

## Revenue Budget Summary - Cemeteries

Budget Description	Budget Holder	2021/22 Gross Budget	2021/22 Net Budget
Cemeteries	Steve Cooper (Works and Environment Manager)	£106,100	£48,500
<p><b>Purpose of the Budget:</b></p> <p>The purpose of the Cemeteries Budget is to fund the operational resources including staffing, machinery and equipment required to run and maintain Stephenson Way Cemetery and West Cemetery, to provide burial services at those cemeteries, and to undertake grounds maintenance and burial services at St Andrews Church in Aycliffe Village.</p>			
<p><b>Scope of Activity and Nature of the Service:</b></p> <p>The Cemeteries Budget provides the resources to undertake repairs and maintenance to the cemetery buildings, the upkeep of the cemetery grounds, the maintenance and replacement of cemetery equipment such as the grave shoring machinery, as well as the running costs of the cemetery buildings. The budget also provides for all staffing costs associated with the above, as well as the burials service. The provision of cemeteries is a statutory service area.</p>			
<p><b>Contribution to Council Aims:</b></p> <p>The provision of cemeteries contributes to the following Council Strategic Aim:- <i>Aim 2: "To manage the Council's finances and assets in a responsible manner"</i></p>			
<p><b>Performance Measures and Indicators</b></p> <p>The provision of cemeteries is a statutory function and also contributes towards the Strategic Aim highlighted above. However, there are not currently any specific targets within the Service Delivery Plan relating to cemeteries.</p>			
<p><b>Key Budget Changes for 2021/22</b></p> <p>The Cemeteries Budget has increased by £7,050 per year to a net running cost of £48,500, largely as a result of an increase in income from burial fees and advance purchases of graves.</p>			
<p><b>Importance of Service to the Community</b></p> <p>Cemeteries provision is a statutory service and is clearly also an essential service to the community. In 2019/20 there were a total of 63 interments and 43 purchases of plots across the three cemeteries at West Cemetery, Stephenson Way and St Andrews at Aycliffe Village. The 2019 'Your Town, Your Choice, Your Voice' Satisfaction Survey provided some very positive feedback on public satisfaction with the cemeteries, with the service having very high levels of satisfaction with standards of maintenance, cleanliness, peacefulness, and value for money and featuring as the fourth most valued service for local taxpayers.</p>			
<p><b>External Funding and Fees and Charges:</b></p> <p>The Council charges fees for the various services provided at the cemeteries including burials, cremations, exclusive rights, plaques, inscriptions, tree planting, exhumation, register searches etc. Income from the above currently totals around £51,750 a year. Cemeteries charges are reviewed annually by the Council's Charges Working Group and have been frozen for 2021/22. The Council also leases part of the building at Stephenson Way Cemetery to a funeral director at a lease rental of £5,850 per year.</p>			