



Subject:	Request for the use Friars Bush Cemetery
Date:	9 June 2026
Reporting Officer:	David Sales, Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services.
Contact Officer:	Siobhan Toland, Director of City Services

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.	
Insert number <input type="checkbox"/>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Information relating to any individual.2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual.3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained.6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction.7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime	
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	<p>At People and Communities in May the Committee agreed to defer consideration of the recommendations presented for the allocation of days for the delivery of tours at Friar’s Bush Burial Ground to enable further discussions to be undertaken with the two tour providers concerned. The purpose of this report is to provide a further update to Committee following recent engagement with the tour providers below at Friars Bush.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends of Friars Bush – Guided Tours of Friar’s Bush Graveyard • Cairde na Cille CIC – Guided Tours of Friar’s Bush Graveyard
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to grant authority to the applicants for the proposed events on the dates noted; subject to the completion of the appropriate event management plans and satisfactory terms being agreed by the Director of City & Neighbourhood Services and on the condition that the Event Organisers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. resolves all operational issues to the Council’s satisfaction; II. meets all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, and licensing responsibilities; and III. shall consult with adjoining public bodies and local communities as necessary.
2.2	<p>Where appropriate a fee will be negotiated which recognises the costs to Council, minimises negative impact on the immediate area and takes account of the potential wider benefit to the city economy, in conjunction with the Councils Commercial Manager.</p>
2.3	<p>Please note that the above recommendations are taken as a pre-policy position in advance of the Council agreeing a more structured framework and policy for ‘Events’, which is currently being taken forward in conjunction with the Councils Commercial team.</p>
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.2	<p>Following the request from People & Communities Committee to defer the recommendations in the May 2026 report further engagement has taken place with both interested tour providers on their respective planned programmes of activities at Friars Bush graveyard over the coming months. On review it is necessary for operational reasons to maintain separate days access for the current tour providers.</p>

3.3	<p>If agreed, the event organiser will be required in advance of the event to submit an event management plan for approval by the Council and all relevant statutory bodies. This will include an assessment of how the event will impact upon the surrounding area and measures to mitigate these impacts.</p>
3.4	<p><u>'Friends of Friars Bush' - Guided Tours of Friar's Bush Graveyard</u></p> <p>Belfast Council has received a request from 'Friends of Friars Bush', who are an informal collective of independent professional tour guides. 'Friends of Friar's Bush' are proposing to host a series of tours at Friar's Bush Graveyard from May 2026 to April 2027.</p>
3.5	<p>This collective of local independent guides have extensive knowledge of Friar's Bush and have been carrying out tours at the site for several years.</p> <p>A standard tour will last 1.15 hours and is scripted, agreed and shared between all guides. The context of the tour is an impartial factual tour, suitable for all audiences and uses primary historical sources as much as possible.</p>
3.6	<p>Following a review by Bereavement Services, Committee approval is sought for these ongoing tours subject to compliance with requirements of use set out by Council. This approval is annual and is subject to change depending on operational requirements. If approved the 'Friends of Friar's Bush' will have access on the dates below.</p>
3.7	<p>Following recent engagement this collective of local independent guides proposes to provide approximately eighty tours until 30th September 2026 with an average of 10 people per tour attending. This proposed offering will include provision linked to wider events taking place in the City over the summer months.</p>
3.8	<p>The Key Dates for the request are:</p> <p>Main Event – Each Saturday, Monday, Wednesday and Friday for a period of 1 year, times to be agreed in advance with Bereavement Services.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Cairde na Cille CIC – Guided Tours of Friars Bush Graveyard</u></p> <p>Council has received a request from Cairde na Cille CIC to host regular tours in Friar's Bush Graveyard. The purpose of the tours is to promote community relations, share heritage and to animate built and open spaces in Belfast.</p>

3.10	Cairde na Cille CIC consists of local guides with extensive knowledge of Friar's Bush. The group provide some free events for economically deprived communities and have been carrying out tours at the site for several years.
3.11	Following a recent review by Bereavement Services, Committee approval is sought for these ongoing tours subject to compliance with requirements of use set out by Council. This approval is annual and is subject to change depending on operational requirements. If approved the 'Cairde na Cille CIC' will have access on dates below.
3.12	As well as providing guided tours this group also complete volunteering efforts within Friars Bush graveyard. Following recent engagement Council Officers will continue to work with the group to ensure the heritage and biodiversity of the site is maintained.
3.13	<p>The Key Dates for the request are:</p> <p>Main Event – Each Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday for a period of 1 year, times to be agreed in advance by Bereavement Services.</p>
3.14	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no known implications.</p>
3.15	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no known implications</p>
4.0	Appendices
	None