

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 18 NOVEMBER 2009

GREEN BURIAL SERVICE – GALSTON

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of the completion of the works to create a green burial site at Galston Cemetery and to approve charges for the use of this new service.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Green burials provide an environmentally friendly alternative to conventional burials and are becoming increasingly popular. Green burial sites provide for burial in a biodegradable coffin in either woodland or meadow setting without the installation of any stone memorial or other artefacts. Green burial sites form part of a natural environment which is allowed to grow and develop with only limited grounds maintenance activity carried out. A green burial service is currently offered by a private company in East Ayrshire.
- 2.2 The Council works in accordance with the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) Charter for the Bereaved and the independent accreditation of the Council's Bereavement Services by the ICCM has identified the need to offer green burials to meet changing customer expectations in recent years. The Council has previously considered the provision of Green Burial facilities as part of the Leisure Services Continuous Improvement Plan agreed by the Community Services Committee in September 2004 and 2005, and the Best Value Review of Leisure Services approved on 29 March 2006. On 31 January 2007, the Community Services Committee also noted that tenders were being sought for a Green Burial site at Galston Cemetery, work did not proceed immediately but has now been completed.
- 2.3 This report has been considered and approved by the Corporate Management Team.

3. GREEN BURIAL SITE – GALSTON CEMETERY

- 3.1 A site within the boundary of the existing Galston Cemetery was selected as the area for the provision of the Council's first green burial site. This site had space available within the Council's ownership and the topography of the site was

considered to be suitable for use as a green burial site being separate from, but adjacent to the existing cemetery.

3.2 A programme of works including ground clearance and levelling, path and wall construction and planting has been implemented over the past two years and the site is now ready for use. A total of 300 green burial plots were created at Galston Cemetery. The total cost of works amounted to £55,000. This sum was met from the capital programme.

4. PROPOSED CHARGES

4.1 It is proposed that the costs of purchasing a lair and lair opening are the same as currently agreed for a conventional burial, however, new charges are required for the supply and planting of a memorial tree and the installation of a slip brick which can be added to the cemetery wall. The proposed range of charges for green burials is as follows:-

Purchase of Lair	£260.00
Lair Opening	£260.00
Supply/Planting Memorial Tree	£150.00
Slip Brick	£50.00

Interment of cremated remains (Meadowland grave only)	£ 99.00
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Children under 16, no charge for interment (there will be a purchase charge for the lair as stated above. There will also be a charge for the provision of a memorial tree or slip brick)

Public holidays and weekends 100% surcharges

Additional charges will be made for interments requested outwith normal working hours, which are
Mon – Thursday (9.30am – 2.30pm)
Friday (9.30am – 2.00pm)

£50.00 per hour or part hour

Residents from outside the East Ayrshire area 100% surcharge on all services

4.2 These charges have been benchmarked against other local green burial providers and have been set at appropriate levels when compared to conventional burial charges. Other green burial providers' charges are shown in Appendix 1.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Ongoing maintenance costs will be met from existing Neighbourhood Services budgets. Additional income from this service is difficult to predict as this new element of choice may simply transfer business from conventional burials to green burials. There may, however, be increased uptake from outside East Ayrshire from areas where this service is not available.

6. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Introduction of green burials has required the updating of the Council's Cemetery Management Rules. The consultation period for the necessary changes was advertised in the local press on 28/06/2009 and ran from 28/06/2009 to 24/07/2009. There was no response to the consultation and therefore the Cemetery Management Rules have been updated for immediate use.

7. COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Offering increased choice to customers supports the Council's ongoing commitment to the provision of cemeteries which in turn supports the delivery of the outcomes of the Delivering Community Regeneration theme of the Community Plan.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Provision of green burial services offers increased choice for customers and addresses one of the issues raised in the recent Charter for the Bereaved inspections reducing the risk of the Council failing to meet accreditation standards in future years.

9. CONCLUSIONS

9.1 The Council can now offer environmentally friendly green burials at Galston Cemetery. Charges are proposed at appropriate levels when compared to conventional burials and this extension of choice for customers will enable the Council to meet future demand for green burials.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- (i) note the completion of work to allow green burials at Galston Cemetery;
- (ii) approve the proposed charges detailed in 4.1; and

(iv) otherwise note the content of this report.

William Stafford
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

WS/JAG/CF
12th November 2009

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Implementation Officer: john.griffiths@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

Craufurdland (Private)

Purchase of lair = £400.00 (for a 50 year period)

Interment = £300.00

Interment of cremated remains = £100.00

The above fees include a tree, or shrub.

Example full purchase and burial + tree = £700.00 (50 years only)**South Ayrshire Council**

Purchase of a lair = £480.00

Interment = £480.00

Purchase cremated remains lair = £240.00

Interment of cremated remains = £93.00

Includes tree or shrub

There is a fixed cost of £ 240.00 for a Saturday morning interment.

There is no surcharge for this facility for non residents

Example full purchase and burial + tree = £960.00**North Ayrshire Council**

Purchase of lair = £365.00

Interment = £365.00

Interment of cremated remains = £175.00

Includes tree or shrub

No surcharges

Example full purchase and burial fee + tree = £730.00**East Ayrshire**

Purchase of Lair = £260.00

Interment = £260.00

Purchase of tree = £150.00

Surcharges 100%

Interment of cremated remains = £99.00

Example full purchase and burial + tree = £670.00