

Cemeteries

Activity Management Plan 2021-31

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Document control

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1. Introduction

Cemeteries are part of the Recreation and Community Services activity group. The group includes the following activities:

- Parks and Open Spaces
- Reserves and Camping Grounds
- Cemeteries

The Ashburton District Council manages and operates 11 cemeteries to meet the burial needs of the various communities within the District. These are located at Ashburton, Methven, Rakaia, Chertsey, Mount Somers, Ruapuna, Alford Forest, Winslow, Hinds, Waterton, and Barrhill.

In addition to these the Council manages five old cemeteries that are closed for interments. These are located at Kyle, Mount Somers, Highbank, Westerfield, and Pioneer Park.

Both Ashburton and Methven have a Returned Services section and a children's section is set aside at the Ashburton Cemetery. The new lawn section of Ashburton Cemetery is interdenominational whereas the majority of the rural cemeteries have separate areas for different religions. Cremation beams for the interment of ashes have been provided at Ashburton, Methven and Rakaia Cemeteries.

Muslim burial, natural burial and ashes scattering areas are also provided in the recently extended Ashburton Cemetery.

Both Ashburton and Rakaia Cemeteries have a 'Book of Memories' – a concrete wall where plaques can be placed for remembrance.

2. Key issues for Cemeteries future planning

Records

Putting in place robust processes and procedures to ensure service provision for burials is carried out without incident or error (graves are prepared on time, are the correct size and in the right place) is a key priority for this plan. This includes ensuring the reliability of plot purchase and burial records for effective and accurate allocation of plots. This will be managed by the preparation of a procedures manual with supporting process maps and use of a dual hard copy and electronic recording system. Headstone photography continues to progress and requires completion.

Vandalism

Council is responding to an increasing number of vandalism incidents and the associated cost of repairs. Measures to abate the incidence of vandalism include security patrols and improving casual surveillance. Other measures such as locking gates and toilet facilities at night are being implemented.

Appearance

The public expect a high level of appearance at all cemeteries and Council needs to maintain this standard. Council will strive to keeping cemeteries consistently in a clean and tidy condition to avoid complaints from visitors and relatives. The customer service request system (CRM) enables improved management and monitoring of customer complaints.

The Sexton office and storage area in the Ashburton cemetery is proposed to be relocated to the new cemetery area behind a purpose built screened bund. Developing this area including new fencing, improved sheds and soil storage will improve the appearance and security of the Ashburton Cemetery.

Completing the exterior fencing of the Ashburton Cemetery will also enhance the appearance and security of the cemetery.

Installing kerb and channel to the main entrance road in the old section of the Ashburton Cemetery is a significant project proposed in this plan. The work is required to improve the appearance of this main entry road and provide a clear connection to the new cemetery section.

Hazards in older cemetery areas

Planned maintenance and upkeep of older cemetery areas where headstones and surrounds are deteriorating. Regular inspections of older cemetery areas are carried out and action taken where required to make areas safe. There may be potential for restoration work involving volunteers in the future.

Future demand

Future demand for cemetery areas, assets and services is on-going. Projections for future demand have been based on information derived from Statistics New Zealand data on predicted death rates, analysis of historic cemetery usage and other current planning documents and sources.

The primary future demand drivers for cemetery assets and services are:

- Ashburton District is one of New Zealand's fastest growing rural districts. Statistics New Zealand population projections predict continued population growth in the district. Ashburton's population is expected to reach 39,200 by 2033 (Stats NZ Medium Growth projection).
- Changes in population age profiles with a predicted ageing population and consequent increase in the number of deaths each year. The number of deaths is expected to rise from 260 per annum in 2018 to 320 per annum in 2037.
- The level of community preference for burial or cremation.
- Community preference for different choices in memorial type, pre-purchase of burial plots and the design, facilities and services provided.
- Preservation of the heritage values associated with cemeteries.
- A major disaster or pandemic.

Key actions to meet demand that the Council may consider are:

- Development of existing cemetery sites to enable continued usability.
- Development of extensions to cemeteries once existing areas are filled.
- Review policies and practices that regulate the use of cemetery space.
- Confirm community preferences for design, memorial options, facility provision and operational services as part of a level of service review.
- Continue to develop and implement designs and new practices that result in improvements to maintenance efficiency and cemetery operations.
- Prepare conservation plans for older cemeteries to guide management and identify projects.
- Maintain sufficient burial capacity, either within existing cemeteries or by designating a special site, to deal with the consequences of a major disaster or pandemic.

Legislation

The Burial and Cremations Act 1964 is currently under review with consultation concluding in July 2020. It is likely that a new Act will come into force within the next one to two years. The new Act is likely to provide a modern and simplified framework for burial and cemetery management and give increasing choice with regards to decisions around burial options. It is possible that a new Act may require local authorities to develop a Cemetery Policy to be agreed in consultation with the community and to include, at a minimum, agreed maintenance standards and the provision of special areas.

Rate of Interment

There are a total of 2,780 deaths projected to occur in the Ashburton District over the next 10 years. Based on current rates and methods of interment, 44% (1,227) of these deaths will be buried in Ashburton District cemeteries and 30% (836) will be ash interments. The remaining 36% will be interred outside of the district.

There is a slight trend towards ash interment but burial remains the preferred choice of interment. Other options of interment such as natural burials are being introduced.

Table 1 below shows the projected number of burials and ash interments expected in the Ashburton District for the next 10 years based on current patterns of interment and projected death rates.

Table 1 Projected rate of deaths in Ashburton District

Projection	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total
Deaths (1)	260	260	260	280	280	280	280	280	300	300	2780
Total Burials	115	115	115	124	124	124	124	124	132	132	1227
Total Ash Interments	78	78	78	84	84	84	84	84	90	90	836
Not interred in district	67	67	67	72	72	72	72	72	77	77	717

(1) Source Stats NZ – Projected Deaths by District Council

The expected distribution of the interments in the next 10 years is shown in table 2 below.

Table 2 Projected Distribution of Interment 2021-31

Location -Burials	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total
Ashburton Burials	80	80	80	87	87	87	87	87	93	93	859
Methven Burials	10	10	10	11	11	11	11	11	12	12	110
Rural Burials	24	24	24	26	26	26	26	26	28	28	258
Total Burials	115	115	115	124	124	124	124	124	132	132	1227
Location - Ashes	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total
Ashburton Ashes	61	61	61	66	66	66	66	66	70	70	652
Methven Ashes	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	9	9	84
Rural Ashes	9	9	9	10	10	10	10	10	11	11	100
Total Ashes	78	78	78	84	84	84	84	84	90	90	836

Capacity

There is currently adequate space available to extend and develop existing cemeteries to provide for the District's needs for some considerable time into the future. Approximately 70% of burials are double depth which further extends the capacity of the cemeteries.

The Ashburton Cemetery has recently been extended and developed to provide a total of 1,327 new burial plots and 695 ash plots, giving sufficient capacity in the new cemetery section for 20-25 years. There is further land at the cemetery to be developed giving the estimated cemetery life of over 85 years.

An assessment of current and future capacity requirements has been carried out and is summarised in Table 3.

Table 3 Overall capacity of cemeteries

Community	Estimated New Burial Plots Required (2021-2031)	New Burial Plots Available	Estimated New Ash Plots Required (2021-2031)	Estimated Remaining Cemetery Life ¹ (years)
Ashburton	859	8,950	652	80+
Methven	110	2,200	84	130+
Rural Cemeteries	258		100	150+
TOTAL	1,227	22,300	836	

Calculations to establish available space have been based on a combination of local judgement and unused space. The reliability of this information would be improved with the preparation and continuous updating of plot layout plans for all cemeteries in conjunction with electronic recording and reporting capability.

3. Activity description for Cemeteries

3.1. What we do

Council maintains the cemeteries to appropriate standards and develops the sites with suitable assets and landscape treatment to create a pleasant contemplative environment for visitors. The Council carries out interments at the cemeteries along with interments for five private cemeteries at Dorie, Windermere, Coldstream, Cracroft, and Longbeach.

The design of Council's cemeteries is intended to be attractive but simple, and low maintenance. Among the improvements to cemeteries currently being implemented are the construction of more concrete beams for burials and ashes and the removal of forestry trees in some of the rural cemeteries to allow more light.

Cemetery administration services are undertaken by the Council and this includes maintenance of burial and plot purchase records which are kept in both electronic and hard copy form. Customer information is also provided in terms of plot locations, genealogical searches and general cemetery enquiries. Photographs of headstones are also being taken/ recorded electronically and provided as part of the general customer information.

There is sufficient land available to meet the projected burial needs of the District into the future and new areas will be developed as required for burial purposes. However, with an ageing and growing population predicted, it is likely that there will be an accelerated use of cemeteries in the future of around 15% every 10 years.

¹ Based on death predictions

3.2. Why we do it

Council provides cemeteries to ensure a safe and healthy community.

- The Council is required to provide for the burial needs of the community under the Burial and Cremations Act 1964.²
- The cemeteries play an important role in preserving the social history of the District and many have significant historic and heritage values.
- Graves, tombs, and cemeteries, which have been associated with human activity for more than 100 years, are archaeological sites in terms of the Historic Places Act 1993.

3.3. How we do it

The assets located on cemeteries are generally owned and operated by Council. Memorial headstones located in cemeteries are the responsibility of the burial plot owner. An exclusive right of burial in a cemetery plot is sold to purchasers in perpetuity (The right of burial will lapse if the plot is unused after 60 years from the date of purchase).

The management and control of cemetery assets and services is carried out by the Ashburton District Council. Management and maintenance services are provided through the Council's Parks and Open Spaces Department. All work is currently carried out in-house by the Parks and Open Spaces Department to the standards set when previously work was contracted out.

Cemetery maintenance specifications are included in Appendix A.

² Currently under review

4. Goals for Cemeteries

The cemeteries **activity goal** is:-

To provide cemeteries in the District that are appropriate, and provide areas for burials and ashes in a low maintenance park setting.

The **principal objectives** for Cemeteries are:-

- a) To provide the community with attractive areas for burials and ashes
- b) To maintain an activity management plan
- c) To implement an annual cemeteries programme that is delivered to agreed timing, standards and budgets

Our principles

These are the guiding principles for how we will function and deliver activities and services to the community.

- Plan and provide fit for purpose services.
- Work with the community and engage in meaningful conversations.
- Lead the community with clear and rational decision-making.
- Represent the district on regional / national issues and partner with others when needed.

Our contribution to community outcomes

Parks and Open Spaces contribute to the following Community Outcomes as shown below.

	Residents are included and have a voice	A district of great spaces and places	A prosperous economy based on innovation and opportunity	A balanced and sustainable environment
Cemeteries		✓		✓

5. Levels of service and performance measures for Cemeteries

5.1. What are we trying to achieve

- To respond to cemetery failures and requests within median response times
- The majority of residents are satisfied with our cemetery services.

5.2. How will we know if we are achieving it

What we plan to do and our levels of service

What we’re aiming for: To provide the district with a network of open green spaces that contribute towards the beauty and enjoyment of the area for residents and visitors alike.

WHAT WE’RE WORKING TOWARDS (Levels of service)	HOW WE’LL MEASURE PROGRESS (Performance measures)	HOW WE’RE PERFORMING NOW (2019/20 results)	WHAT WE’RE AIMING FOR			
			2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 – 2030/31
Council responds to cemetery failures and requests within acceptable response times	Complaints are responded to within ten working days	100%	90%	90%	90%	90%
The majority of residents are satisfied with our cemeteries	Residents are satisfied with Council-provided cemeteries	97%	90%	90%	90%	90%

6. Changes happening in Cemetery management

Cemetery management needs to stay responsive to changing cultural needs including increasing ethnic diversity in the community and the continuing trend towards cremation over burial.

Interest in natural burials is also increasing throughout New Zealand.

Public interest in genealogical research also has increased in recent years and many Councils have responded to this by improving the availability of information online.

7. Key projects for Cemeteries

New capital

To conform to Council's strategy to provide pleasantly landscaped cemeteries that meet the burial and remembrance needs of communities and contribute to the district's green space a number of new capital works are planned over the next few years. These capital projects will allow Council to continue to be able to provide cemeteries to the desired service level standards and to meet the needs of additional demand forecast to occur.

Key new capital requirements relating to cemetery assets include:

- The provision of new cemetery beams to delineate burial and ash plots and accommodate headstones and memorials. These are to be provided on a "just in time" basis to ensure there is space readily available but that the beam does not deteriorate over time.
- The development of a secure yard and soil storage areas at the Ashburton Cemetery
- The development of the entrance road through the old cemetery to the new cemetery with improved kerb and channel and surface treatment.
- The fencing of the frontage of the Ashburton Cemetery.

Funding of new capital assets

The Council proposes to fund part of the cost of these new capital works by utilising the DISP available, a contribution from the general rate of 20% for new works, and the balance from the general rate.

Approach to new capital requirements

The Council will consider all reasonably practicable options and identify the benefits and costs of the likely impacts of each option on the economic, environmental, social, and cultural well-being of the district in the present, and in the future. Service, functionality, price, availability, reliability, aesthetics, safety and maintenance requirements are also to be assessed when consideration is given to creating or acquiring new assets.

Selection will be subject to a design process and community consultation where appropriate. All design work will be carried out to the specified standard and taking into consideration comments, expectations, population, land-use, planning policies, technical and environmental standards, consent conditions and technological advancement.

8. Management of activity for Cemeteries

8.1. Programmed actions years 1-10

Capital renewal work is required from time to time to upgrade, refurbish, or replace existing facilities of equivalent capacity or performance capability.

Generally the confidence level associated with capital renewal cost projections is ‘average’ as a result of the factors already discussed. It is anticipated this will improve markedly as enhanced information is developed.

Tables 8.1.1 and 8.1.2 below summarise the capital expenditure proposed in this Plan over the next 10 years.

8.1.1. Capital works programme

The following table details the annual budget for new capital works until 2031. New capital work refers to the development of new infrastructure, which increase the levels of service and/or the capacity of the asset service an increase in demand.

	Year 1 2021/22 \$000	Year 2 2022/23 \$000	Year 3 2023/24 \$000	Year 4-10 2024-31 \$000
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS	100	280	-	24
Ashburton Cemetery - Works yard	100			
Ashburton Cemetery – Kerbing and sealing		280		
Rakaia Cemetery - New beams				24

9. Costs for Cemeteries

For Parks & Open Spaces

	Annual Plan 2020/21 \$000	Year 1 2021/22 \$000	Year 2 2022/23 \$000	Year 3 2023/24 \$000	Year 4 2024/25 \$000	Year 5 2025/26 \$000	Year 6 2026/27 \$000	Year 7 2027/28 \$000	Year 8 2028/29 \$000	Year 9 2029/30 \$000	Year 10 2030/31 \$000
Operating Funding											
Sources of operating funding											
General rate, UAGC*, rates penalties	1,881	1,741	2,053	2,505	2,503	2,533	2,486	2,820	2,887	3,033	3,117
Targeted rates	1,706	1,865	1,979	2,233	2,167	2,207	2,168	2,464	2,519	2,646	2,696
Subsidies and grants for operating purposes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fees and charges	276	283	286	293	300	308	315	324	332	341	350
Internal charges and overheads recovered	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local authorities fuel tax, fines, infringement fees and other receipts	38	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Total sources of operating funding	3,926	3,890	4,319	5,033	4,972	5,050	4,971	5,610	5,740	6,022	6,165
Applications of operating funding											
Payments to staff and suppliers	3,312	3,711	3,857	4,007	3,901	3,966	3,705	4,275	4,375	4,574	4,669
Finance costs	75	68	92	173	177	176	236	240	235	245	248
Internal charges and overheads	154	88	96	103	102	105	115	113	117	127	126
Other operating funding applications	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total applications of operating funding	3,542	3,867	4,045	4,283	4,180	4,247	4,056	4,628	4,727	4,945	5,043
Surplus/(deficit) of operating funding	384	22	274	750	791	802	915	981	1,012	1,077	1,122

	Annual Plan 2020/21 \$000	Year 1 2021/22 \$000	Year 2 2022/23 \$000	Year 3 2023/24 \$000	Year 4 2024/25 \$000	Year 5 2025/26 \$000	Year 6 2026/27 \$000	Year 7 2027/28 \$000	Year 8 2028/29 \$000	Year 9 2029/30 \$000	Year 10 2030/31 \$000
Capital Funding											
Sources of capital funding											
Subsidies and grants for capital expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Development and financial contributions	450	600	617	633	649	665	681	699	718	737	757
Increase/(decrease) in debt	1,138	1,062	3,611	178	(73)	2,655	146	(241)	325	83	307
Gross proceeds from sale of assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lump sum contributions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other dedicated capital funding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total sources of capital funding	1,588	1,662	4,229	811	576	3,320	828	459	1,044	820	1,064
Application of capital funding											
Capital expenditure											
- to meet additional demand	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
- to improve the level of service	2,341	2,040	4,079	671	401	3,160	731	423	1,014	795	1,065
- to replace existing assets	215	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Increase/(decrease) in reserves	(584)	(356)	424	890	966	962	1,011	1,017	1,042	1,102	1,120
Increase/(decrease) in investments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total applications of capital funding	1,972	1,684	4,502	1,561	1,367	4,122	1,742	1,440	2,056	1,897	2,185
Surplus/(deficit) of capital funding	(384)	(22)	(274)	(750)	(791)	(802)	(915)	(981)	(1,012)	(1,077)	(1,122)
Funding Balance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Expenditure by activity

	Annual Plan 2020/21 \$000	Year 1 2021/22 \$000	Year 2 2022/23 \$000	Year 3 2023/24 \$000	Year 4 2024/25 \$000	Year 5 2025/26 \$000	Year 6 2026/27 \$000	Year 7 2027/28 \$000	Year 8 2028/29 \$000	Year 9 2029/30 \$000	Year 10 2030/31 \$000
Parksand recreation	3,495	3,603	3,883	4,396	4,265	4,356	4,279	4,859	4,978	5,227	5,350
Cemeteries	417	569	600	597	627	633	633	680	701	729	760
Total operating expenditure	3,912	4,172	4,484	4,994	4,891	4,989	4,912	5,539	5,679	5,956	6,111
less depreciation	369	304	438	711	711	742	856	911	951	1,010	1,068
Total applications of operating funding	3,542	3,867	4,045	4,283	4,180	4,247	4,056	4,628	4,727	4,945	5,043

Capital by activity

	Annual Plan 2020/21 \$000	Year 1 2021/22 \$000	Year 2 2022/23 \$000	Year 3 2023/24 \$000	Year 4 2024/25 \$000	Year 5 2025/26 \$000	Year 6 2026/27 \$000	Year 7 2027/28 \$000	Year 8 2028/29 \$000	Year 9 2029/30 \$000	Year 10 2030/31 \$000
Parksand recreation	2,517	1,940	3,799	671	390	3,160	731	423	1,014	795	1,053
Cemeteries	39	100	280	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	13
Total capital expenditure	2,556	2,040	4,079	671	401	3,160	731	423	1,014	795	1,065
less vested assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council funded capital expenditure	2,556	2,040	4,079	671	401	3,160	731	423	1,014	795	1,065

10. Key legislation / industry standards and relationship with other planning / policy documents for Cemeteries

- Burial and Cremations Act 1964
- Historic Places Act 1993
- Local Government Act 2002
- Resource Management Act 1991
- Health Act 1956
- New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000
- Building Act 2004
- Local Government Official Information & Meetings Act 1987
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Ashburton District Council Long Term Plan 2015-2025

11. Risk management for Cemeteries

The following potential sources of risk have been identified.

- Events – such as a major disaster or pandemic.
- Physical failure - such as unstable headstones.
- Cemetery assets – such as condition and performance failure
- Operation practice – such as errors in burial operations.
- Institutional – such as loss of records, loss of knowledge, etc.
- Environmental – such as contamination of ground water.

As yet a risk assessment and the development of a risk register have not been carried out for cemeteries and this action forms part of the improvement programme.

12. Key stakeholders for Cemetery management

- Communities within the Ashburton District.
- Funeral directors

13. Improvement programme for Cemeteries

13.1. Process overview

Document cemetery operating procedures and undertake regular audits of interment processes to ensure accuracy.

13.2. Improvement actions

1. Develop a comprehensive asset register for cemeteries including condition assessment so that all assets are appropriately programmed for renewal including roads, furniture and structures etc.
2. Review cemetery charges to ensure cost recovery is in-line with funding policy.
3. Develop a cemetery plan for Methven and Rakaia Cemeteries to guide cemetery development and landscaping
4. Develop a Cemetery Policy (subject to this being a requirement of the revised Burial and Cremations Act)

14. Appendices

14.1. Appendix A – Cemetery Maintenance Specifications

Grave digging and reinstatement

The grave digging and reinstatement specification covers operations associated with burials in public cemeteries. Reference to a Burial Warrant is intended to cover all such orders including an Authority to Reopen.

Customer Outcomes

- Graves are prepared in the correct location and are dug to the specified dimensions
- Prepared graves are left in a neat, tidy and safe condition for burial
- Graves are reinstated immediately following burial and left in a neat and tidy condition
- Headstones and beams are not damaged by grave digging and reinstatement operations



Scheduled operations	Best Practice Principles	Service Level Indicators	Performance Assessment measures Customer Outcomes are met when:

Burial warrant and plot location	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Burial Warrant containing details of location, dimensions and arrival time is provided to service providers well in advance of the burial.• The correct plot is located and verified.• All details and signatures required to complete the Burial Warrant are collected.• The completed Burial Warrant is returned to the appropriate person.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least 1 working day in advance of burial• Within 24 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The correct plot is prepared for use.• The documentation is completed correctly.

Digging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plot is marked out to the correct dimensions and the turf removed. • The grave is dug to the correct depth and size for the intended burial. • Shoring is used for hand digging and finishing, or where there is a risk that the sides will collapse. • Soil is removed from the immediate graveside. • Trip hazards are cleared from the graveside and the ground surface covered with mats. • The open grave is covered and all digging equipment removed if the plot is being prepared in advance. • Excess water entering the grave is removed by pump until the arrival of the funeral procession. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dimensions are correct within 50mm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grave is dug to the correct size and depth (as specified) for the casket or shrouded body, and to allow future burials if required. • The grave is safe, stable and suitable for burial.
Presentation for burial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digging and presentation is completed before arrival time. • The grave is presented uncovered, with pumps removed, mats in place, trip hazards removed, soil removed (apart from a small amount of backfill for family use) and lowering device or straps (if required) in position. • Burial team must be present and available to assist where required. • Clean shovels are available for the family to use for backfilling if requested. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 5 minutes before arrival time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The graveside environment is safe, tidy and attractive for burial. • Service providers are tidy, helpful and respectful.
Backfilling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All backfilling is supervised by service providers. • Soil is replaced and appropriately compacted to reduce subsidence. • Soil is neatly mounded to around 300mm above surrounding ground with excess soil removed from site. • Any plaques removed for burial are reset. • The finished grave is left neat and tidy with flowers placed on the mound. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be completed immediately following burial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and friends are able to contribute to backfilling where this can be safely carried out. • The grave is finished to a safe, neat and tidy standard with all disruption to surrounding areas remedied.
Reinstatement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The burial mound is kept free of weeds and reformed as 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The finished grave is grassed or turfed neatly so that it appears to be part of the

	<p>required until grass reinstatement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mounded soil is consolidated, levelled and grass reinstated. • Fresh flowers that have been left on burial mounds are removed. • Artificial flowers and ornaments are placed on adjacent beams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 to 4 months after burial 	surrounding lawn.
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Ash interment

The ash interment specification covers several forms of ash interment including burial in a lawn or garden ash plot, and interment in a columbarium or niche wall. Reference to a Burial Warrant is intended to cover all such orders including an Authority to Reopen.

Customer Outcomes

- Lawn and garden plots are prepared in the correct location and to the specified dimensions.
- Ashes are interred safely and correctly.
- Plots are reinstated immediately following interment and left in a neat and tidy condition.
- Memorial plaques and mounts are not damaged by plot preparation and reinstatement operations.



Scheduled operations	Best Practice Principles	Service Level Indicators ****	Performance Assessment measures Customer Outcomes are met when:
Burial warrant and plot location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Burial Warrant containing details of location, dimensions and arrival time is provided to service providers well in advance of the ash interment. • The correct plot is located and verified. • All details and signatures required to complete the Burial Warrant are collected. • The completed Burial Warrant is returned to the appropriate person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 1 working day in advance of burial • Within 24 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The correct plot is prepared for use. • The documentation is completed correctly.
Digging of earth plots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plot is marked out to the correct dimensions and the turf removed (for grass plots). • The plot is dug to the correct depth and size for the ash casket. • The plot is left in a neat and tidy condition prior to interment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dimensions are correct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plot is the correct size and depth (as specified) for the ash casket, and to allow future ash interments if required. • The plot is safe, stable and suitable for burial.

Presentation for burial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation is completed before arrival of ashes (if mourners or family are to be present during interment). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As required unless agreed otherwise with family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The immediate environment is safe, tidy, attractive and prepared for interment. • Operators are tidy, helpful and respectful.
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Cemetery maintenance operations

Cemetery maintenance operations is intended to include the operations that are commonly required in a cemetery over and above a park of similar standard. These operations are related directly to the use of the land for burials and commemoration, and the high density of built structures that are often found in cemeteries. The Cemetery maintenance operations specification has three service levels, with the basic service level being applicable to closed and historic cemeteries.

Customer Outcomes

- Cemeteries are neat, tidy and well cared for.
- Cemeteries are an attractive place to visit.



Scheduled operations	Best Practice Principles	Service Level Indicators			Performance Assessment measures Customer Outcomes are met when:
		Premium *****	Standard ****	Basic ***	
Topping up of graves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graves are kept topped up so the surface turf is maintained in a level condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ground surface depression is no more than 50mm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ground surface depression is no more than 70mm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ground surface depression is no more than 70mm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grass cover over graves is level with surrounding turf with depressions no deeper than specified.
Removal of dead flowers and debris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flowers, toys and ornaments that fall onto the grass are placed on adjacent beams prior to mowing and edging. Floral tributes are removed from site when they are no longer fresh or when they are scattered and become 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cemeteries are neat and tidy with no litter or debris present.

	debris.				
Memorials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damage to memorials, beams and other structures caused by maintenance operations is repaired. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures are well cared for and undamaged by cemetery operations.
Edging around beams and graves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grass edges along concrete beams and around graves and gravestones are maintained in a neat and tidy condition. Grass trimmings are cleared from hard surfaces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grass edges are trimmed to the same standard as adjacent lawn so that there is no discernible height difference 	<p>Either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grass edges are trimmed to the same standard as adjacent lawn so that there is no discernible height difference, or a vegetation free strip no more than 100mm wide is maintained around and along edges. 	<p>Either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grass edges are trimmed to the same standard as adjacent lawn so that there is no discernible height difference, or a vegetation free strip no more than 100mm wide is maintained around and along edges. 	<p>Either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edges are neatly trimmed, or Vegetation free strips are no wider than specified.
Vegetation control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undesirable or damaging vegetation is controlled on enclosed and covered plots using appropriate chemical or non-damaging alternative methods. Naturalised or well-maintained garden plants that are not causing damage to grave furniture or structures are retained where this is in keeping with the character of the cemetery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enclosed and covered plots are free of undesirable vegetation.