

NEWSLETTER

Welcome

We are proud to present our sixth newsletter this summer. We aim to provide our readers with the latest news, updates and information on important aspects of our work as a leading funeral service provider.

Our last newsletter was during the midst of the winter period. As our readers may be aware, visits to the cemetery and performing burials during winter can become difficult due to prolonged periods of rain and surface water. Shorter daylight hours also results in fewer burial slots available on any given day.

In addition to the usual winter challenges, matters were further complicated on 7th March 2024 when Leicester City Council was unfortunately subject to a cyber-attack. The incident caused significant disruption to the Council's IT infrastructure and telephone systems across its entire network.



Bereavement, Coroners and Registration services were all affected. The lack of access to the Council's funeral booking system was cause for concern to those seeking to arrange funerals. Whilst the Council were working tirelessly to resolve the issues, it became apparent that the attack was substantially complex and that restoring the IT and telephone systems was going to be a challenging process.

Fortunately, Crescent Funerals were not affected by the Council's cyber incident as we operate independently of the Council's IT systems. As our readers may be aware, Crescent Funerals has operated as the Council's sole service provider for out of hours burials since 2021. Given our existing relationship with the Council, we assisted with ensuring that the Council's burial service provision continued to operate by acting as a temporary and emergency service provider for all in-hours Muslim burial enquiries and bookings until the Council's IT systems were restored. The City's Muslim funeral arrangers were notified of the cyber incident and of the interim changes to burial applications. We are pleased to report that although it was a challenging period for our team, we were successful in providing the additional services without any noticeable impact or incident.



At Crescent Funerals, we place "responsibility and contribution to society" at the core of our values and we often carry out training and awareness activities around Muslim bereavement and related matters.

During February 2024 we were very fortunate to be invited by Professor Catherine E. Mason, H.M. Senior Coroner for Leicester City & South Leicestershire, to speak to her team around the Muslim perspective on post-mortem examinations.

The session was attended by Professor Mason, Mr Ivan Cartwright, Area Coroner, and a number of Coroner's Officers. There was also an online presence from

officers who were not working on the day.

The session began with a basic insight into Islam, followed by a look at census data that focused mainly on the Muslim community, its presence in the city and needs compared to other faith groups.

The presentation highlighted the growth of the local Muslim community and what impact that can potentially have on local services, and more specifically, the impact on bereavement and coronial services.

Census data has vital information around faith communities, their make up, their growth rates and so on. This often assists service providers when allocating resources in order to deal with demands placed on existing services and more importantly, anticipate and plan for future demands on those same services.



The 2021 census placed the Muslim community in Leicester as the second largest faith group in the city, at around 86,443 residents. The Muslim community has grown from 26% to 33% when compared to data from the 2011 census. This is a significant increase and more than any other faith group in the city. The Muslim community continues to grow and is likely to soon become the largest faith group in the city.

Our presentation then provided an insight into the Muslim perspective on post-mortem examinations. There was emphasis on the need to avoid delays in performing Muslim rituals and on our faith requirements to bury our loved ones as soon as possible. We also addressed the sensitivities surrounding infant deaths. This is a particularly difficult time for families and a time when additional support and sensitivity is often required.

There were many questions from the floor, mainly regarding faith requirements and faith sensitivities. There were also several questions on how the officers could make the process easier for families.

Feedback received after the presentation was very positive and indicative of the session overall.

"Your talk was informative, and it's helpful to know that you are doing all you can to sustain and improve relationships between your community and our office."

"your talk was informative and pitched at the right level with good content"

"I remain very proud of all that we have achieved together and the great relationship between my office and the Muslim community in Leicester."

It has become customary to appeal for volunteers in our newsletter. Please contact Br Ahmed Kasu (07973 344341) to register.



Want to volunteer?

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

Contact details are provided should you need to arrange a funeral during normal working hours or out of hours

(weekends and Bank Holidays). 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

www.crescent-funerals.com