

RE: KS2/3 Christian and Muslim Funeral Traditions



Funerals are very important as they show respect for the dead and depending on your beliefs, help the departed on their journey into an afterlife. They also enable relatives and friends of the deceased to remember the dead person, to celebrate their life and to mourn their death.

At Lye and Wollescote Cemetery there are examples of both Christian and Muslim burials.

When a Christian dies, their body is placed in a coffin. The coffin is taken to a church or chapel and a religious leader (priest, vicar) will read phrases from the Bible. They will also share a few words about the person, sing hymns or songs, listen to music and then take the coffin for burial or cremation. It can be a couple of weeks from the time the person dies to their actual funeral. Most graves are marked with a headstone or gravestone, or if cremated – a grave marker will mark the place that the ashes have been interred. Some ashes are scattered at a place special to the deceased and their family.

Christian Funeral rites:

When a Muslim dies, the community aim to bury the deceased as soon as possible and within 3 days. The deceased's body is washed and wrapped in a white cloth, 3 cloths for men, 5 for women. Muslims believe in a physical resurrection on the Day of Judgement so do not approve of cremation. At the funeral, phrases from the Qur'an are read as people stand by the grave and once the body is in the ground. It is forbidden to accompany the body with music. The graves point towards Mecca, the holy city of Islam.

Q1. What evidence can you see at the cemetery of these traditions and beliefs?

Q2. Once the cemetery is full, can you think of any other suggestions for how the people of Lye and Wollescote could bury their dead that will satisfy their religious and cultural traditions?
