

Mid Devon District Council

Rules and Regulations for Funeral Organisers

1. All professional funeral organisers (Funeral Directors) must be members of the Councils Approved Contractor Scheme. (An application form is attached and should be submitted before an interment can be booked). The conditions of membership are:
 1. Public Liability Insurance to a value of £5m.
 2. Statements to the effect that the Funeral Director has not been banned from any cemetery within the last two years and that should this occur in the future that he/she will inform the Council immediately.
 3. That all work will conform at least to Cemetery Regulations and Statutory Regulations. Adherence to nationally recognised Professional Codes of Conduct should also be considered essential.
2. All requests to book an interment should be submitted to the relevant Council Office at least three working days before the planned interment.
3. It is the responsibility of the Funeral Organiser to ensure that all monuments are removed from a grave at least two working days before an interment. All Masons have been informed that all masonry must be completely removed from the cemetery unless prior written permission to the contrary.
4. The exact size of the coffin/casket should be reported on the Notice of Interment form. The Councils operatives will then determine the correct size of the grave. Overstating the size of the coffin is bad practice and causes extra work and expense, any transgressions will be noted and may incur an extra cost. The size should be reported in inches only, not feet and inches.
5. It is the Councils policy to excavate all new graves to a depth of 9 feet.
6. It is the Councils policy to make maximum use of unpurchased graves. Section A of the Notice of Interment form clearly states that if the Rights to a grave are not purchased then the Council may inter unrelated remains in that grave. It is also our policy that no monumentalisation can take place on an unpurchased grave. It is vital that if a family does not wish to purchase a grave that the Funeral Organiser makes them fully aware of the consequences and that section A is signed by the family. This protects both the Council and the Funeral Organiser.
7. New Graves may be temporarily purchased by the Funeral Organiser but should be transferred to the eventual owner as soon as possible using a standard Transfer of Ownership form available from the Council.
8. Previously purchased graves may only be opened with the written permission of the owner or to inter the owner. Under no circumstances is it correct for the Funeral Organiser to sign an indemnity. The Council can advise and provide the proper paperwork should the owner of the Rights be already interred, or if paperwork is missing. It is the responsibility of the Funeral Organiser to ensure that there is someone who can legally give permission to open such a grave and no booking will be accepted until such a person is identified and has given permission.
9. The Council can not be held responsible for any losses or consequences of a Notice of Interment not meeting the above criteria.
10. Whilst it is understood that it is not always possible to arrive at the cemetery at the exact time booked, it should be realised that this can cause problems and expense. Should a funeral be obviously running late, a brief telephone call to the Cemetery Office should be made if possible giving the approximate delay and expected time of arrival. Excessive delays will be noted and the Council reserves the right to make an extra charge upon the Funeral Organiser.
11. A Council representative is available to attend all funerals, although this will only usually occur when the Funeral Organiser is unfamiliar with the cemetery. Should the Funeral Organiser wish the cortege to be met by a Council representative this should be noted on the Notice of Interment form.