

Bereavement Services

Rationale for increasing non-residents surcharge on interment and Exclusive Right of Burial.

A combination of the desirability of our districts cemeteries (and some cemeteries in neighbouring districts/boroughs and Cities not being so desirable) has seen a disproportionate increase in the numbers of non-residents wishing to use our facilities, leading to cemeteries filling up at a faster rate than previously anticipated. Consequently it is proposed to double the non-WDC resident surcharge, for burials, this will be used for land purchases for additional burial plots. A future business case will consider the need for future cemetery land and how this extra surcharge may assist to fund this.

This would bring us in line with non-resident policies from some neighbouring authorities' i.e Redditch and Birmingham, albeit Coventry and Solihull operate a policy similar to our existing one.

Historically approx 13% of burials being carried out across all cemeteries were for non-residents, there is a well-established policy of charging non-residents additional fees, formally in the cemetery by-laws and now within the cemeteries regulations. To protect former residents and for some special circumstances there is a non-residents fee policy addenda to the cemetery regulations, which ensures consistency and fairness to everyone.

Figures from the last 12 months (a rolling year Oct 2015-Sept 2016 to give the most up to date picture) indicate that across this demand has escalated primarily in Kenilworth cemetery where approx 31% (10 out of 32) of interments are for non-residents and 43% (10 out of 23) of Exclusive rights are issued to non-residents. Leamington and Warwick cemeteries have seen a more modest increase with approx 15% of burials being for non-residents.

It is by no means certain what affect this increase in the non-residents surcharge will have, people may choose to use the cemetery in their own city or opt instead for cremation and a smaller grave for the cremated remains. It is hoped that the increase will deter non-residents from wishing to use our facilities and thus protect the availability of graves for residents. If it does not, and the current increases are sustained, an annual investment in the region of £50,000 could be made into a reserve for the future acquisition and development of cemetery land.

At the current rate Kenilworth cemetery could be full by 2026 and Warwick by 2040, neither of these cemeteries have undeveloped land to take them beyond the existing planned capacity. Leamington cemetery has adjacent land designated for future development.

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