

# **Chesterfield Cemeteries Strategy**

September 2014

# Cemeteries Strategy

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Cemeteries in the UK have traditionally been considered to be a 'Cinderella Service' for many authorities, indeed in 2001 a Select Committee Inquiry stated this and made a number of comments about the provision of cemeteries in the UK.
- 1.2 The Inquiry identified the lack of priority given to cemeteries, the need for a thorough review of legislation, the shameful condition of some cemeteries and a commendation to managers who were attempting to improve standards.
- 1.3 Whilst Chesterfield's cemeteries could not be described as 'shameful', neither could they currently be considered to be well cared for or provided to a high standard of maintenance, despite being valuable areas of green space with considerable heritage value for the community. A strategy is required to guide the development of cemeteries for the next five years.
- 1.4 A number of issues specific to the future provision of cemeteries in the UK will also be considered including:
  - The need to understand the historical, ecological and educational significance of cemeteries
  - The implications in changes in legislation such as grave reuse. Whilst only approved for London at moment, it could apply elsewhere in future when burial space runs out
  - MoJ memorial safety guidance
  - Potential changes in Death Certification which may cost an additional £150 to the bereaved
  - 100 years since the First World War and how best to commemorate the war dead in our cemeteries
- 1.5 It is the intention of this cemetery strategy to broadly define the way forward for the next 5 years, however, the detailed development will be addressed through individual management plans for each of the sites.
- 1.6 Sir William Gladstone once said, "Show me the manner in which a nation looks after its dead and I will measure with mathematical exactness, the tender mercies of its people, their respect for the laws of the land and their loyalty to high ideals." It is in this context that this cemeteries strategy is considered whilst realising the financial constraints within which the Council must operate.
- 1.7 **Historical Position**
  - 1.7.1 It is important to understand the historical and legislative framework in which the cemeteries and closed churchyards operate within Chesterfield. Historically burial was the responsibility of the Church. The 'churchyard', the area around a church, usually no more than a couple of acres in extent, had become a common place for burial in England by the eighth century, and

was the principal location for interment for the majority of the population until the nineteenth century. Until Victorian times these churchyards were operated on the basis of 'reuse', when the churchyard was full, they started burying again in the oldest areas, burying any remains back into the grave. The practice was mostly stopped following the Burial Act 1825 which prohibited the disturbance of human remains unless by faculty (a formal church approval) or licence.

- 1.7.2 During the 1800's massive urban population growth fuelled by the industrial revolution meant private companies and burial boards began to provide cemeteries as the churchyards could no longer cope.
- 1.7.3 From the 1890s, newly created local authorities were empowered to lay out cemeteries, and burial boards went into decline. The responsibility for providing and maintaining cemetery land was much simplified in 1972, when the Local Government Act abolished all burial boards. New burial authorities were defined, which included metropolitan and non-metropolitan authorities, London councils and, in rural areas, parish councils. These authorities took over the management of the burial board cemeteries. With the exception of a small number of company cemeteries, all cemeteries are now owned by local authorities or parish councils.
- 1.7.4 Local government currently faces many challenges and this cemeteries strategy will consider balancing the need to raise the profile of the cemeteries service, the importance of meeting the needs of the bereaved and the financial climate in which the Chesterfield Council must operate.

## **1.8 Legislative Background**

- 1.8.1 The provision of cemeteries is widely recognised as a vital service provided by Chesterfield Borough Council. To maintain and improve this service for the future will need the Council to take a number of strategic decisions, which may affect the direction in which the cemeteries are managed.
- 1.8.2 It is the public duty of the Church of England to provide for burials in open churchyards, however, there is, at present, no statutory requirement on any public authority in England or Wales to make available a place for burial. The opportunity for the public to bury those who have died in ground set aside for this purpose is dependent on the exercise of the discretionary powers of the Authority.
- 1.8.3 Provision of burial grounds is also dependent on normal application of planning legislation. No dispensation in relation to burial grounds is provided, nor are there any financial incentives or relaxation of financial burdens.
- 1.8.4 Although there is no legal requirement for a Council to provide burial or cremation facilities, this Authority has acted as a burial authority for over 100 years. The main legislation that governs cemeteries in England and Wales is the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO). The Order sets out the general parameters under which municipal cemeteries operate and allows considerable management discretion and regulates matters such as:
  - Provision of chapels, mortuaries and biers
  - Plans and record keeping, registration of burials and disinterments, and storage of records
  - Grant of exclusive burial rights, rights to erect memorials and agreements for maintenance of graves and memorials

- Fees and other charges
- Maintenance, including removal of memorials
- Depth of burial and special provisions in relation to walled graves and vaults
- Offences and penalties

## 1.9 Excess Deaths

1.9.1 At times deaths may exceed the number anticipated, as can occur during an influenza pandemic. Chesterfield must be prepared for such occurrences and Derbyshire County Council has prepared a Mass Fatalities and Excess Deaths Emergency Plan to deal with an emergency pandemic situation. Government guidance continues to suggest that a serious pandemic resulting in high numbers of excess deaths is inevitable within the foreseeable future and authorities must be prepared, the UK Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Strategy 2011 states:

1.9.2 *“The number of additional deaths expected as a result of a pandemic is impossible to predict ahead of a pandemic. However, local authorities in conjunction with local service providers should ensure that they have plans in place to surge their capacity to cope with an increase in burials and cremations during a pandemic. When planning for excess deaths, local planners should prepare to extend capacity on a precautionary but reasonably practicable basis, and aim to cope with up to 210,000 - 315,000 additional deaths across the UK over a 15 week period (or a higher level where possible). In a less widespread and lower impact influenza pandemic, the number of additional deaths would be lower.”*

1.9.3 Within the Mass Fatalities and Excess Deaths Emergency Plan is a plan for the disposal of the dead, using the crematorium and available burial space. As part of the Cemeteries Strategy, Chesterfield Borough Council must review their plans for dealing with the disposal of the dead during such periods and in particular will need to re-visit how deaths will be dealt with when crematoria are unable to cope with the numbers and temporary storage is not available. In such circumstances a controlled and sensitive system of trench burial will need to be considered. The revised plan will then need to be included in the Council’s own procedures and any training needs identified.

## 2.0 What is the Current Position in Chesterfield?

2.1 Chesterfield cemeteries are managed within Bereavement Services, who are also responsible for the operation of the crematorium, which is jointly owned by Chesterfield, Bolsover and North East Derbyshire Councils and managed by the Joint Crematorium Committee, rather than Chesterfield Borough Council.

2.2 Bereavement Services currently manage four cemeteries with responsibility for maintenance of closed churchyards lying within the Green Spaces section. It is proposed that following the implementation of the cemeteries strategy, responsibility for the management of churchyards will transfer to Bereavement Services.

## 2.3 Cemeteries

2.4 The Council manages the following four cemeteries:

### 2.4.1 Brimington Cemetery

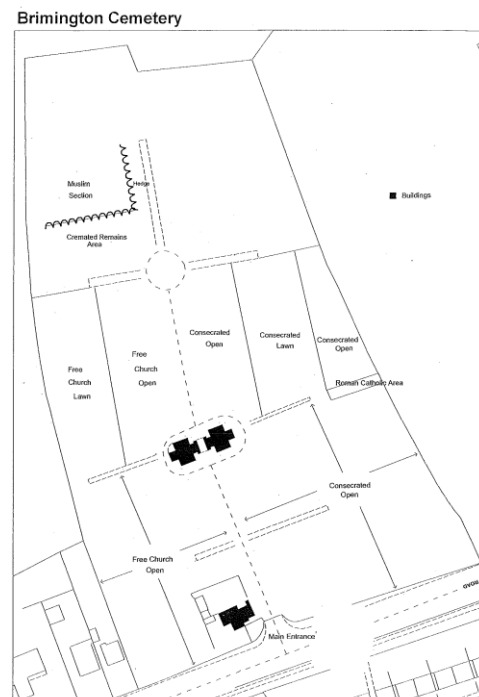


A 2.9 hectare site that opened in 1878 and carries out approximately 68 burials (including cremated remains) each year. The site is fairly well maintained and contains lawned, open, cremated remains and Muslim sections. There are two unused chapels on site, which would require extensive refurbishment if they were to be brought back in to use. It may be feasible to bring at least one of

the chapels back into use and utilise this as a second chapel for the crematorium. However, the need for a second chapel for the crematorium will need to be assessed now a private sector crematorium is to open in Swanwick.

A site management plan will be developed in conjunction with the local community and key service users. A range of measures have been considered for inclusion in the management plan for the site.

- Signage and furniture provision
- Landscape and grounds maintenance improvements
- Path Improvements
- Memorial refurbishment
- Chapel provision
- Improvements to Muslim Section





## 2.4.2 Boythorpe Cemetery

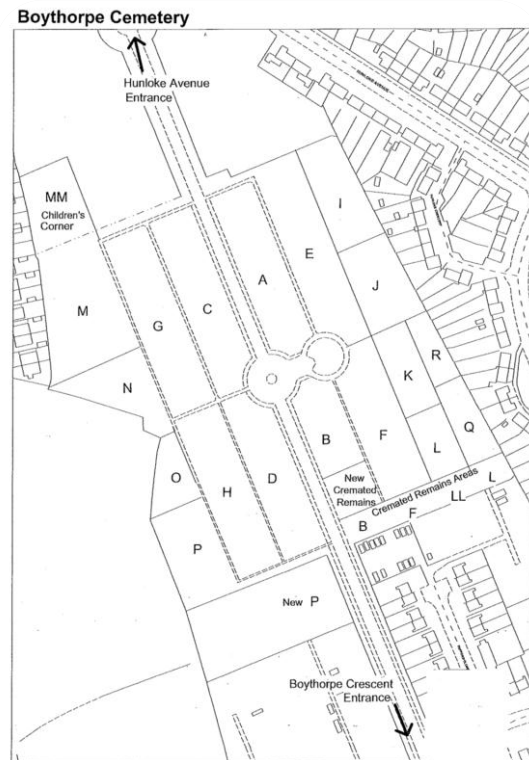


A 5.9 hectare site that opened in 1919 and carries out approximately 128 burials each year (including cremated remains). The site is fairly well maintained and contains lawned, open and cremated remains section. There is a separate area for baby burials within the site, the Bereavement Services team are currently working with Chesterfield Sands who are fund raising to develop this area into a special baby burial garden, due to be opened in June 2014.

There are no buildings within the cemetery.

A site management plan will be developed in conjunction with the local community and key service users. A range of measures have been considered for inclusion in the management plan for the site.

- Signage and furniture provision
- Landscape and grounds maintenance improvements
- Path Improvements
- Memorial refurbishment
- Chapel provision
- Provision of a new baby garden



### 2.4.3 Spital Cemetery



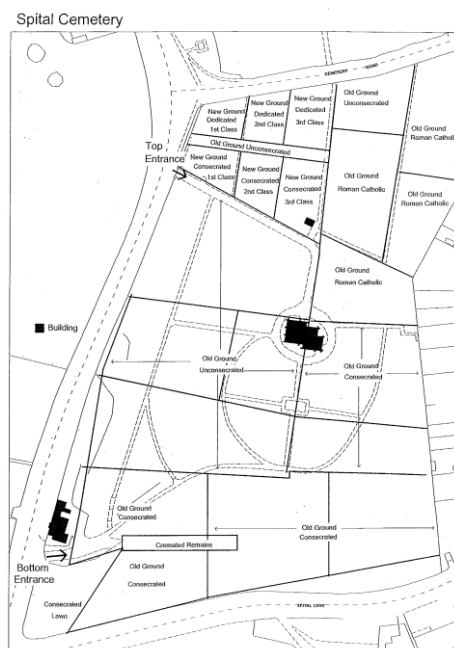
A 4.2 hectare site that opened in 1857 and carries out approximately 28 burials each year (including cremated remains). Maintenance on this site is difficult due to the built up nature of the site and its location on Hady Hill. Space in this cemetery is running out with new graves only available on the lawned section.

The cemetery contains a number of fine memorials, which provide an interesting insight into Chesterfield's social, political, cultural and economic history from the 19th Century. Many of the memorials refer to those who worked in local industries and those who fought and died during the First and Second World Wars. This is of particular significance as in 2014 it is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the First World War.

The graves also provide a factual record of the various communities who have lived in the town, and the many that continue to do so. There are two chapels on site, both listed buildings and both in very poor condition and requiring significant funding if they are to be restored. Funding grants available are currently being explored and an Options Appraisal has been carried out.

There is a Friends of Spital Group who carry out some work in the cemetery as well as some community events.

A site management plan will be developed in conjunction with the local community and key service users, including the Spital Cemetery Friends Group. A range of measures have been considered for inclusion in the management plan for the site.



- Signage and furniture provision
- Landscape and grounds maintenance improvements
- Path Improvements
- Memorial refurbishment
- Chapel provision
- Development of a heritage trail
- Conservation management and wildlife areas
- WW1 Commemoration event

## 2.4.4 Staveley Cemetery

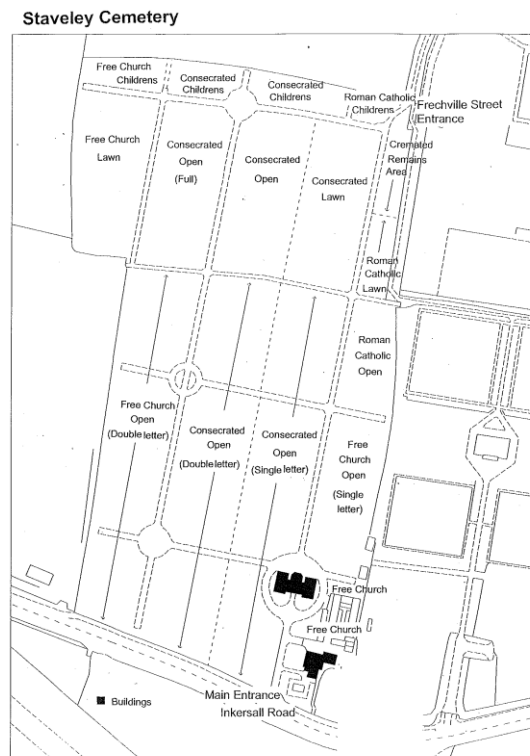


A 4.2 hectare site that opened in 1884 and carries out approximately 66 burials each year (including cremated remains). The site has suffered from some anti-social behaviour which will need to be addressed. There are lawned, open, cremated remains and children's sections within the cemetery.

A site management plan will be developed in conjunction with the local community and key service users. A range of measures have been

considered for inclusion in the management plan for the site.

- Signage and furniture provision
- Landscape and grounds maintenance improvements
- Path Improvements
- Memorial refurbishment
- Chapel provision
- Improvements to children's burial section





## 2.4.5 Closed Churchyards

The Council maintains the following 6 closed churchyards:


1. St Mary's and All Saints, Chesterfield
2. Holy Trinity Church, Newbold
3. St John the Evangelist, Newbold
4. St Bartholemew's Church, Old Whittington
5. St John The Baptist Church, Staveley Churchyard
6. St Michael & All Angels, Brimington Churchyard

The churchyards are currently managed and maintained by Spirepride, however this is now under review and the potential for them to be managed in the future by Bereavement Services is being explored.



## 2.5 Maintenance Standards

- 2.5.1 There has been little investment in the above cemetery sites, however, all are maintained to an adequate standard, primarily by a hard working maintenance team who also excavate all the graves. Some maintenance work is also carried out by Spirepride, however, charging arrangements are in need of review. There is considerable room for improvement, as can be seen in some of the comparison photographs shown in Appendix 2 which show cemeteries maintained by other authorities. A review is currently being undertaken and there is confidence that improvements can be achieved. This will include a new approach to memorial safety, much of which is already in place
- 2.5.2 It is believed that the fragmented approach to staffing of the cemeteries has contributed to the deterioration in standards of maintenance and the lack of significant links with the community. This has led to a review of staffing arrangements and working procedures within Bereavement Services and it is clear that maintenance and grave digging operations should be carried out by one team within Bereavement Services to provide a more flexible approach to the delivery of the service. A less fragmented and more flexible approach to grounds maintenance will allow the service to provide a more targeted approach to grounds maintenance and the development of our cemetery landscapes. It will also allow us to develop better links with the local communities with use of some site based staff. Customer care is good and staff understand the requirements of the bereaved and go out of their way to deliver this, however, the provision of some staff able to provide local services could be beneficial to both grounds maintenance standards and links with the local community. At present there is no succession strategy for staff, which will be important to achieve and sustain to ensure high standards of provision, this will be better achieved using a less fragmented workforce.

- 2.5.3 There is adequate provision for other faith groups, with a Muslim section in place at Brimington Cemetery, however, more could be done to promote these services and this will be reviewed and included in any new marketing documentation prepared to promote Bereavement Services.
- 2.5.4 There is currently no provision for natural / woodland burial and whilst this will be reviewed as a possible area where the service could be expanded, it should be noted that local authority provision of woodland burial areas is largely unsuccessful as it is often provided in areas that are too small and cannot truly be regarded as natural/woodland burial areas. More frequently they are areas that adjoin formal burial areas but are unable to be developed in a similar manner to the remainder of the site, hence they are allowed to become overgrown and are identified as a 'woodland burial' area, unable to provide a truly natural feel and therefore largely unused. Space in the cemeteries is limited and there is little opportunity to provide a suitably large area that will provide a natural area likely to be used by those seeking an environmentally friendly burial. A review of other land available within the borough will be carried out.
- 2.5.5 Signage is generally poor and needs upgrading to improve both the quality of the signage and the standard of information provided to users of the cemeteries. Seating, litter bins and other site furniture are also in need of improvement and will be considered alongside a review of memorialisation options.
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- 2.5.6 The chapels that are situated in three of the cemeteries pose significant problems as they are all unused for burial services and are now in need of significant investment if they are to be retained. The chapel at Brimington was being considered as a potential second chapel for Chesterfield Crematorium, however, with the opening of a new crematorium in Swanwick, this project may need to be deferred until the impact of the new crematorium can be assessed. A review of the chapel in Spital Cemetery is being carried out, however, a recent Options Assessment indicates little likelihood of finding a new use for the chapel, together with the high costs of refurbishment, it appears only an extremely innovative option for the possible use of the chapels will allow them to be utilised in the future.
- 2.5.7 Currently only one friends group exists, Spital Cemetery Friends Group, and more structured work now needs to take place with them. It is hoped that the review of staffing arrangements will allow the Council to work more closely with Spital Friends Group and allow further work with the community to develop more groups interested in working within the cemeteries.
- 2.5.8 2014 will mark 100 years since the start of the First World War. Events will be taking place across Europe to commemorate those who died in the subsequent wars and it is intended that Bereavement Services will take part in a wider intergenerational project within the Council, developing commemorative packs with individual cemetery leaflets identifying soldiers buried in our cemeteries, as well as working with schools and planting areas of poppies within the grounds.

## 2.6 Demographics

- 2.6.1 The recent 2011 census figures show a 4.8% increase in population in Chesterfield, rising from 98,800 in 2001 to 103,800 in 2011. This is significantly less than the average figures for both East Midlands (8%) and England (7.3%). However, the proportion of the population that is over 65 is 18.6%. This is a little higher than both East Midlands (17.1%) and England (9.4%). It is likely that the population will continue to rise steadily with a predicted population of 109,000 in 2026, by which time it is expected that people over 65 will make up around 24% of the population.
- 2.6.2 The death rate for Chesterfield is higher than the average for the East Midlands, with around 10.2 deaths per 1,000 (1.02%) in Chesterfield and 8.9 per 1,000 (0.89%) for the East Midlands. Interestingly, Sheffield statistics indicate only 8.6 deaths per 1,000, around the average for England and Wales.
- 2.6.3 The death rate is predicted to continue to gradually decrease over the next 10 – 15 years, at which point it is expected to rise once again when those born during the post war 'Baby Boom' begin to die. There is also an uncertainty regarding the possible influence of obesity rates in the UK as young deaths are beginning to increase due to obesity in the modern day society. This may require larger size graves which will have a slight impact on layout and space available in cemeteries.
- 2.6.4 The net result of the population increase and the reduction in the death rate is that there is likely to be a very slow increase in the numbers of deaths over the next 10 to 15 years. After this time the numbers of deaths may begin to increase a little more dramatically. If all other things remain equal there will be very little effect on the numbers of burial carried out by Chesterfield Borough Council in the next 15 years.
- 2.6.5 Ethnicity – the Borough has a higher proportion of residents from minority ethnic backgrounds than in Derbyshire. In 2001 98.1% of the Chesterfield Borough population were White British compared to 94.9% in 2011.
- 2.6.6 More people describe themselves as Christian (63.8%) than in England, East Midland and Derbyshire. The second largest religious group is Muslims at 0.7%. 27.2% of Chesterfield Borough residents stated that they have no religion. Bereavement Services provide specific burial areas for various faith groups, including Muslims.

## 2.7 Finance

- 2.7.1 The cemetery service is currently run at a deficit of around £160,000. Fees and charges are lower than average in our family group and are in need of review.

Consideration needs to be given to reducing the deficit whilst improving standards

- Review maintenance arrangements to seek to provide a higher maintenance standard at a lower cost.
- Compare fees and charges with others in our family group
- Current pricing structure been in place for some years, need to review

## 3.0 What are we aiming for?

### 3.1 Four primary aims

- To provide a service that meets the needs of the bereaved and other visitors to the cemeteries
- To provide cemeteries for the burial and commemoration of the dead in a secure, sustainable and well maintained environment.
- To raise awareness of cemeteries and churchyards as valuable, historic green spaces promoting wellbeing, biodiversity, learning and recreation.
- To manage the service in the most cost efficient manner, incrementally reducing the deficit whilst improving standards

### 3.2 Within the four primary aims are a number of objectives as follows:

#### 3.2.1 Provision of a service that meets the needs of the bereaved

- We want to have site specific management plans to reflect the uniqueness of individual sites and meet the needs wants and aspirations of local communities.
- We want to put in place robust procedures to provide an efficient service that protects the needs and rights of the bereaved and those of the Council.
- We want to provide and permit memorialisation in cemeteries that gives additional choice to the bereaved within regulations that ensure standards are maintained.

#### 3.2.2 Provision of cemeteries in a secure, sustainable and well-maintained environment:

- We want to adopt management methods which meet current and future needs in respect of local burial options while providing accessible green space, biodiversity and sustainable environmental practices.
- We want to improve aesthetics while reducing costs by reviewing maintenance provision and standards.
- We want to continue to implement the Council's memorial management policy to ensure safety in our cemeteries and to develop procedures for dealing with memorials laid flat or dilapidated.



#### 3.2.3 Valuable historic green spaces, promoting wellbeing, biodiversity, learning and recreation:



- We want to provide a supportive and inclusive service that fully reflects the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity of Chesterfield.
- We want to develop a policy on the future use of chapels that will consider the historical significance and architectural value of the buildings balanced against funding streams available

#### 3.2.4 Managed in the most cost efficient manner:

- We want to deliver a value for money cemeteries service by introducing a policy and pricing strategy that will ensure the long term sustainability of the cemeteries and the provision of a good standard of service for the bereaved.

#### 3.3 In all four of the cemeteries there needs to be improvements to the general standards of grounds maintenance, however in addition to this there needs to be specific improvements to the following :-

- Drives and paths are in need of some maintenance, many are in a very poor condition.
- Gates all need painting and some need repairing.
- Flowers beds need to be re-introduced in some places and existing beds improved
- There is a need for a policy on memorial benches as there are too many in Brimington and not enough everywhere else.
- A policy is required to enable staff to deal with unauthorised memorials. This would ultimately improve the overall look of the cemeteries
- Children's sections need to be improved. Whilst Chesterfield SANDS are working with Bereavement Services to provide a baby memorial garden in Boythorpe Cemetery, the existing children's garden at Staveley needs some attention too.

#### 3.4 Sustainability of the cemeteries for the future needs to be carefully addressed as this involves some sensitive decision making. Available space within the existing cemeteries is limited and in Spital Cemetery it is likely that there is less than 15 years worth of burial space remaining. The first option in the past for most authorities would be to purchase additional burial land, although this is becoming very expensive and there is no guarantee that sites will be suitable due to new regulations. Chesterfield Council will need to investigate all aspects of usage of the existing sites including:

- Available burial space in public graves
- Previously sold graves where the rights have not been used
- Areas where additional burials may be able to be included
- Reuse of consecrated public burial space
- Impact of future legislation on reuse of burial space

## 4.0 How are we going to get where we want to be?

### 4.1 Provision of a service that meets the needs of the bereaved

- We want to have site specific management plans to reflect the uniqueness of individual sites and meet the needs wants and aspirations of local communities.

#### Actions

- Develop site specific management plans
  - Continue to work closely with our stakeholders including Funeral Directors, clergy, celebrants, friends and bereavement support groups.
  - Develop regulations that reflect the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity of Chesterfield.
- We want to put in place robust procedures to provide an efficient service that protects the needs and rights of the bereaved and those of the Council.

#### Actions

- Offer grave owners the opportunity to top up Exclusive Right of Burial every five years for a fee
  - Allow existing grave owners to top up Exclusive Right of Burial for a fee
  - Introduce a policy and pricing strategy for Extending Exclusive Rights of Burial once existing rights have expired.
  - Develop a policy of permitting burial in a shroud or wooden / biodegradable coffin only.
  - Review and update all systems
  - Put in place revised procedures for dealing with Exclusive Right of Burial
  - Obtain a memorial safety inspection package to link to our existing IT system.
  - Make effective use of technology for cemetery bookings and records.
  - Digitise cemetery maps
  - Assess the architectural and heritage value of buildings and identify whether or not grant funding is available
  - Consider and consult on use of Brimington chapel for cremation services.
- We want to provide and permit memorialisation in cemeteries that gives additional choice to the bereaved within regulations that ensure standards are maintained.

#### Actions

- Provide memorials for cremated remains
- Amend cemetery regulations to permit a wider range of memorialisation
- Ensure all memorials are fixed to national standards and suitably monitored
- Ensure all memorial masons working in our cemeteries are members of a national registration scheme.

#### 4.2 **Provision of cemeteries in a secure, sustainable and well-maintained environment:**

- We want to adopt management methods which meet current and future needs in respect of local burial options while providing accessible green space, biodiversity and sustainable environmental practices.

##### Actions

- Encourage biodiversity and sustainable environmental practices
  - Promote the educational and heritage value of cemeteries
  - Raise the profile of cemeteries
- We want to improve aesthetics while reducing costs by reviewing maintenance provision and standards.

##### Actions

- Review maintenance standards and recharges
  - Establish budgets for directly employed staff and equipment.
  - Recruit one additional member of staff
  - Re-erect where possible memorials that have fallen or been laid flat
  - Remove dilapidated memorials
  - Develop and implement a policy on dealing with unauthorised memorials
- We want to continue to implement the Council's memorial management policy to ensure safety in our cemeteries and to develop procedures for dealing with memorials laid flat or dilapidated.

##### Actions

- Implement an annual programme of inspections in the councils cemeteries
- Implement a requirement for masons to be part of a national registration scheme.
- Liaise with Diocese to establish inspections within closed churchyards.

#### 4.3 **Raising awareness of cemeteries and churchyards as valuable, historic green spaces promoting wellbeing, biodiversity, learning and recreation**

- We want to provide a supportive and inclusive service that fully reflects the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity of Chesterfield

##### Actions

- Develop a policy of permitting burial in a shroud
  - Review service times available
  - Develop a programme of events in cemeteries in conjunction with friends and bereavement support groups
- We want to develop a policy on the future use of chapels that will consider the historical significance and architectural value of the buildings balanced against funding streams available.

Actions

- Assess the architectural and heritage value of buildings and identify whether or not grant funding is available
- Consider and consult on use of Brimington chapel for cremation services.

**4.4 Managed in the most cost efficient manner:**

- We want to deliver a value for money cemeteries service by introducing a policy and pricing strategy that will ensure the long term sustainability of the cemeteries and the provision of a good standard of service for the bereaved.

Actions

- Increase fees on an annual basis to reflect local charges and service improvements
- Include fee to erect a memorial in the charge for purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial.
- Excavate graves to a maximum depth and charge one interment fee
- Increase prices of Exclusive Right of Burial for cremated remains graves
- Restrict the length of time Exclusive Right of Burial is sold for.
- Where graves are bought in advance, restrict the rights to a ten year period.

APPENDIX 1

## Action Plan

### Aim 1: To provide a service that meets the needs of the bereaved and other visitors to the cemeteries

#### Objective 1

Development of site specific management plans to reflect the uniqueness of individual sites and meet the needs, wants and aspirations of local communities

ACTION	LEAD PERSON	DATE
Develop a management plan for: Spital Cemetery Staveley Cemetery Boythorpe Cemetery Brimington Cemetery	Angela Dunn	2015 2016 2017 2018
Continue to work closely with our stakeholders including Funeral Directors, Clergy, Celebrants, Friends, support groups	Angela Dunn Sue Ramsey Cemeteries team	Annual liaison meeting Quarterly meeting with Friends
Develop regulations that reflect the religious, ethnical and cultural diversity of Chesterfield.	Angela Dunn Sue Ramsey	March 2015



## Objective 2

Put in place robust procedures to provide an efficient service that protects the needs and rights of the bereaved and those of the Council

ACTION	LEAD PERSON	DATE
<p>Develop revised procedures for granting of Exclusive right of Burial:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement revised procedures for transfer of Exclusive Right of Burial.</li> <li>• Introduce a policy and pricing strategy for extending exclusive right of Burial after rights have expired.</li> <li>• Offer the opportunity to top up grave rights every five years.</li> <li>• Allow existing grave owners to top up Exclusive Right of Burial.</li> </ul>	<p>Angela Dunn</p> <p>Diane Collett</p> <p>Sue Ramsey</p> <p>Sue Ramsey</p> <p>Sue Ramsey</p>	<p>Implemented June 2014</p> <p>June 2014</p> <p>April 2015</p> <p>April 2015</p> <p>April 2015</p>
<p>Review and update all systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review all administrative and operational systems</li> <li>• Make effective use of technology for cemetery bookings and records</li> <li>• Digitise cemetery maps</li> </ul>	<p>Sue Ramey</p> <p>Diane Collett</p> <p>Sue Ramsey</p>	<p>March 2015</p> <p>December 2015</p> <p>March 2015</p>

Objective 3

Provide and permit memorialisation in cemeteries that gives additional choice to the bereaved within regulations that ensure standards are maintained

ACTION	LEAD PERSON	DATE
Provide memorials for cremated remains	Sue Ramsey	September 2015
Amend cemetery regulations to permit a wider range of memorials	Angela Dunn Sue Ramsey	March 2015
Ensure all memorials are fixed to a national standard and that all memorial masons are members of a national registration scheme	Sue Ramsey	December 2014

**Aim 2: To provide cemeteries for the burial and commemoration of the dead in a secure, sustainable and well maintained environment.**

Objective 1

To adopt management methods which meet current and future needs in respect of local burial options while providing accessible green space, biodiversity and sustainable environmental practices.

ACTION	LEAD PERSON	DATE
Encourage biodiversity and sustainable environmental practices	Sue Ramsey Sustainability Officer	Ongoing
Promote the educational and heritage value of cemeteries	Cemeteries team Friends Group	Annual events
Raise the profile of cemeteries	Darran West Angela Dunn Cemeteries team	Annual events
Permit burial in a shroud or wooden / biodegradable coffin only	Sue Ramsey	March 2015

## Objective 2

Improve aesthetics while reducing costs by reviewing maintenance provision and standards

ACTION	LEAD PERSON	DATE
Review maintenance standards and recharges	Bereavement / Green Spaces team	2014
Establish budgets for directly employed staff and equipment to include recruitment of one additional member of staff	Angela Dunn	2014
Implement procedures for dealing with dilapidated and unauthorised memorials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Re-erect where possible memorials that have fallen or been laid flat</li> <li>○ Remove dilapidated memorials</li> <li>○ Develop and implement a policy on dealing with unauthorised memorials</li> </ul>	Sue Ramsey  Cemeteries team  Cemeteries team  Angela Dunn	2014  Annual schedule  Annual schedule  2016

### Objective 3

Continue to implement the Council's memorial management policy to ensure safety in our cemeteries and to develop procedures for dealing with memorials laid flat or dilapidated

ACTION	LEAD PERSON	DATE
Implement an annual programme of inspections in the Council's cemeteries and develop procedures for dealing with dilapidated memorials	Sue Ramsey Ross Fawbert	Annual programme
Liaise with the Diocese to establish inspections within closed churchyards	Sue Ramsey	December 2014
Implement requirement for memorial masons to be part of a national registration scheme	Sue Ramsey	December 2014
Obtain memorial safety package to link to existing IT system	Angela Dunn	December 2015



**Aim 3: To raise awareness of cemeteries and churchyards as valuable, historic green spaces promoting wellbeing, biodiversity, learning and recreation.**

Objective 1

ACTION	LEAD PERSON	DATE
Encourage biodiversity and sustainable environmental practices	Sue Ramsey	Ongoing
Promote the educational and heritage value of cemeteries	Sue Ramsey	Ongoing
Develop a programme of events in cemeteries in conjunction with Friends and bereavement support groups.	Sue Ramsey Cemeteries team	Annual events

**Aim 4: To manage the service in the most cost efficient manner, incrementally reducing the deficit while importing standards.**

Objective 1

ACTION	LEAD PERSON	DATE
Increase fees on an annual basis to reflect local charges and service improvements.	Angela Dunn	Annually
Include fee to erect a memorial in the charge for purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial	Angela Dunn	March 2016
Increase prices of Exclusive Right of Burial for cremated remains graves.	Angela Dunn	March 2015
Restrict the period Exclusive Right of Burial is sold for and allow grave owners to top up rights every five years.	Angela Dunn	March 2015
Where graves are purchased in advance, restrict the period to ten years.	Sue Ramsey	March 2015
Directly employ cemeteries staff to carry out all non-specialist maintenance / grave digging operations.	Angela Dunn	2014

## Appendix 2 - Maintenance Standards

### 4.3.1 Burial areas



Boythorpe Cemetery



Comparative Cemeteries



### Buildings and Surrounds



Spital Cemetery



Comparative Cemeteries



## Signage



CBC Cemeteries



Comparative Cemetery



Chesterfield Crematorium Signage

## Conservation Areas



Spital Cemetery



Other cemetery with signage

