Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee 24 February 2023

Bereavement Services

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What will we cover?

- What the service covers and who does what
- Key issues
 - Covid
 - Sensitivity
 - Funeral Poverty
 - Carbon
 - Burial Space
 - Future Developments



What does Bereavement Services Cover

- Crematoria Mountsett & Central Durham
- Cemeteries 46 open, 98 closed/ church yards
- Woodland burials
- Public funerals
- Cemetery development
- Technical expertise
- Memorial safety
- Community involvement



What we do?

Grave Digging

- · Grave markings
- · Lifting & Levelling Graves
- · Grave Maintenance Works
- · Reinstatement of Graves

Grounds Maintenance

- · Grass Cutting & Strimming
- Tree Planting / Inspections maintenance
- Maintenance of Footpaths and Headstones
- Rose / Shrub / Flower Bed Maintenance
- Hedge Border Maintenance & Hedge Cutting
- Litter Picking
- Weed Killing
- · Leaf / snow clearing & gritting
- Turfing & Seeding
- Path edging
- Topping up Graves
- Including closed cemeteries and graveyards

Memorial Inspection Team

- · Headstone Inspections
- All memorials must be erected in accordance with the National Association of Memorial Masons Specification.
- All monumental masons must be registered with the Bramm register of Accredited Monumental Masons.

Partnership Working

- · Friends of the Cemetery
- Parish Councils

Crematoriums

Bereavement Services

Miscellaneous

- Cemetery Gates & Fence Painting
- Dry Stone Walling
- · Memorial Bench Maintenance
- Maintenance of Walls & Fences
- Attend Funerals to Direct Cortege to graveside
- Attend Site Visits with Bereaved Public Funerals
- Exhumations
- Cemetery Extensions.

Admin

- Funeral / Grave and Crematorium Booking
- · Dealing with the Sale of Grave Plots
- Deal with members of the public face to face as well as by telephone and letter.
- · Carry out Grave Searches.
- · Draw up map of Cemeteries.
- Identifying Deed Holders and arrange any transfer of deeds.
- Memorial Applications.
- · Transferring Information onto registers.
- Finance/ Income generation/ Invoicing/ Reconciliation/ Liaising with Funeral Directors/ Monumental Masons
- Issuing Permits
- · Liaising with Registry Offices
- Ordering Stocks
- Customer Satisfaction Service
- · Book of Remembrance.
- Monumental Masons/ Funeral Director Meetings.
- Fees & Charges

Awards

Cemetery of the Year - Runner Up

Baby Garden - Runner Up Chester-Le-Street Cemetery

Green Flag

A.P.S.E



Cemeteries







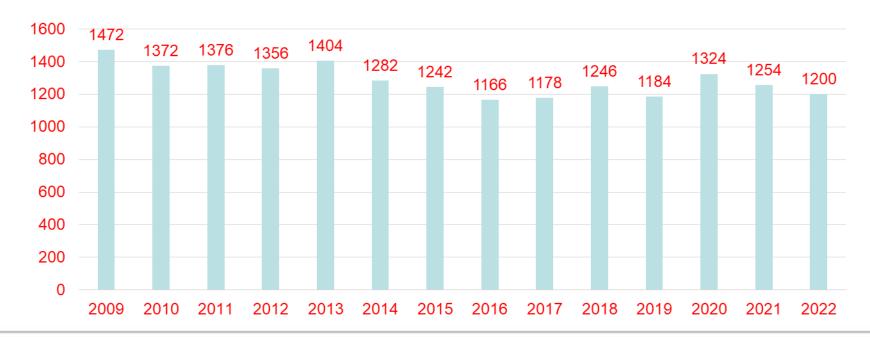




Cemeteries

- Who provides DCC, Parish & Faith
- Settings Cemeteries, closed church yards & woodland site
- Provision Burials, maintenance, headstone inspections
- Awards Green Flag, Cemetery of the Year
- Key issues sensitivity, burial space, funeral poverty, regulation & Covid

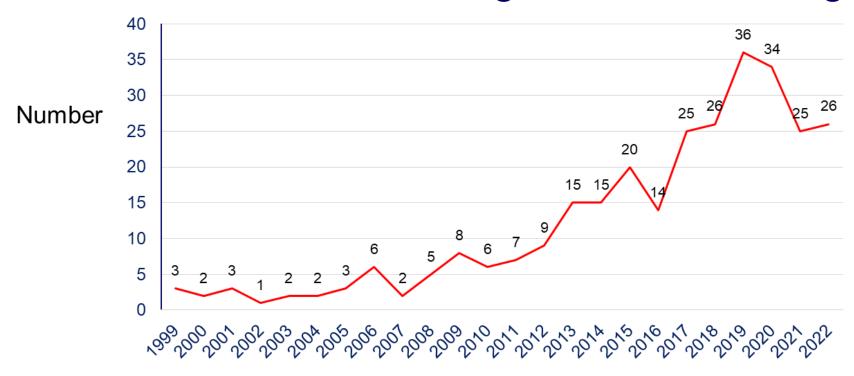
Burial numbers including full burials/re-open and ashes burials





Public Health Funerals

Statutory Duty - A local authority **must** make arrangements for the funerals of people who die or are found dead in their area where no other arrangements are being made.





Headstones

- Strimming
- Weedkilling
- Growth Retardant
- Future







Woodland Burial Site

- Alternative to traditional funerals, cemeteries and graveyards.
- Alternative grave and memorial choice.
- Return to nature.
- Environmentally friendly
- Friends of Durham Woodland Cemetery





Burial Space

- Cemeteries have a fixed amount of space
- 4 sites identified as full or close to being full
 - Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland, Meadowfield & Witton Park
- Limited scope to expand
- Most cemeteries have an alternative within 4 miles

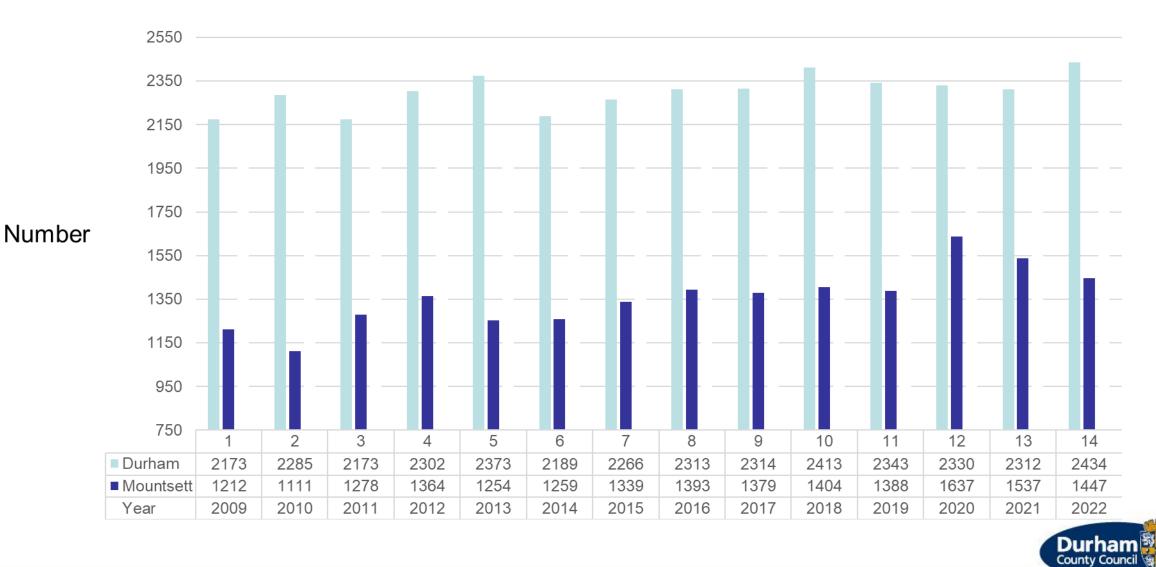


Crematoria

- Who provides DCC (joint venture) & private
- Provision Wesley music system, organ, webcasting of services, recordings, books of remembrances, memorials, recycling of metals
- Investment & development
 - Increased parking, separate book of remembrance building, energy improvements, chapel and office improvements. Solar panels and electric charging points.
 - Mercury Abatement compliance
- Awards Charter for the Bereaved, Green flag, A.P.S.E.
- Key issues sensitivity, regulation, funeral poverty & Covid



Cremation numbers



Durham Crematorium











Mountsett Crematorium











Re-cycling of metals

- Metals remaining after cremation
- Ortho Metals B. V.
- Proceeds are returned to the crematoria by OrthoMetals.
- So far £284,276 given to local death related charities by both crematoriums.





Memorialisation

- Memorial gardens Durham Crematorium.
- Large and small plaques.
- Vase blocks(Durham only).
- Niche units (Durham only).
- Seats
- Memorial trees.(Durham & Mountsett)
- Memorial towers (Mountsett only)





Achievements so far











Key Issues

- Sensitivity of the service
- Regulation
- Funeral Poverty
- Burial space
- Carbon



Future developments

- Resomation
- Continued response Ecological emergency





Thank you!

Questions?

