



**Whalley, Wiswell & Barrow Cemetery – Joint Burial Committee
Complaints Procedure**

Version Control

Version	Date	Description of Change
V.1	9/7/2025	New Policy

Whalley, Wiswell & Barrow Cemetery – Joint Burial Committee

Complaints Procedure

(In accordance with relevant statutory guidance and local government best practices)

1. Introduction

This Complaints Procedure outlines how complaints regarding the cemetery under the care of the **Whalley, Wiswell & Barrow Cemetery – Joint Burial Committee** will be managed. It ensures complaints are addressed fairly, transparently, and in compliance with relevant legislation and guidance.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to complaints related to:

- Grounds maintenance and cemetery upkeep
 - Grave or memorial concerns
 - Behaviour of staff, contractors, or committee members
 - Enforcement of cemetery rules and regulations
 - Removal or relocation of items from graves
-

3. Legal and Statutory Framework

This procedure is informed by the following key legislation and guidance:

- **Local Government Act 1972** – Establishes the powers and responsibilities of parish and joint parish councils, including the management of cemeteries.
 - **Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO)** – Governs cemetery management, including regulations about memorials, interments, and removal of items.
 - **General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018** – Ensures personal data of complainants is processed lawfully and securely.
 - **Freedom of Information Act 2000** – Allows individuals to request information relating to cemetery operations, subject to exemptions.
 - **NALC: Code of Practice in Handling Complaints** – Offers a model complaints procedure for local councils.
-

4. Informal Resolution

Where possible, complaints should first be raised informally with the **Cemetery Clerk** or **Designated Officer**. Many concerns can be resolved promptly through open discussion or clarification.

5. Formal Complaint Process

If informal resolution is unsuccessful, the complainant may submit a **formal complaint** in writing to the **Clerk to the Whalley, Wiswell & Barrow Cemetery – Joint Burial Committee**. This should include:

- Full name and contact details
- A detailed description of the complaint
- Dates, names, and any supporting documentation
- Actions taken so far
- Desired outcome (if applicable)

Submission Methods:

- **Email** (to the official Council email address)
 - **Post** (to the Clerk's office)
-

6. Acknowledgement and Investigation

- Complaints will be **acknowledged in writing within 5 working days**.
- The Clerk will forward the complaint to the **Chair of the WWB Joint Burial Committee** (or Vice Chair, if necessary), who will conduct a review or investigation.
- The investigation may include:
 - Reviewing cemetery records
 - Speaking with staff or committee members
 - Site visits or inspections

A **written response** will be provided within **20 working days**, unless more time is needed. In such cases, the complainant will be notified of the revised timescale.

7. Appeals

If unsatisfied with the response, the complainant may **appeal in writing** to the **Chair of the WWB Joint Burial Committee**. The appeal will be considered at the next scheduled meeting of the full **WWB Joint Burial Committee** or a delegated appeals sub-committee.

- The complainant will be notified of the meeting date and may request to attend.
 - The decision made at the appeal stage is **final**.
-

8. Record Keeping and Monitoring

- All formal complaints and outcomes will be **recorded and monitored** by the Clerk.
 - The **WWB Joint Burial Committee** will **review complaints periodically** to identify any trends or areas for improvement.
-

9. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaints will be handled in accordance with the **UK GDPR** and **Data Protection Act 2018**. Personal information will only be shared as necessary for the purpose of investigating the complaint.

10. Unreasonable or Vexatious Complaints

The Committee reserves the right to take proportionate steps in response to behaviour that is:

- Abusive
- Harassing
- Repetitive without basis
- Intentionally disruptive to cemetery business

Any such action will be taken in accordance with council policy and relevant guidance.