

Memorial Operational Procedure for non-Cemetery Settings

This operational procedure outlines the Councils approach to the management of tributes in Bath and North East Somerset and on council-owned or council managed land, with the exception of separate arrangements made with bereavement services.

Bath and North East Somerset Council recognises that there are differing and sometimes strongly held views about this matter due to the sensitivity of the subject. In putting forward this operational procedure it has sought to adopt an approach that seeks to take into account a diverse range of views and concerns.

When someone suddenly dies, many people, in addition to family and close friends, are affected. Where the term 'family' is used in this operational procedure it is intended to mean any close friend, partner or family member who has been bereaved.

Objectives

This procedure has been produced with the following guiding principles:

- To be respectful and empathetic to those seeking to install a memorial.
- To be clear and easily understood by members of the public.
- To create a consistent approach that can be applied across Bath and North East Somerset
- To ensure areas within Bath and North East Somerset that are used for operational purposes and recreational use can continue.
- To establish responsibility for the maintenance, repair and replacement of memorials.
- To avoid demands on public funds from privately installed memorials.

Any complaints relating to the implementation of the operational procedure that cannot be resolved by officers managing the response will be considered by the Director of Place Management.

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A. Memorials/floral tributes

1. The council shall generally allow floral tributes or other temporary memorials - for example ghost bikes (bicycle roadside memorial) – for a period of 30 days from when the tribute is first identified.
2. Any floral tributes or memorials remaining in place after the 30 day period shall be removed by the council. Where possible this will be in consultation with the family and/or Police Family Liaison Officers.
3. Any item of a non-perishable nature removed by the council shall be retained for a 90 day period in a safe storage area (at Haycombe crematorium) during which time bereaved relatives will, by arrangement, be able to collect such items.
4. Following the 30 day period, any installation of a longer term memorial will be considered on a case-by-case basis, depending on the request and location. The final decision will be made by the Director of Place Management in consultation with the relevant cabinet member.
5. Permitted memorials, for example planting of or adopting a tree on council-owned land, or small plaque mounted on existing street furniture, such as a bench or a planter, will have the final decision made by the Director of Place Management.
6. The Council will arrange for the mounting or planting of the memorial as appropriate with the cost being borne by the person making the request.
7. The location and any wording for the inscription for any memorial bench or plaque must be agreed in advance in writing with the council. Contact details are listed below.
8. The releasing of sky lanterns or balloons (whether filled with helium or not) are not permitted on council owned land.

B. Roadside Memorials/floral tributes

9. Low-key memorials such as the discrete placing of a small floral tribute at the roadside may be acceptable provided there is no significant risk of driver distraction or undue risk to the individual visiting the location. Any items should be placed clear of any locations where highway maintenance is likely to be undertaken, e.g. grass cutting. They should also be placed away from locations that are hazardous to access, such as carriageway central reservations and roundabout central islands. Large permanent physical structures (monuments and shrines) will not be allowed.
10. The council highways authority reserves the right to remove at any time roadside floral tributes or shrines which are considered to present a hazard or distraction to road users including pedestrians.

11. The operational procedure does not allow for anniversary tributes to be placed at the roadside and any tribute at the site of a previous incident will be removed in accordance with the details outlined in paragraph 3.

C. Council action in case of non-compliance with memorial procedure

12. Items will be removed and stored for 90 days at Haycombe Cemetery. If they are not claimed after 90 days they will be disposed of appropriately.

13. Perishable items removed such as floral tributes, and items of no substantial value such as candles, will be disposed of without further notice as the council sees fit.

Contact details:

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