plot.

Memorial Benches

1. Any benches within the Cemeteries that are in disrepair will be removed and any memorial plaque on the bench will be retained at the Cemeteries office for collection by the former owner if they wish it back. No new benches are permitted to be installed within the Cemeteries.
2. Bench covers are not permitted and will be removed.
3. Where memorials etc. are erected in the Cemeteries it is advisable in the owner’s interest to arrange suitable insurance cover.

# Removal of Refuse on Completion of Work

1. When carrying out work at a grave plot the owner must ensure that adjacent grave plots, headstones, paths, trees, moveable memorials or flowers are not damaged in any way. The owner or his/her agent/contractor will remove any soil or any form of refuse from the works to another place away from the Cemetery. If any damages or materials are left following the works, the Council will carry out any necessary repairs and recover the cost of the work from the registered owner, his/her heirs or agents/contractors.
2. Astro Turf Surface on plots
	1. Astro Turf surface is not permitted in any cemeteries.
	2. Any existing plots with Astro turf surface, grave owners will be contacted and advised of the new policy and informed to remove the astro turf surface. The plot will be sown with grass at the Council’s expense.
3. Planting on Grave Plots
	1. Trees and shrubs must not be planted on any grave or beside any benches or area of open spaces
	2. The Parks & Cemeteries Manager shall be at liberty at any time to remove

any tree or shrub so planted on any grave in any cemetery within the control of the Council, the cost of which will be recoverable from the registered proprietor, his/her heirs or assigns.

1. Commemorative Tree Planting
	1. Woodland Remembrance

At present no Yew trees are available for purchase. However, if space becomes available with future Cemetery projects, a Yew tree can be selected, by agreement with relatives for the placing of cremated remains. The location to be recorded. Applicants will supply details of the deceased and the Cremation papers for inspection. The applicant will be entitled to have erected at the tree, at the applicant’s cost, a plaque of standard design. The plaque to be bronze in colour and no more than 300 mm x 125 mm in size. All inscriptions thereon shall be subject to the approval of the Council.

The plaque to be mounted no more than 150 mm above ground level on a vertical support securely fixed to an appropriate concrete foundation.

**General**

1. No monument, headstone or memorial shall be removed or altered without the written permission of the Council.
2. No person shall enter or leave the Cemetery except by the entrance gates, or walk or trespass upon any of the graves, or damage any tree, plant, or shrub; or pluck any flower, or trap snare, injure, willfully destroy birds’ nests etc.; or meddle or interfere with any monument, tomb or gravestone. A parent or guardian must accompany children under sixteen years.
3. No flags are to be erected within any of the Council Cemeteries.
4. Dog owners must keep dogs on leads at all times. This is defined within the Councils Dog Control Orders. Please see the Council website for further information relating to Dog Control Orders.
5. No balloons are permitted to be tied to any tree, grave, bench or any other installation.
6. The Head of Service for Parks and Amenities, may remove person/s from any of the Council Cemeteries who conduct themselves improperly and shall prevent any person/s from entering the Cemetery during prohibited hours.
7. Any person who willfully destroys, damages or defaces monuments/items within the Council Cemeteries or breaks any of the cemetery rules as outlined above may be dealt with in the court of law.
8. In the event of an epidemic outbreak disease within Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area, the Council may make special arrangements regulating the order of interments and the length of notice required to arrange an interment.
9. In the event of a certificate signed by a medical practitioner, provided to the Chief Executive requesting the immediate interment of a body for public health reasons, will issue an order for the interment of the body without requiring the prescribed length of notice.
10. Funeral Directors will be responsible for ensuring that suitable wooden coffins or caskets for earth burials are used. In instances where the total Coffin/Casket weight including the remains is in excess of 24stone (152Kg), additional requirements are required in relation to manual handling. Coffin/Casket measurements including total weight are to be supplied.
11. The above Rules will remain in force and be binding on all owners of the right of burial in the cemetery, and all other persons, until they are altered by the Council.

**These Rules and Regulations, have been adopted by Council.**