

ARNOS VALE BRISTOL. 463

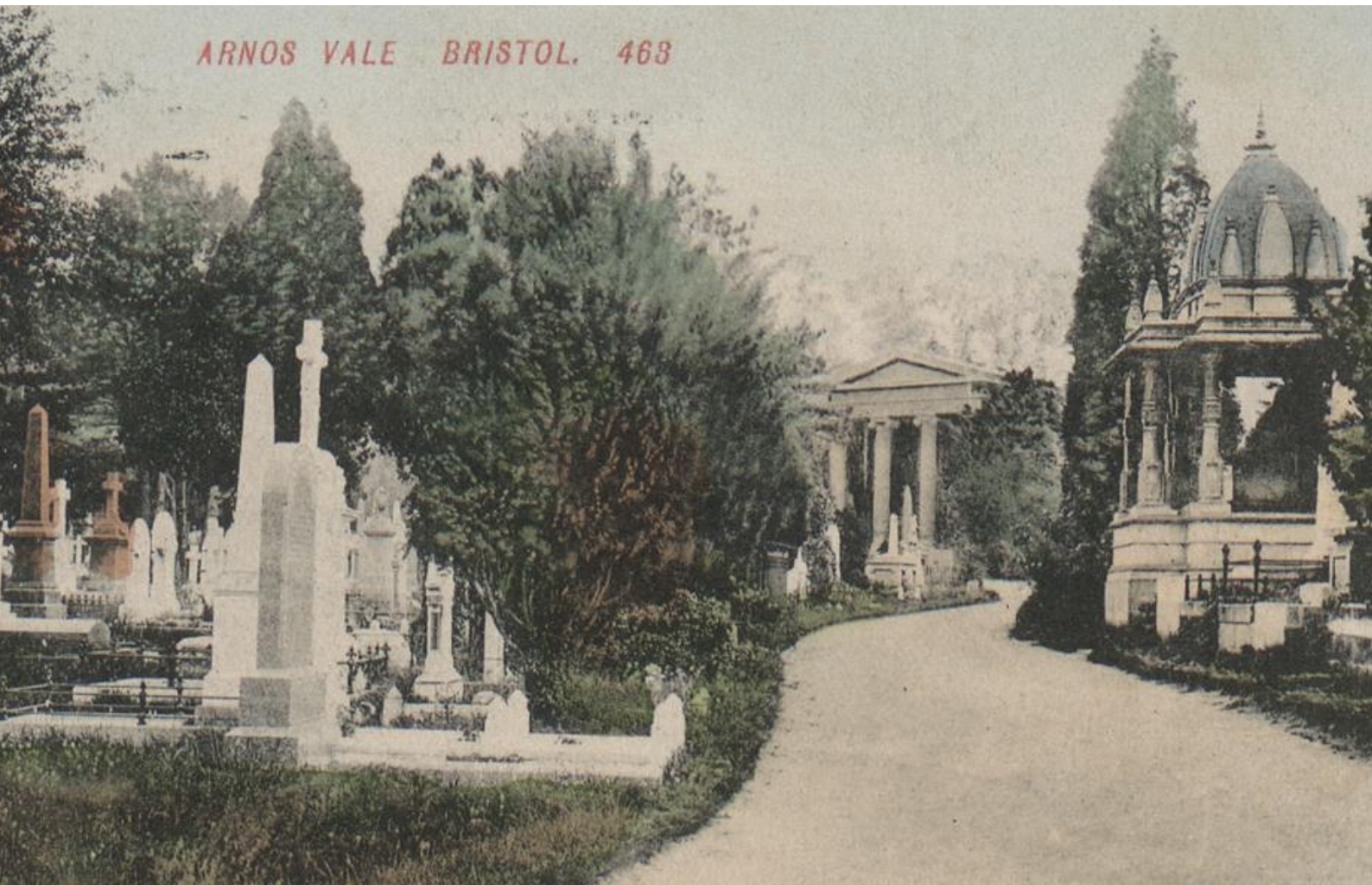


Image credit: Arnos Vale cemetery, 1906 (ref. 43207/9/40/22)

Bristol Archives

Guide to cemetery and burial records



Online catalogue	archives.bristol.gov.uk
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Introduction to this guide

There are a wide variety of cemeteries where someone may have been buried – the grounds of the local Anglican church or other denominational chapel, a private ground operated by a company, grounds operated by local burial boards, and grounds operated by the city council. The likelihood of Bristol Archives holdings records varies for each of these types of grounds.

This guide aims to identify the different burial grounds, as well as later crematoria, and identify the records we hold for them, both in terms of burials themselves and creation / administration of the grounds.

The records listed are generally the most important or useful ones – it is recommended that you still search our [online catalogue](#) for any additional items that have not been included, or have been received since this guide was compiled.

Research advice

If you are looking for a parish burial but don't know which parish it would be, you may be able to discover this using the census or the street listings in a trade directory.

Although we hold a large number of registers, they usually record that a burial occurred, rather than exactly where in the ground the body was placed.

Due to restrictions on burial grounds, if the person you are researching died after 1841 in the city of Bristol, there is a good chance they were buried in one of the 'municipal' graveyards, regardless of the parish in which they lived.

If you can't find the burial you are after, it is worth: checking the registers of surrounding parishes; checking local non-conformist registers; checking if we have any indexes for that time period.

Secondary sources

If you do not know which cemetery someone was buried in, it is worth checking if they are listed in an index before looking into individual burial grounds.

The Bristol & Avon Family History Society (BAFHS) have produced many indexes. Anglican and non-conformist burials are generally on indexes of registers of baptisms and marriages as well as burials, and generally cover up to 1837 when Civil Registration was introduced.

BAFHS have also produced indexes of registers for cemeteries set up by, or taken over by, Bristol City Council, known as 'municipal' burials, generally covering 1870s-1991.

They have also produced transcriptions of monumental inscriptions for various burial grounds in the former Avon County Council area.

BAFHS indexes are available to view on our searchroom computers, or can be purchased as CDs or digital downloads via the shop on their [website](#).

A brief history of cemeteries and burial grounds in Bristol

The population of Bristol grew rapidly, and by the 1830s, it was perhaps ten or twelve times greater than it had been in the Middle Ages. However, Bristolians still relied on the overcrowded burial grounds of the churches and chapels used by their ancestors.

Most people were buried in the graveyards of Anglican (Church of England) parish churches, although by the 18th and early 19th centuries, several non-conformist chapels had burial grounds and a few private burial grounds had been established.

In the mid-19th century several new Anglican churches, built beyond the city centre or outside the city boundary at that time, opened burial grounds of their own. The first burial at Holy Trinity, St Philip took place in 1832 and this new burial ground greatly relieved the situation in a densely populated area. Other new churches with burial grounds which opened at this time include St Andrew Montpelier (1845), St Simon Baptist Mills (1848), St Mark Easton (1848), St Luke Barton Hill (1850) and St Barnabas (1852).

However, provision of land for burial did not keep pace with demand. The cholera epidemics of 1832 and 1849 turned the problem of burial space into a crisis. National concern over public health led to legislation, including the Public Health Act of 1848 and the Burial Act of 1853, which resulted in the closure of the city centre burial grounds by 1854.

Arnos Vale Cemetery

In 1836 the Bristol General Cemetery Company was formed, and it bought land at Arnos Vale on the Bath Road to create a cemetery. See page 11 for full details.

Cemetery Unions

In 1847, the Clergy of the Deanery of Bristol appointed a committee to discuss the problem of burial space. The committee's report proposed that the city parishes should form four cemetery unions which would purchase land on the edge of the city to provide a common cemetery for those parishes.

However, under the Public Health Act of 1848, new burial grounds had to be approved by the General Board of Health, which recommended that general cemeteries should be provided instead, with areas for each religious persuasion. It was also suggested that the private Arnos Vale Cemetery should be used more fully.

Closure of the city centre burial grounds

In Bristol, the Public Health Act of 1848 led to an inquiry into the city's sanitary conditions. A report compiled by George T Clark for the General Board of Health in 1850 described the condition of some of the city burial grounds in graphic detail. The report concluded that the church and chapel burial grounds were both insufficient and unfit for the needs of the city.

Under the 1848 act, burial grounds could be closed on the recommendation of the Local Board of Health if they were considered dangerous to health. This was followed by the Burial Act of 1853, which resulted in the closure of all the burial grounds in the city centre by an Order in Council of 1854. Several closed immediately, as well as church crypts (burial places beneath church buildings), whilst others were restricted on the number of bodies per grave and the proximity of graves to nearby buildings. Burials were also allowed to continue in certain burial grounds in existing family graves. Burial grounds at the new Anglican churches which opened in the early 19th century were not affected, as they were beyond the boundaries of the city.

Burial Boards and cemeteries

Following further legislation, burial boards were appointed to make further provision for burials and a number of general cemeteries were established (as mentioned in the 'cemetery unions' section) beyond the city boundaries, such as Greenbank. At the end of the 19th century the boundaries of Bristol were extended by a series of Acts of Parliament and so the city assumed responsibility for several more cemeteries. The boundaries extended further in the 20th century and the most recent council cemetery to be created was South Bristol, which opened in 1971.

General records available at Bristol Archives

'Report to the General Board of Health on the Sewerage, Drainage, Supply of Water and Sanitary Conditions of the Inhabitants of Bristol' by GT Clark, 1850 (ref. [Bk/640](#)).

'Report on the Sanitary Conditions of Bristol' by Sir H de la Beche and Dr Lyon Playfair from the 'Report of the Commissioner for Inquiring into the State of Large Towns and Populous Districts', 1845 (ref. [InfoBox 18/15](#)).

'Order for discontinuing burials in the city churchyards, and restricting burials in others (Anglican and non-conformist)', 1854 (ref. [EP/A/27/66](#), photocopy).

The archive of the Diocese of Bristol includes consecration papers and faculties regarding churchyards, burial grounds and cemeteries (overall ref. [EP](#)).

Council deeds and agreements relating to various cemeteries (ref. [CEM](#)).

Opening hours and charges for many cemeteries are noted in the Bristol trade directories of the 19th and early 20th centuries (ref. [Dir](#)).

There are images of various cemeteries and church burial grounds amongst the Vaughan collection of postcards (ref. <https://archives.bristol.gov.uk/records/43207>).

Anglican parishes

Burial registers will be found within the individual parish collections (references starting with 'P.'). For a full listing of the parish collections that we hold, please see the separate [source guide](#) titled 'Guide to Parish, Church and Chapel Records' available online.

Some early registers are 'general' registers containing baptisms and marriages as well as burials.

Most of these are available on microfiche in our searchroom and now via the Ancestry website.

BAFHS have transcribed and indexed various parish registers, mostly pre-1837. These can be viewed on our searchroom computers or purchased from them directly.

There are various hard copy records of indexes of gravestones, monumental inscriptions and registers available in our microfiche area. Many of these are catalogued within the [NPM/B](#) collection.

A few registers no longer exist for various reasons, including due to air raid damage (particularly for St Peter, St Mary le Port, and Temple). In these cases, the Bishops' Transcripts (on microfiche) are a useful substitute.

Please note that St Mary Redcliffe purchased land on the Bath Road (near Arnos Vale cemetery) to use for burials due to railway construction near the church itself.

Non-conformist chapels

Burial registers will be found within the individual chapel collections. For a full listing of the chapel collections that we hold, please see the separate [source guide](#) titled 'Guide to Parish, Church and Chapel Records' available online.

Many of the non-conformist chapels are included in the various BAFHS indexes for baptism marriage and burial registers.

There are various hard copy records of indexes of gravestones, monumental inscriptions and registers available in our microfiche area. Many of these are catalogued within the [NPM/B](#) collection.

One of the earliest nonconformist burial grounds belonged to the Baptist chapel in Broadmead, the burial register of which dates from 1679.

In 1768 the first burial took place in the Brunswick Square burial ground of Lewin's Mead Unitarian chapel. Records of graves c1770-1950 and other papers are available (ref. [39461/BG](#)) and a transcript covering 1798-1963 is available in our microfiche area.

The Roman Catholic chapel of St Joseph in Trenchard Street (later St Mary on the Quay) opened a burial ground in the 18th century, as did the Moravians in Maudlin Lane (now Upper Maudlin Street).

The Jewish burial ground in Barley Fields, St Philip's (now Barton Road) also dates from the mid-18th century.

The Society of Friends (Quakers) had burial grounds in New Street, Redcliffe Pit and at the Friars (later known as Quakers Friars). A plan of Redcliffe pit burials and names is available (ref. [40804/1](#)).

The burial ground of the Wesleyan Portland Street chapel dates from the late 18th century, and those of Redfield Wesleyan chapel and St Philip's Chapel in Old Market Street from the early 19th century.

Holy Souls cemetery at Bath Road, Brislington, opened in 1863 for the burial of Roman Catholics. Registers 1863-1894 are available on microfiche, and a transcript of the registers 1863-1922 is available in our microfiche area.

Burial boards and Bristol Corporation (later Bristol City Council) burial provision and cemeteries

Local Burial boards

As well as causing closure of the city centre burial grounds, the Burial Act of 1853 led to the establishment of burial boards to make provision for burials and to administer new burial grounds.

Bristol had five burial boards, some of which were existing civil parishes:

St Philip Burial Board [see Greenbank section]

St George Local Board of Health [see Avonview section]

Shirehampton Parish Council [see Shirehampton section]

Brislington Parish Council [see Brislington section]

Barton Regis Rural District Council [see Canford section]

These cemeteries were located outside the boundaries of Bristol but were gradually absorbed by the growth of the city, with Bristol Corporation assuming responsibility for the burial grounds and cemeteries administered by the burial boards, as well as acquiring certain administrative records of the boards.

For records of these burial boards, see the individual sections for each cemetery.

Bristol Corporation Burial Board

Bristol Corporation became the burial board for the city in 1896, under an order of the Local Government Board. Since then, cemeteries have been managed by a series of committees. The minutes of which contain details of the setting-up and management of cemeteries and crematoria. They are of particular interest during the years when new cemeteries were being planned and established.

For 1895-1919 see Burial Board Committee (ref. [M/BCC/BUR](#)).

For 1919-1963 see Cemeteries Committee (ref. [M/BCC/CEM](#)).

For 1963-1967 see Crematorium and Cemeteries Committee (ref. [M/BCC/CREM](#)).

For 1968-1974 see Public Works Committee (ref. [M/BCC/PUW](#)).

For 1973-1986 see Open Spaces and Amenities Committee (ref. [M/BCC/OPEN](#)).

For 1986-1991 see Health and Public Protection Committee (ref. [M/BCC/HPP](#)).

For 1991-1999 see Health and Environmental Services Committee (ref. [M/BCC/HES](#)).

For 2000-2005 see Environment, Transport and Leisure Committee (ref. [M/BCC/ETL](#)).

Crematoria

The first crematorium in Bristol opened at Arnos Vale Cemetery in 1928. The Corporation's crematoria at Canford Cemetery opened in 1956 and at South Bristol Cemetery in 1971.

'Bristol Crematorium, Arnos Vale', undated, c 1930s (ref. [Pamphlet 1179](#)).

Programme for Canford Crematorium opening, 1956 (ref. [Pamphlet/691](#)).

Programme for South Bristol Crematorium opening, 1971 (ref. [Pamphlet/1914](#)).

The crematorium at Arnos Vale has several plans relating to its construction in 1926 and alterations in 1939 and 1947 (ref. [Building Plans](#))

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General and municipal cemeteries

Arnos Vale Cemetery

Address	Bath Road, Brislington, Bristol, BS4 3EW
Established by	Bristol General Cemetery Company, established 1836
Opened	1839; enlarged 1880 and 1891
Crematorium opened	1928 (closed 1998)
Transfer to Bristol City Council	Compulsory purchase order, 2003
Managed by	Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust

The Bristol General Cemetery Company bought 28 acres of land at Arnos Vale for a cemetery that the company said would double the burial space provided by the city churches. Half of the land was initially prepared for burials.

The cemetery was seen as an asset to Bristol, but it was not well used at first due to high fees and the distant location. Victims of cholera were buried at the site during the 1849 epidemic and after the city burial grounds closed in 1854, burial at Arnos Vale became routine. In 1860 the remaining land came into use and the site was later extended. The crematorium which opened in 1928 was one of the first in England and the only one in the south-west until the 1930s.

By the late 1980s, the cemetery was badly neglected. The owners announced its closure in 1998, but the Friends of Arnos Vale Cemetery kept the site open to the public. Bristol City Council completed a compulsory purchase order in 2003 and licensed the Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust to manage burials and maintenance at the cemetery.

Burial records

Digital images of the registers and indexes for the 'Church' burials (Church of England, 1840-2003), 'Chapel' burials (non-consecrated ground, 1839-1991), and cremations (1928-1998) can be viewed in our public searchroom. Please note that these must be viewed in person - we cannot conduct any searches of the images on your behalf as search requests must be made directly to the cemetery (see page 26).

We also hold Bishop's transcripts of Anglican burials for 1840-1868 on microfiche, with a hard copy index to them available on our searchroom shelves. They are also available in the 'Bristol, England, Church of England Burials, 1813-1994' set of parish records on Ancestry.

Other material at Bristol Archives

Administrative and other records of the Bristol General Cemetery Company, 1830s-1990s (ref. [41455](#)).

Records of the Friends of Arnos Vale Cemetery, 1995-2012 (ref. [45068](#)).

Records of the Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust, including some records of the Friends of Arnos Vale Cemetery, 1987-2006 (ref. [45207](#)).

Published Acts relating to the establishment and expansion of the cemetery such as [Acts/2/1837/1](#) and [Acts/4/1880/3](#).

Various published books such as [Pamphlet/1833](#) and [Bk/2386](#).

Avonview Cemetery

Address	Beaufort Road, St George, Bristol, BS5 8EN
Established by	St George Local Board of Health, established in 1873 (later St George Urban Sanitary Authority). It first met as a burial board in 1882.
Opened	1883
Transfer to Bristol Corporation	1897, following the Bristol Corporation Act of 1897 which extended the city boundary to include St George

Burial records

Burial registers for 1883-1904 on microfiche, with hard copy index available.

BAFHS municipal burials index covers 1883-1991.

Monumental inscriptions (ref. [NPM/B/122](#)).

For other burial records contact South Bristol cemetery (see page 26).

Other records at Bristol Archives

St George Local Board (Burial Board) minutes, 1882-1887 (ref. [05007](#)).

St George Burial Board Committee letter book, 1882-1897 (ref. [05023](#)).

St George Burial Board Burial Grants minutes, 1883-1897 (ref. [05148](#)).

St George Urban Sanitary Authority Cemetery Committee minutes, 1894-1897 (ref. [05011](#)).

Avonview Cemetery deeds, 1880-1914 (ref. [01672](#)).

Avonview Cemetery tenancy agreements and conveyances, 1892-1923 (ref. [01673](#)).

Burial Board Committee papers and agreements, 1910-1914 (ref. [45235/18/2](#)).

Brislington Cemetery

Address	Church Hill, Brislington, Bristol, BS4 4LT
Established by	Brislington Parish Council
Opened	1905
Transfer to Bristol Corporation	1933, when the remainder of Brislington parish was absorbed into the city by the Somerset Review Order. Parts of the parish had already been incorporated into Bristol by the Bristol Corporation Act of 1897.

Burial records

BAFHS municipal burial registers index covers 1905-1991.

For other burial records contact South Bristol cemetery (see page 26).

Other records at Bristol Archives

Brislington Parish Council: burial fees account book, 1905-1933 (ref. [324](#)).

Brislington Parish Council: Brislington Cemetery receipt books, 1905-1933 (ref. [325](#)).

Brislington Parish Council: Grants of exclusive rights of burial, 1906-1922 (ref. [327](#)).

Plans of Brislington Cemetery, 1903 (ref. [333/8](#)).

Canford Cemetery

Address	Canford Lane, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, BS9 3PQ
Established by	Barton Regis Rural District Council, which was established under the Local Government Act of 1894 and took on the functions of the Barton Regis Rural Sanitary Authority. It also acted as a burial board.
Opened	1903
Crematorium opened	December 1956 (first cremations held January 1957)
Transfer to Bristol Corporation	1904, under the Bristol Corporation Act of that year which extended the city boundary.

Burial records

BAFHS municipal burial registers index covers 1903-1991.

For other burial records contact South Bristol cemetery (see page 26).

Other records at Bristol Archives

The minutes of Barton Regis Rural District Council include references to Canford Cemetery, 1894-1904 (ref. [05035](#)).

Plan of Westbury-on-Trym Cemetery [Canford] showing arrangement of graves, 1903 but updated to 2000 (ref [BristolPlans/arranged/65/2](#)).

Map showing proposed extension to Westbury-on Trym Cemetery [Canford], 1904 (ref. [BristolPlans/arranged/80](#)). Please note this item is too fragile to be produced.

General Burial Board Committee papers (ref. [45235/18/3](#)).

Burial Board minutes, 1866-1886, and lists of civilian war dead, 1940s (ref. [35755](#)).

Diocesan consecration papers, 1903-1933 (ref. [EP/A/22/Can](#)).

Correspondence regarding consecration, 1916 (ref. [01675](#)).

Greenbank Cemetery

Address	Greenbank Road, Easton, Bristol, BS5 6HL
Established by	St Philip's Burial Board (established 1868) to cater for the large and densely populated outparish of St Philip & Jacob.
Opened	1871; enlarged in 1880 by St Philip's Burial Board; enlarged in 1899 by Bristol Corporation.
Transfer to Bristol Corporation	1895 under the Bristol Corporation Act of that year, which extended the city boundary to include the outparish of St Philip & Jacob. It was the first cemetery to be taken over by the Corporation, which appointed a Burial Board Sub-Committee to manage it.

Greenbank Cemetery was the first large cemetery after Arnos Cemetery to be set up in Bristol in 1871. In the north eastern section of the cemetery are memorials to the civilians who died during the Bristol Blitz.

Burial records

The BAFHS municipal cemetery burial register index covers 1871-1991.

Burial registers 1871-1901 and Bishop's transcripts of Anglican burials 1871-1897 are available on microfiche.

For other burial records contact South Bristol cemetery (see page 26).

Other records at Bristol Archives

Minutes of St Philip's Burial Board, 1868-1895 (refs. [35755](#) and [05034](#)).

Greenbank Cemetery deeds, 1715-1920 (refs. [01666](#), [01667](#), [01668](#), [01669](#), [01670](#)).

Correspondence regarding consecration, 1904-1908 (ref. [01671](#)).

Charges, rules and regulations of Greenbank Cemetery, 1886 (ref. [40161](#)).

Burial Board Committee papers, 1912-1915 (ref. [45235/18/4](#)).

Diocesan papers, 1869-1904 (ref. [EP/A/22/G](#)).

Notes regarding re-interments from Redcross Street Baptist burial ground in 1926 (ref. [InfoBox/4/5](#)).

Notes regarding reinterments from Holy Trinity, St Phillips in 1981 (ref. [InfoBox/38/38](#)).

Henbury Cemetery

Address	Kingsweston Road, Henbury, Bristol, BS10 7QT
Established by	Originally a burial ground for the ecclesiastical parish of Henbury.
Opened	17 th century
Transfer to Bristol Corporation	Management of the cemetery was taken over by the Corporation/City Council in the 1950s. In 1963 the Bristol Diocesan Trust conveyed the land to the city council on condition that it would be used only for the ecclesiastical parish of Henbury.

The cemetery includes painted gravestones for Scipio Africanus (1720), and an obelisk with an ankh marking the grave of Amelia Edwards.

Burial records

Parish burial registers 1678-1976 (ref. [P.Hen/R/4](#)).

The BAFHS municipal cemetery burial register index covers 1923-1991.

Churchyard grave survey, 1992 (ref. [42766](#)).

Other records at Bristol Archives

Parish records relating to Henbury Cemetery, 1919-1963, including minutes 1921-1958 (ref. [P.Hen/PCC/3](#)).

Ridgeway Park Cemetery

Address	Oakdene Avenue, Eastville, Bristol, BS5 6QQ
Established by	Ridgeway Park Cemetery Company (established in 1887, acquiring the land in 1888)
Opened	1888
Transfer to Bristol Corporation	The company was wound-up in 1949, after which the Corporation took over maintenance of the cemetery. It was obliged to assume full responsibility for the cemetery by an Order in Council of 1954, and burials were restricted to interments in existing graves.

Burial records

The BAFHS municipal cemetery burial register index covers 1888-1991.

Other records at Bristol Archives

Records of Ridgeway Park Cemetery Company (not including burial registers, but including a 2018 survey of graves), 1888-1951 (ref. [35531](#)).

Minutes of the Cemeteries Committee, 1940-1954, include complaints about conditions in the cemetery (ref. [M/BCC/CEM/3](#)).

Shirehampton Cemetery

Address	St Mary's Road, Shirehampton, Bristol, BS11 9RN
Established by	Shirehampton Parish Council
Opened	1898; enlarged in 1907 by Bristol Corporation
Transfer to Bristol Corporation	1904 when the Bristol Corporation Act (which extended the city boundary to include Shirehampton) dissolved Shirehampton Parish Council.

Burial records

The BAFHS municipal burial registers index covers 1883-1991.

For other burial records contact South Bristol cemetery (see page 26).

Other records at Bristol Archives

Barton Regis Rural District Council minutes 1894-1904 include references to Shirehampton Cemetery (ref. [05035](#)).

Shirehampton Cemetery deeds, 1897-1912 (ref. [01674](#)).

Plan of proposed extensions to Shirehampton Burial Ground, 1907 (ref. [BristolPlans/arranged/101](#)).

Burial Board Committee papers, 1898-1912 (ref. [45235/18/5](#)).

The BAFHS [website](#) includes a searchable index of monumental inscriptions for this cemetery, undertaken in the 1980s.

South Bristol Cemetery and Crematorium

Address	Bridgwater Road, Bedminster Down, Bristol, BS13 7AS
Established by	Bristol City Council
Opened	1971, although burials only began in 1974.

Burial records

Contact South Bristol cemetery (see page 26).

Other records at Bristol Archives

Copies of assorted plans and surveys, 1970s-1980s, within the Aperture Card collection (ref. [42054](#)).

Private burial grounds

There were several private burial grounds in Bristol from about 1769 to 1854, although little documentary evidence of these has survived.

Latimer's *Annals of Bristol* notes that a private Universal Burial Ground opened in 1762 outside Lawford's Gate (near Eugene Street), to serve the growing population of the outparish of St Philip & Jacob.

In 1845, a report on sanitary conditions in Bristol was produced by the Commission on the State of Large Town and Populous Districts. The report condemned the private burial grounds, suggesting that unscrupulous burial practices were used in land that was already full.

George T Clark's report to the General Board of Health in 1850 also criticised these sites and accused them of poorly recording burials. In 1853, a legal inquiry was recommended after complaints to the Local Board of Health about practices at Thomas' burial ground.

Clark listed five private burial grounds operating in Bristol in 1850, all sited towards the east of the city. These were:

Howland's burial ground

Opened by Thomas Howland (a house carpenter) in 1804, between Wilson Street and Newfoundland Street. We hold a microfiche copy of a burial register for 1804-1854 and some related circulars (ref. [11930](#)).

Dolman's burial ground

Also known as Dolman's Yard or Allen's was in Pennywell Street, by Eugene Street. This may have originally been the Universal Burial Ground. We do not hold any records.

Thomas' burial ground

Opened sometime between 1828 and 1850 in Clarence Place, at the end of West Street. Minutes of the Local Board of Health for 28 April 1853 record complaints about this burial ground (ref. [M/BCC/SAN/1/2](#)).

Francis' burial ground

Opened around 1837 in West Street, at the end of Old Market Street. We do not hold any records.

Williams' burial ground

According to title deeds (held privately), this was owned by a Methodist minister, Rev Williams, and located in West Street. We do not hold any records.

All of these burial grounds were closed by the Order in Council of 1854.

Bunhill Fields

Located in Redcross Street, now the site of St Matthias Park (opened 1886), little is known about this burial ground but there is evidence of its administration by Congregationalists during the period covered by its registers for 1807-1880 (ref. [46055](#)). BAFHS have produced an index and transcription of these registers, available to view on our public computers or to purchase from them directly.

Other burial grounds and cemeteries

Institution burial grounds

Many institutions, such as the workhouses, had their own burial grounds but a large number of poor law records were destroyed during World War II.

Where records do survive, they are likely to record deaths rather than burials, and are often in the collections of the institutions that took over the buildings, such as Stapleton / Manor Park Hospital for Stapleton Workhouse (ref. [43127](#)) and Thornbury Hospital for Thornbury Workhouse (ref. [38034](#)). The registers of Eastville Workhouse (ref. [30105](#)) were used by Bristol Radical History Society to identify unmarked graves of paupers buried at Rosemary Green.

Bristol Infirmary burial ground

Until the mid-19th century, many patients from the Bristol Infirmary (now Bristol Royal Infirmary) were buried in nearby parishes such as St Michael and St James. However the Infirmary had a small burial ground for pauper patients, situated in Johnny Ball Lane.

The Corporation granted the land to the Infirmary in 1757 though it is likely that the plot was already used by the infirmary as a burial ground. It was adjacent to the 'soldiers' infirmary' and is referred to as the 'soldiers' burial ground' in a book of plans of Corporation properties dating from the mid-18th century.

The burial ground was beset with problems of overcrowding, maintenance and security, not least to prevent graverobbers removing bodies for dissection by medical students.

The burial ground closed in 1854, along with the other city centre burial grounds. The burials of pauper patients later took place at Arnos Vale cemetery.

Burial records

Many burials in the Infirmary burial ground were recorded in the burial registers of St Michael, available on microfiche and via the Ancestry website.

Other records

Within the BRI collection, Richard Smith's biographical memoirs contain mentions of the burial ground in volumes 2, 3 and 12 (ref. [35893/36](#)). There are also mentions in the committee minutes of 12 Jul 1757 (ref. [35893/1/a](#)), weekly committee minutes 1797-1810 and house committee minutes 1814-1828 (ref. [35893/2](#)).

The Common Council Proceedings of 20 Dec 1755 refer to land granted for a burial ground (ref. [M/BCC/CCP/1/13](#)).

Plan showing the Soldiers' Infirmary and burial ground in the mid-18th century (ref. [Plan Book/A/126](#)).

Archaeological excavation report, 2002 (ref. [45839/Rep/2002/70](#)).

A History of the Bristol Royal Infirmary by G Munro Smith, 1917 (ref. [Bk/288](#)).

Cholera burial ground

Bristol's lack of burial space became a critical problem during the cholera outbreaks of 1832 and 1848. In 1832, an emergency burial ground for deaths at St Peter's Hospital (the old Bristol city workhouse) was established near the cattle market in Temple Meads. According to Latimer's *Annals of Bristol* bodies were taken there by boat to avoid attention, due to concern about public reaction to the burial of pauper cholera victims.

Records

A conveyance of land at Temple Meads between the Corporation of Bristol and the Great Western Railway Company dated 1836 includes a plan showing the location of the cholera burial ground (ref. [00975/11](#))

Paupers' cemetery, Stapleton (proposed)

By 1852 the Corporation of the Poor (which was responsible for providing poor relief in Bristol) was in negotiations for land to provide a cemetery for the poor of Bristol. A site adjacent to the city workhouse at Stapleton was surveyed as a possible location.

The proposal did not succeed as, following the Public Health Act of 1848, all new burial grounds had to be approved by the General Board of Health. The Board favoured general cemeteries for everyone regardless of income. In addition, plans for a paupers' cemetery in Bristol were overtaken by new national legislation; following the Burial Act of 1853, municipal burial provision began in earnest.

Records

Local Board of Health minutes 1851-1852 include discussions regarding the creation of a cemetery for the poor (ref. [M/BCC/SAN/1/1](#)).

Monumental inscriptions

Bristol Archives holds a record of monumental inscriptions (gravestones and memorials) covering various parish, private and municipal cemeteries in Bristol and the former county of Avon (north Somerset and south Gloucestershire) created by the Bristol & Avon Family History Society on microfiche. This can now also be searched on the BAFHS [website](#) (in the 'inscriptions' section of the 'data' page).

There are also printed transcriptions of monumental inscriptions for several individual churchyards and burial grounds including St Andrew Clifton, Westbury on Trym, and Avonview cemetery. These are available on the shelves in our microfiche area. Some of them are listed under ref. [NPM/B](#).

For monumental inscriptions in the County of Gloucestershire, Ralph Bigland's *Historical, Monumental and Genealogical Collections Relative to the County of Gloucestershire* has been published in four volumes by the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society (refs. [Bk/2230-2233](#)).

Useful addresses

Bristol City Council

Requests for information for all current and former council cemeteries (Canford, Greenbank, Avonview, Shirehampton, Henbury, Brislington, Ridgeway Park) should be directed to:

South Bristol Cemetery and Crematorium
Bridgwater Road
Bedminster Down
Bristol
BS13 7AS

Email: cems.crems@bristol.gov.uk
Telephone: 0117 903 8330

Website: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/births-deaths-marriages/deaths/cemeteries-and-crematoria>

Arnos Vale Cemetery

This site is owned by Bristol City Council but managed by the Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust

The Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust
West Lodge
Bath Road
Bristol
BS4 3EW

Email: info@arnosvale.org.uk
Telephone: 0117 971 9117

Website, including search request form: www.arnosvale.org.uk

South Gloucestershire Council

Requests relating to the cemeteries at Mangotsfield (opened 1880), Filton (opened 1957) and Mayshill (opened 1973) should be directed to:

Email: cemeteries@southglos.gov.uk
Telephone: 01454 865831

Website: <https://beta.southglos.gov.uk/cemeteries/>