

# NEWSLETTER

## Welcome

We are happy to present our fourth newsletter. Read on for updates on important aspects of our work as the out of hours burial service provider for Leicester City Council and as one of Leicester's leading funeral service providers.

### START

We launched a new section on our website early this year to assist and support bereaved families when a loved one passes away. "How to Arrange a Funeral" is a web based application for visitors who may wish to find out what steps to take and who to contact in case of bereavement. The application asks the user questions regarding the death so that it is able to provide the most appropriate information and instructions on what action to take. As always, our aim is to make the process as easy as possible and to educate and create awareness around death and bereavement. Feedback from users since launch has been exceptionally positive.

We have to thank our Coroner for Leicester City and South Leicestershire, Professor Catherine Mason, Mrs Bharti Parmar, Superintendent Registrar and Mr Alan Brown, Bereavement Services Manager, for their contribution in developing the application.

The winter was an extremely difficult period for our Muslim community. We noted an increase in the number of deaths, made more difficult with a reduction in the availability of burial slots due to shorter daylight hours. Unfortunately, many families struggled with securing same day burials.

Burials during the winter months were difficult to undertake with freezing temperatures and prolonged periods of wet weather. With a rise in the water table, the main Muslim lawned sections suffered the worst from surface water and water logging. Although cemetery staff laid temporary walkways, conditions remained treacherous for many mourners making their way around the sections during burials.



Cemetery surface water and flooding is not unique to cemeteries in Leicester. It is a regular occurrence found in many cemeteries up and down the country with all communities encountering difficulties.

Local families who buried their loved ones in Saffron Hill Cemetery in such conditions are commended for their patience and understanding. We also acknowledge our Muslim volunteer team and Council ground staff at the cemetery, who coped extremely well in preparing for burials considering how difficult weather and ground conditions were.



Many members of the community came forward to lend their support on witnessing such difficult conditions. Some of this came in the shape of equipment donated to tackle water during burials. Others donated equipment for the Janaz (Muslim Prayer Hall) and many many more came forward to volunteer their time when needed.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who donated equipment, resources and offered their valuable time of assist families.

As always, Crescent Funerals continues to monitor and deal with operational issues that arise from time to time, supporting organisations and families in accessing funeral and other related services.

There has been an increase in recent months in the number of families seeking advice on where and how to access financial assistance to meet funeral costs. This has always been an issue for low income and newly arrived families, however an increase in those seeking financial assistance is of notable concern.

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) can make a Funeral Expenses Payment to help qualifying applicants meet some of the costs of a funeral.

The payment may not cover all of the costs, but it can help with covering basic funeral expenses and burial costs. You can find out more about the DWP Funeral Fund via this link: <https://www.gov.uk/funeral-payments>

You can also find information on the DWP Funeral Fund and download an application form on our website [www.crescent-funerals.com](http://www.crescent-funerals.com)

In recent years Leicester City Council has experienced a very high demand for burials resulting from above-average death rates, mostly due to the pandemic. Alongside burials, many families had also reserved graves next to or close to their loved ones. As a result of both of these factors, the capacity for new burials has greatly been reduced and therefore necessary steps had to be taken. Leicester City Council applied a policy change as of 31st March 2023 to ensure it is able to provide a sufficient supply of graves to meet the projected demand over the next few years, Exclusive rights of burial for new graves may only now be purchased at the time of need for a burial. Reserving of graves is no longer available.



As part of the consultation in dealing with limited burial spaces left at Saffron Hill Cemetery, we and other stake holders have been involved in discussions with Leicester City Council regarding new burial space. Leicester City Council has identified a suitable site, however this is a work in progress and appropriate information regarding new burial space will be released by Leicester City Council in due course.



**Want to volunteer?**

As in previous newsletters, we would like to appeal for volunteers. Volunteering in bereavement services can give an individual a profound sense of purpose. It can be a life changing experience as it remains to be one of the most revered and rewarding acts of our faith. Visit our website [www.crescent-funerals.com](http://www.crescent-funerals.com) or contact Br Ahmed Kasu (07973 344341) to register.

In closing, we would once again like to remind our readers that Crescent Funerals remain dedicated to supporting and assisting families in arranging and managing funerals for their loved ones; a service we continue to provide to the community on a voluntary basis.

A dedicated contact number and email address is provided should you need to arrange a funeral during normal working hours or out of hours (weekends and Bank Holidays).

A call handler will always be happy to advise and assist you with the entire process. As always, you can also get assistance and advice from the burial committee based at your local Mosque or community centre or through your local Funeral Director or Funeral Arranger.

**To arrange a funeral please call**

**07999 776593**

**Email: [bookings@crescent-funerals.com](mailto:bookings@crescent-funerals.com)**

**[www.crescent-funerals.com](http://www.crescent-funerals.com)**