

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 15TH SEPTEMBER 2004

PRE-SALE OF BURIAL LAIRS

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval from Members to stop the pre-sale of burial lairs in the cemeteries of East Ayrshire.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At present East Ayrshire Council have stopped pre-sale of lairs in 8 cemeteries due to a shortage of burial space and land purchase problems.
- 2.2 A full list of cemeteries showing available lairs and expected years of operation remaining is shown in the table below. Average annual usage refers to lairs sold either as a pre-sale or immediate interment.

AVAILABILITY OF LAIRS IN EAST AYRSHIRE'S CEMETERIES AS OF 30TH JUNE 2004			
SOUTH AREA			
CEMETERY	LAIRS REMAINING	AVERAGE ANNUAL USAGE	RENEWAL REQUIRED YEARS
AUCHINLECK	294	20	14
CATRINE	326	8	40
CUMNOCK	150	25	6
DALMELLINGTON	60	16	3
DALRYMPLE	34	4	7
DRONGAN	306	7	43
MAUCLINE	55	8	6
MUIRKIRK	84	12	7
NEW CUMNOCK	83	13	6
OCHILTREE	379	4	94
PATNA	16	8	1
SORN	18	1	12
STAIR	42	1	42

The figures obviously vary from year to year and in some cemeteries the ground conditions may be such that some lairs cannot be used e.g. rock sub-strata.

AVAILABILITY OF LAIRS IN EAST AYRSHIRE'S CEMETERIES AS OF 30TH JUNE 2004 NORTH AREA			
CEMETERY	LAIRS REMAINING	AVERAGE ANNUAL USAGE	RENEWAL REQUIRED YEARS
DARVEL	513	12	42
DUNLOP	142	7	20
FENWICK	244	5	48
GALSTON	71	12	5
KILMARNOCK	2384	76	31
KILMAURS	106	9	11
NEWMILNS	915	8	114
RICCARTON	1082	32	33
STEWARTON	1209	13	89

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Council at present operate two separate procedures when selling lairs to the public, with pre-sale of lairs available in some communities but not in others.
- 3.2 Land purchase problems have been experienced when applying to extend existing cemeteries in Patna and Mauchline and there may be further difficulties securing land in Dalmellington and New Cumnock. An offer has been made in respect of land at Patna, and the use of alternative land is now being considered at Mauchline.
- 3.3 People expect that cemeteries will be extended/located within their own communities and there is an ongoing requirement to secure and develop new land for burials.
- 3.4 The Council does have the option of a Compulsory Purchase Order, where landowners object to the sale of land for cemeteries. However, this can prove a lengthy process and may not always be successful. The process may also affect the authority's ability to offer an interment service locally.
- 3.5 North Ayrshire Council do not offer a pre-sale of their lairs. South Ayrshire Council continue to offer a pre-sale service, however they have restrictions in some cemeteries.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Should re-sale of lairs be stopped, income for lair sales may reduce on an annual basis, however there would be no effect in the longer term.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The present policy allows the Director to cease pre-sales of lairs at his discretion. Approval to amend the existing policy to include a total cessation of pre-sales of lairs in the cemeteries of East Ayrshire is sought.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Nil.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Establishing a policy of no pre-sales of lairs would extend the operational term of individual cemeteries and avoid undue pressures being placed on cemeteries when the number of lairs reduce below a crucial level.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Committee recommend that Council:-
- i) cease the policy of pre-sales of lairs in cemeteries in East Ayrshire; and
 - ii) otherwise note the content of the report.

William Stafford
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

WS/JAG/BMcC/RR

12th August 2004.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL

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