

To receive a report on a letters to heaven concept and consider any actions and associated expenditure

**Overview:**

The Town Council have been approached by a resident who has posed the following question in relation to installing a post box at Churchtown Cemetery with the aim to support loved ones to cope with grief by writing letters.

*Dear Town Council*

*You may have seen in the news recently the beautiful and moving idea a young girl in Nottingham had of a 'letters to heaven' postbox at her local cemetery. It was a chance for her to write and send a letter to her grandparents - <https://www.bristolworld.com/read-this/girls-postbox-to-heaven-idea-to-be-rolled-out-across-crematoriums-in-uk-4022793> I recently lost my best friend very suddenly and unexpectedly aged 38 who is buried at Churchtown. She left behind 3 devastated young children who miss her everyday, I noticed next to her plot is also a young father who died in his 30s with gifts and crafts on his grave from his daughter. Obviously the cemetery also has mothers, fathers, grandparents and friends of all ages and I would like to enquire if a similar letters to heaven postbox could be considered for Churchtown Cemetery for loved ones to cope with grief and write letters as a help with this. I could see this being a wonderful addition to the peaceful space and something that would be a help and support for those of all ages greiving. I would be happy to raise the funds for the postbox, I would like it to be similar to the one in the news article above so I can source this and ensure it is painted in the correct tone - to be approved by those involved with Churchtown Cemetery.*

**Review:**

The following link relates to the original site mentioned in the query raised by the resident and the site owners information relating to the project, this also includes a story of the post box and how it came to first being placed at one of the Crematorium sites.

<https://www.gedlingcrematorium.co.uk/letters-to-heaven.php#:~:text=Located%20within%20our%20beautiful%20memorial,%2C%20and%20'post%20them'>

Having reviewed information available, areas and sites that have adopted this concept all seem to be privately owned sites, some fall under the same group the Westerleigh group, this group have 36 crematorium sites throughout the UK <https://www.westerleighgroup.co.uk/locations.php> Having reached out to the group of crematoriums mentioned on how they manage the concept the following information has been received.

*Thank you for your email. I am delighted to hear you are thinking of having a 'Letters to Heaven' post box.*

*We are currently trialling composting the letters and then the soil will go back into our grounds to regenerate the land. We shred the letters first. I know that some people have decided to bury the letters and some just shred them.*

*From feedback it is more important that the letters are not opened or read that people seem to care the most about. This is what we focus on and not what happens afterwards. We do have to be*

*careful when advertising what happens as it is a bit like 'Santa' and don't want to ruin the thoughts for children. ( we don't advertise what happens).*

*Each site within Westerleigh group looks after their own post box. Please let me know if you would like any further information.*

Reviewing the cost involved, some examples for post boxes range from £97 to £260, this does include a stand to display the box (Example one). For safety reasons and to prevent theft/damage the best solution would be to attach a potential post box to the cemetery hut using security screws.

Example 1

[https://www.diy.com/departments/royal-mail-post-box-with-floor-stand-er-cast-iron-wall-mounted-wedding-authentic-pillar-replica-lockable-post-office-letter-box/5055986143079\\_BQ.prd?ds\\_rl=1272379&gclid=EAlaIQobChMI-7Wzq8v0\\_QIVCbDtCh3uqqXeEAQYAyABEgLYqPD\\_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds](https://www.diy.com/departments/royal-mail-post-box-with-floor-stand-er-cast-iron-wall-mounted-wedding-authentic-pillar-replica-lockable-post-office-letter-box/5055986143079_BQ.prd?ds_rl=1272379&gclid=EAlaIQobChMI-7Wzq8v0_QIVCbDtCh3uqqXeEAQYAyABEgLYqPD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds)

Example 2

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/Mounted-Letterboxes-Rustproof-Weatherproof-Lockable/dp/B09VMDS8LX/ref=sr\\_1\\_6?keywords=Red+Post+Box&qid=1679661606&sr=8-6](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Mounted-Letterboxes-Rustproof-Weatherproof-Lockable/dp/B09VMDS8LX/ref=sr_1_6?keywords=Red+Post+Box&qid=1679661606&sr=8-6)

Example 3

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/Vintage-Mounted-Authentic-Lockable-Weatherproof/dp/B0B1Z5CJWN/ref=sr\\_1\\_17?keywords=Red+Post+Box&qid=1679661606&sr=8-17](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Vintage-Mounted-Authentic-Lockable-Weatherproof/dp/B0B1Z5CJWN/ref=sr_1_17?keywords=Red+Post+Box&qid=1679661606&sr=8-17) .

**Proposal:**

1. To procure a post box mentioned in example three at a cost of £120.79 +VAT from budget code 6073 BA EMF Memorial Garden current available budget £4,200.
2. To promote the Service via social media, notice boards and the Town Council website.
3. The Service Delivery Department to empty the post box as required.
4. Letters to be shredded and included in the Town Councils green waste process for disposal.
5. Service Delivery Manager to include the Service in future Service Delivery reports to be received at future Burial Authority meetings.

**End of Report**  
**Assistant Town Clerk**