

## Cemetery Services report:

The Cemetery Figures over the past 3 years:

- 19-20 Income = £12924.00 Expenditure = £22987 above average spend due to memorial repairs.
- 20-21 Income = £16665 Expenditure =£16152
- 21-22 Income = £14209 Expenditure =£19985
- 22-23 income = £13669.80 Expenditure =£17489.31 (to the 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2022)

As highlighted within the figures above, the Cemetery expenditure rarely covers the income so this is currently being supplemented within the precept.

If the parish council were to offer more chargeable services within the Cemetery this could offer an opportunity to increase income and therefore decrease reliance on the precept. Many Cemeteries throughout the country are run as businesses covering their own costs and making a profit which can be reinvested within those businesses.

I am not suggesting that we take the business model to profiteer from people's grief, but I am suggesting, for your consideration, additional services that could help the Cemetery to become self-sufficient and reduce our need to increase the precept to subsidise the burial ground as costs increase or for unforeseen issues that arise. An increase in revenue may also assist in covering such things as memorial benches and memorial testing or repairs.

In 2018 we introduced fees for EROB transfers. Whilst this is showing a small increase in income it has been steadily growing over the past few years and this year to date £390 has been received for this service alone.

There are two suggestions that I would like to put forward for services that we do not currently offer but could be of benefit to the families who have loved ones within our burial ground.

1. Headstone cleaning service: This is a simple service for the older members of our community who are unable to keep their headstones in the way that they would like due to mobility issues, ill health or simply the distance that they live from the burial ground. This would ensure that when people visited their loved one's resting place the headstone and grave area is clean and tidy. It would also help to ensure that we are in regular contact with plot owners should any issues arise. The choice of how often they require this service would be down to the individual. Our casuals can undertake this as part of their work loads or with the charge as an additional job. There are a variety of options that could be covered within this service, and it can be followed up with a photograph being emailed or sent to the service user.
2. Grave side service for ashes interments: We do have a few families that do not wish to use the services of a funeral director for the interment of their loved one's ashes, this has been steadily increasing and at present we do not advertise this as a service we offer. The Parish Council manage the arrangements directly with the sexton and the family. There have been a few occasions where enquiries have been made as to how this works and some people cannot face the prospect of lowering the ashes into the ground. I have had first-hand experience of this when assisting with a gentleman that came to lay his late mother to rest to me. Even though there has been a funeral this last part can be very difficult for some people to manage.  
I have also received an enquiry regarding having a representative to attend the cemetery for and ashes interment and say a few words from a funeral director, funnily enough in the last 24 hours.

I have spoken with Rev Arthur and there is no reason why we cannot offer this assistance. You do not have to be ordained although if the family require a religious ceremony, it does make more sense for it to be a person of the cloth. I have looked at parochial charges for this service and they can vary but it is usually in the region of £200.00. I do not have costs for funeral directors who also carry out this service, but I can imagine that they would possibly be within the same region.

<https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Table-of-Parochial-Fees-2021-1.pdf><https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Table-of-Parochial-Fees-2021-1.pdf>

[https://cofecarlisle.contentfiles.net/media/documents/document/2021/10/C\\_of\\_E\\_Fees\\_Table\\_2022.pdf](https://cofecarlisle.contentfiles.net/media/documents/document/2021/10/C_of_E_Fees_Table_2022.pdf)

This would be an extension to the service that we already offer at an additional cost. More and more people are cutting cost by coming to us direct and if it were available, I am sure this service would be used. I am currently investigating any legalities that we would need to be aware of through the ICCM.

3. Search fees: From time to time, we do get enquiries about family history, or people researching family trees. At the moment we do not charge for any investigations of our records. I do feel that this needs to be amended as if this is an in person enquiry this can take up some time. All burial books must be available for public inspection, so this is something that we already do. St Stephen in Brannel charge £65 for searches in the register, Cornwall Council charge £71. With everything now on the computer this will make the task simpler, but it can still take time.

I do feel that all the points above could be managed in line with what we already undertake and could also bring in new streams of income for the Cemetery making it more self-sufficient, this in turn could help us to keep future increases in the precept lower.