

Gardens of Peace

Child Funeral Charity

14th July 2015

Muslim Religious Requirements on Burials and Deaths
implemented in Practice at Gardens of Peace

“

**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



- **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









Community Involvement

- Constantly encourage community involvement
- Held tree planting for local school kids
- Hosted local scouts groups annual walk
- Held multiple funeral awareness events
- We have a clothes bank for Islamic Relief



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



Preparing for a Muslim Burial

There are five main points for the preparation of a Muslim's body for burial as listed below:

- Body Washing or Ghusul
- Shrouding the body - Kafn
- Funeral Prayers (Janāzah Salāh)
- Funeral procession
- Burial

n.b. We only permit shroud burials but allow coffins under exceptional circumstances

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

Islamic Requirements - Stillborn Babies

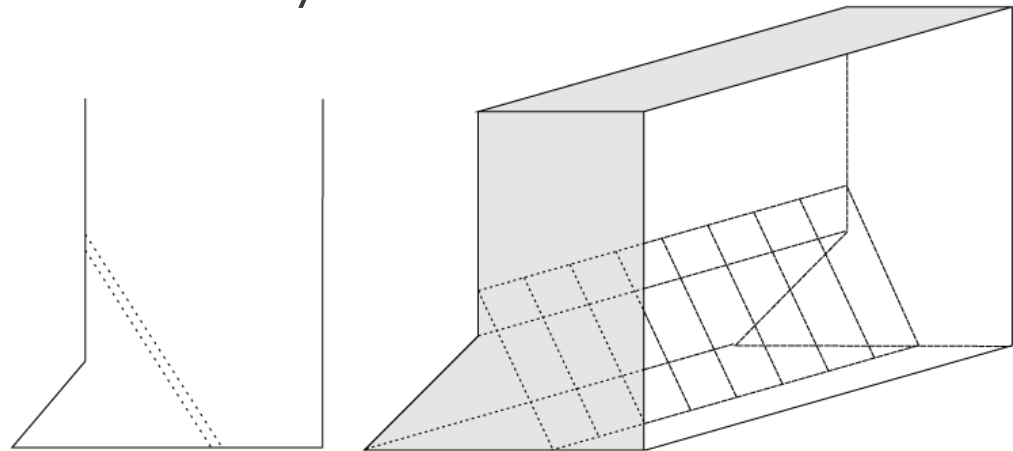
- Under 120 days – no need for body to be washed or need to name the foetus or for funeral prayer
- More than 120 days – need for body wash and need to name the foetus, and funeral prayer only if child lives, however briefly, before dying

Plan of the Cemetery



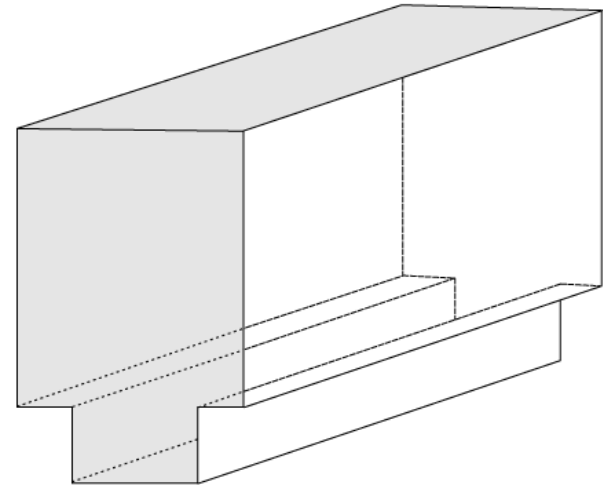
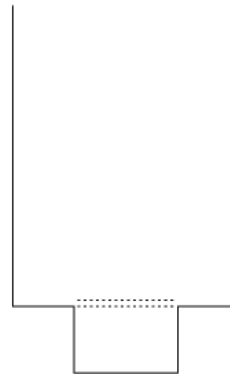
Types of Grave – The Lahd

- 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

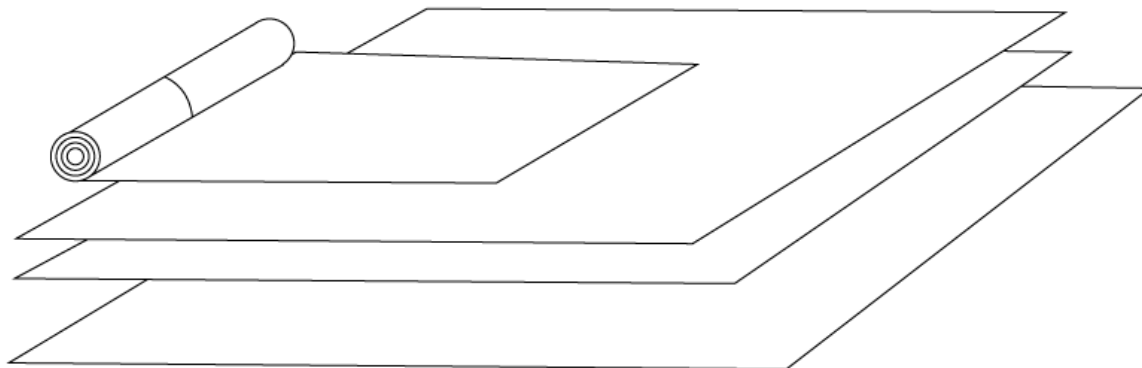


Preferable Practices in Shrouding the dead

- 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

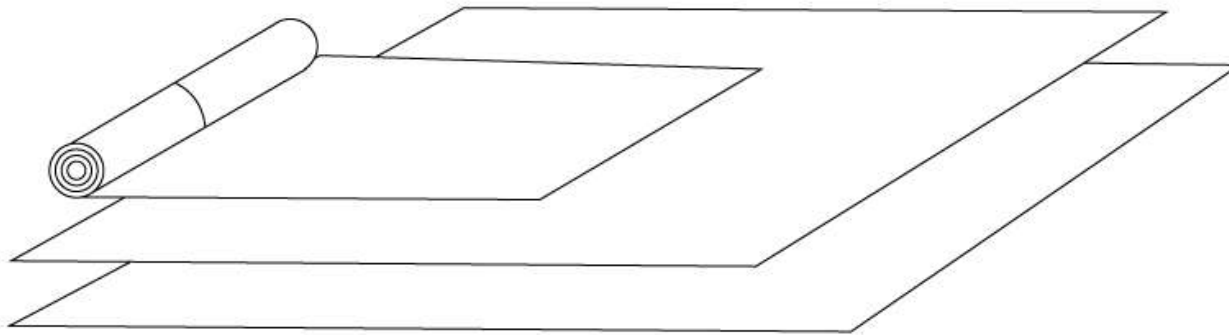
Woman's Shroud

- Scarf (not shown)
- Shirt
- Loin cloth
- Chest wrap
- Outer Sheet



Men's Shroud

- Shirt
- Loin cloth
- Outer Sheet



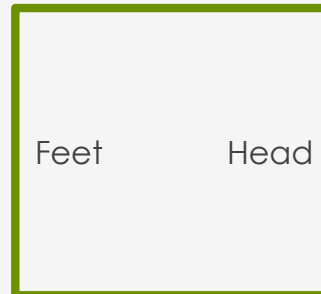


Foetus

120 days or less inside the mothers womb

500mm x 500mm

500



500



Stillborn

120 days inside the mothers womb up till birth

600mm x 500mm

600

Feet

Head

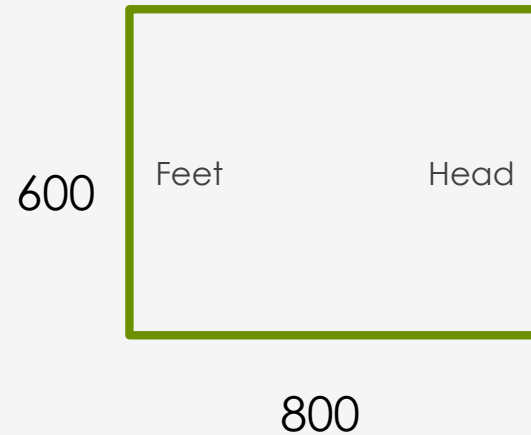
500



Babies

From birth up to 2 years old

800mm x 600mm





Children

From 2 years to 12 years old

1600mm x 700mm





Adult

From 12 years old and above

2100mm x 800mm

800

Feet

Head

2100

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 quoranic / or any other personal items into the grave
- Attendance of non-Muslims for funerals
- Shape of grave
- Reservation of graves

The Muslim Patient

The information below is a general guide only. Always check everything with the patient/ client. If in doubt, ask them, or the contact, for advice.

- Great importance is attached to cleanliness. Therefore, before every act of prayer the patient will want to wash. Water poured from the a jug will be appreciated
- Times of prayer are dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, just after sunset and before retiring for sleep. The patient will need to stand on clean ground or a prayer mat facing Mecca (South –East in Britain)
- If the patient is not able to stand, s/he can pray sitting on the bed or on a chair.
- Privacy will be appreciated.

The Muslim Patient

- An offer of the copy of the Quran will be appreciated. This must be handled with the greatest respect, no object or book being placed upon it. This can be supplied by the patient's family, the local mosque or by the chaplain's office.
- Both male and female Muslims are very modest in their dress and outlook. A female may request that her husband or a female companion be present during a medical examination.
- It is immodest for men to touch women other than their wives, therefore thought needs to be given about what contact is necessary between nurse and patient.
- Women may wish to cover hair with scarf and wish limbs to be kept covered at all times. This must be respected. Also, men may like to cover their heads during their stay.

The Muslim Patient - Diet

- Halal Meals are available on request.
- During the time of Ramadan it is incumbent that all Muslims fast, but ill patients are exempt from this. Food should be made available for any patient who may be fasting before dawn and after sunset.
- The taking of medication during a fast may cause difficulties to the patient; no undue pressure should be applied. The local Mosque or an Imam, who is part of the chaplain's office, can be very helpful in this situation.

The Muslim Patient – Care of the Dying

- The patient may wish to sit or lie facing Mecca.
- Family or friends may wish to quietly read the Quran at the patient's bedside.
- At Death wrap the body in one or two plain white sheets.
- Place the foot of the bed facing Mecca or turn the patient onto their right side in order that the deceased's face looks towards the Mecca.

The Muslim Patient – Care of the Dying

- Clean the body as per normal procedure being sensitive to the gender of the patient (female staff for female and male staff for male). The nearest relative may wish to join and help in the washing.
- Do not cut nails or hair.
- The nearest relative may wish to close the eyes .The arms should be extended by the side and, mouth/jaw closed. The body is to be touched as little as possible.
- Jewellery should be removed in presence of witnesses and list made.

The Muslim Patient – Care of the Dying

- Burial should take place as soon as possible and within 24 hrs. if possible so the issuing of a death certificate should not be delayed unnecessarily. Contact the Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths concerning special arrangements.
- A Muslim Undertaker will be contacted by the family.
- The washing of the body will normally be handled by a Muslim undertaker and prayers said at a local mosque.

The Muslim Patient – Post mortems and Organ Donation /Transplant

- The body is traditionally regarded as sacred and should not be damaged in any way. Muslims prefer no post mortems, but if it is required by law, normal legal procedures must be observed, and these should be explained to the next of kin, including the possibility of non –invasive post mortems.
- As a general rule, organ donations are not permitted. The wishes of the patient and next of kin should be ascertained, and consent obtained.

The Muslim Patient - Contact

- No information about a patient should be passed to these contacts without the permission of the patient or next of kin.
- Some hospitals will have an Imam as part of the Chaplaincy team and should be the first point of contact should any clarification or guidance is required.

- Gardens of Peace Muslim Cemetery Trust
Elmbridge Road Hainault Ilford Essex
IG6 3SW

Tel: 02085026000 Mobile: 07773816905

Email: Mohamed.Omer@gardens-of-peace.org.uk

Islamic Approach to Bereavement

- It is very well documented that faith helps greatly in dealing with bereavement
- The Islamic terminology used to support or console someone after death is known as 'ta'ziyah'
- Ta'ziyah is the Arabic word used to describe when someone consoles the bereaved.
- There are two types of Ta'ziyah
 - Ta'ziyah – immediately after a death
 - Ta'ziyah – bereavement support
- Encouragement for patience – grieving cannot change destiny

Islamic Approach to Bereavement

- During bereavement support, one can never bring up the possibility of sins being the reason of a death.
- No one knows what the real reason is and therefore to make someone guilty is detrimental to the bereaved and far from the truth.
- Losing a child is definitely one of the most difficult trials faced by a family, as the child is a part of the parents, their blood and soul.

Islamic Approach to Bereavement

- What advice does the Quran and Hadith give to comfort the bereaved?
 - 1) Encourage/Adopt 'sabr' patience
 - 2) Reminder of your belonging to Allah
 - 3) Be punctual in Salaah and perform more *optional* Salaah

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
- Affiliated with SANDS and Sakoon Counselling
- 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