

ITEM 9

REQUEST FOR
DEDICATED SPACE IN 'CEMETERIES' FOR
THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

5 January 2021

FAO:

Didcot Town Council Leader

Didcot Town Council Environment Committee

Please refer to the attached narrative and concerns raised on behalf of Muslim community living across SOXON (South Oxfordshire) area.

This issue is being raised with all concerned SOXON district and town councils namely Oxford City Council (OCC), Vale of White Horse (VoWH), South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC), Didcot Town Council (DTC), Abingdon Town Council (ABT), and Wantage Town Council (WTC). We believe a group comprising of representatives from these councils and various Muslim community groups is already been facilitated by Oxford City Council's Cemeteries Department and zoom meeting of this group was arranged in November 2020. As the SOXON community at large is running out of burial space across different cemeteries managed by Oxford City Council this wider group is considering future options for all communities including the Muslim community. We have joined up with this wider SOXON group and will be representing our community's concerns.

In order to further raise awareness and seek wider support a petition representing the SOXON Muslim community will be rolled out by the end of this week. Here is a link to this petition.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfQ5IcyuMLUVYDvxwbujSoGpk2dmFiDLjHaxpxaN-QZasou9g/viewform>

Please contact Fas Nadeem with your response at email fasnadeem@gmail.com
mob number 07956-138212.

Yours sincerely,

SOXON Muslims Burial Working Group

CONCERNS Regarding South Oxfordshire (SOXON) Muslims Burial

Muslim Community living in SOXON area would like to raise the issue that we do not have a dedicated burial space in or around our main towns of Didcot and Abingdon. This has been a matter of great concern but has become even more serious and needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

- We do not have an allocated Muslim Burial Area in our towns or county. The only nearest availability is in Botley Cemetery that is managed by Oxford City Council (OCC). This dedicated area and the cemetery at large has almost run out of available spaces.
- As compared to Muslims living within the boundaries of OCC those living outside these boundaries have to pay three times the cost just for the burial ground. This is in addition to other funeral related costs.
- We ask for a suitable land, an area or a section that is to be allocated to us either as a whole or agreed to be shared with the larger Muslim Community of Oxfordshire county with "equal rights" and on "fair terms" by paying the same levies as the local residents of OCC.