Getting it Right for the Muslim Community

Mohamed Omer

Gardens of Peace

Muslim Cemetery
Gardens of Peace

ICCM LEARNING CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION 2017

Muslim Community – Getting it Right
“Every Soul Shall Taste Death (21:35)”
Ability to implement Islamic requirements in the UK?

- Quick Burial
- Pre-burial preparation – washing, prayers, etc
- No post-mortems
- Shroud burials
- Single graves
- No Lawn Graves
- Re- Use
- Consecrated Grounds
- Orientation of the grave towards Mecca
Quick burial:
- Out of hours registrar office service
- 7 day a week cemeteries

Preparation for burial:
- Dedicated Muslim funeral directors

Post Mortems

Simple Grave
**Existing Facilities**

At present, Local Authority run Council Cemeteries endeavour to provide a separate section within their cemeteries. Few councils have actually allocated land for use by the Muslim Community eg in Bolton, Glasgow and in Waltham Forest in London.

**Lawn Graves**

According to our teachings, lawn graves are not permitted because you will be walking on graves .. this is strictly prohibited.
- **Re-Use / Multiple Burials**
  Not permitted unless all the body has been decomposed. Three exceptions: War, epidemic or land is not available. Under these circumstances, more than one body can be buried in one grave.

- **Consecrated Grounds**
  Like church cemeteries, for all intense and purpose, Muslim Cemetery area is a consecrated area and therefore requires a dedicated area.
About Us

- Purchased land in 1998
- Registered as a charity in late 1998
- Planning permission was granted in 2001
- The first burial took place in November 2002
- More land has been purchased for future use
Awards

- Stoneguard Phoenix Award 2003
- Bali National Landscape Award 2003
- 2006 Certificate of Achievement as part of London in Bloom
- ACE / RIBA Award for Religious Architecture 2011- Runners Up
- Cemetery of Year 2016
Cultural Variances

- Certain communities have variations in burial:
  - Large monuments, flowers, pictures and use of incense, predominantly by the Turkish community
  - Preference for a concrete chamber instead of wooden planks
  - Large memorial stones with religious inscriptions

- The above variations are cultural rather than religious requirements
Plan of the Cemetery
Types of Grave – The Lahd

- Where the ground and sides of the grave are firm, then a recess should be dug on the side facing towards Mecca, to allow placing the body in the recess.
- Unbaked bricks or wooden planks should preferably be used to close the recess, and made to fit neatly.
Types of Grave – The Shiq

- Where the soft nature of the ground does not allow a Lahd to be made, then a shallow trench should be dug in the centre at the bottom of the grave to allow the body to be placed in this trench.
- Timber may be used to cover this. The use of any fabrics or blankets etc is undesirable.
Preferable Practices in Shrouding the dead

- The shroud should be pleasant, clean and large enough to cover the entire body
- Twenty-two yards of material will be needed for the shroud as some wraps need to be double in width to make them wide enough for wrapping.
- The shroud should be white
- Should be scented and perfumed
Woman’s Shroud

- Scarf (not shown)
- Shirt
- Loin cloth
- Chest wrap
- Outer Sheet
Men’s Shroud

- Shirt
- Loin cloth
- Outer Sheet
Foetus

120 days or less inside the mother’s womb

500mm x 500mm

500

Feet

Head

500
Stillborn

120 days inside the mothers womb up till birth

600mm x 500mm
Babies
From birth up to 2 years old

800mm x 600mm

600 Feet

800 Head
Children

From 2 years to 12 years old

1600mm x 700mm

700

Feet

Head

1600
Adult

From 12 years old and above

2100mm x 800mm
Preparation of the grave
Preparation of the grave
FAQ

- Flowers on graves
- Incense / candles
- Prayers at graveside
- Visiting the graves for women
- More than one person in one grave
- Recycling / reuse
- Transporting of bodies abroad
- Who can give ghusul (washing of the body)
- Watering graves
- What will benefit the dead
- Placing qur'anic / or any other personal items into the grave
- Attendance of non-Muslims for funerals
- Shape of grave
- Reservation of graves
- Concrete chamber
Muslim Bereavement Support Service

- Non-profit organisation formed in early 2012 to ‘fill the gaps’
- Initially supported by Gardens of Peace but aim to be independent
- Support specialists are fully trained volunteers
- Works with SANDS, Child Bereavement UK
- During the early stages will only provide support to mothers but plan to expand to provide support for entire family
Thank you for listening

Mohamed Omer

**Board Member - External Affairs**

T: 020 8502 6000
M: 077 7381 6905
F: 020 3137 6443
E: mohamed.omer@gardens-of-peace.org.uk
W: www.gardens-of-peace.org.uk