GLASGOW CENTRAL MOSQUE

SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION OF MOSQUES

A National Muslim Voice

MASJID-E-KHAZRA

BURIAL & MAINTENANCE GUIDE

LINN CEMETERY (MUSLIM SECTION)

Mid Netherton Road, Glasgow, G45 9QE

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Introduction

The funeral services teams at Glasgow Central Mosque (GCM) and Masjid e Khazra (MEK), in conjunction with the Scottish Association of Mosques (SAM), have been engaging with Glasgow City Council around burials and the ongoing maintenance of graves at Linn Cemetery.

This publication aims to inform families of the current burial procedure and guide them on the upkeep of graves of loved ones in accordance with the Sunnah, whilst adhering to Glasgow City Council's regulations for cemeteries. We hope this will help with ongoing maintenance and create a tranquil place of rest and reflection for our community.

General Etiquettes when Visiting the Cemetery

The narrations of hadith mention that the Prophet (SAW) encouraged the Sahabah (RA) to visit the cemetery. Visiting graves, particularly those of loved ones, is a reminder of our own mortality, and can benefit the deceased through du'as and righteous actions.

When visiting the graveyard, please adhere to the following:

- Be mindful of others visiting the cemetery.
- Park responsibly
- Do not sit, stand or walk on graves.
- Smoking, vaping, and eating or drinking is strictly prohibited.
- Do not litter. If bins are full please take your litter away.
- Do not feed the birds, as this attracts rats.

The Sunnah Method of Preparing Graves

Muslim cemeteries should have their own unique identity and appearance. In preparing graves, Muslims should not imitate other cultures.

"The Prophet of Allah, Sallallahu alayhi wa Sallam, forbade that a grave be plastered, and that a grave be sat on, and that a grave be built on." (Sahih Muslim)

How should graves look?

- After filling the grave, the soil on the surface of the grave should be raised into a mound no taller than one handspan.

- The outward shape of the grave should be oval; not rectangular.

- There is no such concept of erecting memorials, or building on or around graves in Islam. It is however permissible to fit a simple headstone, with the sole intention to help identify the grave.

Leaving the grave simple is more beneficial to the deceased person and will be more deserving of drawing the Noor (light) and mercy of Allah Ta'ala.

Furthermore, in leaving the graves simple, there will be a greater impact on those who visit the cemetery by reminding them of their own mortality, and the need to prepare for one's own inevitable death.

Preparing Graves at the Linn Cemetery

At the time of burial

- The soil at the surface of the grave will be shaped into a mound.
- The Masjid team will place a wooden stake into the grave, which has the grave number written on it for identification purposes.

4-6 weeks after the burial

- Glasgow City Council groundsmen will tidy and reshape the surface of the grave.
- Any graves where the soil has sunken will be topped up with additional soil. The mound of soil on the surface of the grave will be set at a height of around 4 inches.
- The grave will then be seeded or turfed, depending on the season.
- The wooden stake will also be removed.

Please note:

- It is normal for the soil on a grave to sink, in the days or weeks after burial, as it naturally settles. This is not a cause for concern.
- Families are requested not to place any items on or around the grave. This includes boulders and plaques with the name of the deceased printed on it.
- Leaving the graves clear will allow council staff to maintain the cemetery.

Do's	Don'ts
Oval shaped grave **This is a Sunnah**	Rectangular, flat or excessively raised grave **This is contrary to Sunnah**
Raised mound (not more than 1 handspan) **This is a Sunnah**	Building on/decorating graves e.g. fencing, slabs, marble, stone chips, lights, ornaments, photos, keepsakes **This is not permissible**
Simple headstone (name, DOB/DOD) **This is permissible**	An ornate headstone with Quran verses, du'as, poetry, "RIP", "In Loving Memory Of" or anything which imitates other cultures **This is not permissible**

A good example of a Muslim cemetery

Headstones (memorials)

Headstones, known as memorials, may be fitted in the cemetery. Any families wishing to erect a headstone should appoint a reputable stonemason and follow the due process which includes obtaining prior approval from GCC before doing so. Families who wish to do so should note the following:

Title deeds

To install a headstone, families require the original title deeds for the lair (grave). These will be sent by post by GCC Bereavement Services to the lair owner. This usually takes place 4-6 weeks after the burial.

Memorial application

Prior to installing a headstone, permission must be granted by GCC Bereavement Services. To arrange this, a memorial application must be submitted with a copy of the title deeds for the grave.

Stonemason

In most cases the stonemason will submit the Memorial Application on your behalf and must wait for approval prior to installing it.

Families should not sign a ‘disclaimer’ presented by any stonemason relinquishing responsibility for works carried out without permission by GCC Bereavement Services, or which are clearly in breach of the rules on permitted memorials.

Unauthorised memorials

The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982: Management Rules Regulating Cemeteries And Churchyards Under The Control of the Council states: **“Kerbs, copes, railings, fences, gravel, corner stones or any other such ornamental additions to the lair shall not be permitted.”** All of these items are not permitted and are deemed unauthorised memorials.

Another form of unauthorised memorials are headstones which have not been approved by Glasgow City Council through a Memorial Application. This includes any temporary plaques which are commonly placed on graves.

Please note that GCC staff will removed any unauthorised memorials and keep these items in storage for a certain period. After this period has lapsed, the items will be sensitively disposed of.

Maintenance of the cemetery

The cemetery is maintained by Council staff. This includes the surface of graves and all communal areas.

Unauthorised memorials (mentioned above) make it difficult for grass to be cut properly and can damage maintenance equipment. Any unauthorised memorials will be removed by council staff.

We would urge families to sympathetically remove these memorials voluntarily before council staff do so, to avoid any hurt or upset.

Alongside council maintenance, visitors may wish to clean and water graves themselves. However, water butts should not be installed. Please bring water bottles or cleaning wipes from home instead, and dispose of used items responsibly.

Further information

If you require any support or guidance, please contact the relevant service provider:

GCC Bereavement Services

Tel: 0141 287 3961

Email: lscems@glasgow.gov.uk

GCM Funeral Services

Tel: 0141 429 3132 (option 4)

Email: funerals@centralmosque.co.uk

MEK Funeral Services

Tel: 0141 422 1154 / 07980 900 882 / 07508 766 843

Email: fsmek@outlook.com