

Review of Cemetery Fees & Charges

Fees and Charges for the Cemetery were last reviewed and set by the Parish Council at its meeting in November 2023 (Min 23.11.17 refers).

The Sole operator appointed in January 2022 (**Min. 22.01.10.3 refers**) was also re-appointed in January 2024.

Maintaining the cemetery:

A burial authority may enclose, layout and embellish a cemetery as it thinks fit and improve it, and is obliged to keep it and its associated buildings, walls and fences in good repairⁱ.

There is useful guidance on with respect to maintaining cemeteries and closed churchyards in the National Association of Local Council's Legal Topic Note 64 – Tombstones & Memorials, attached as Appendix B to this report. This makes it clear that it is the occupier's (parish council) responsibility to maintain the cemetery/closed churchyard.

Grave spaces in a cemetery remain in the ownership of the council. A right of burial (including an exclusive right of burial) gives only a right to inter a body and no control over the surface of the grave.

Income and expenditure relating to the Cemetery and (closed) Churchyard over the previous three years, plus the current budget and half year figures is set out below:

	2019/20	2020-21	2021/22	2022-23	2023-24	Year End	2024-25 Budget	Year to October '24	Anticipated Year End	2025/26 Budget
	6	5	5	6	6	7	4	6		
Interments										
Grounds Maintenance	£5,394.00	£4,500.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 1,700.00	£ 3,240.00	£ 1,440.00	£ 3,600.00	£2,445.45	£ 3,244.43	£ 3,600.00
Other maintenance spending				£ 1,321.82	£ 750.00	£ 732.66	£ 750.00	£ 60.00	£ 1,162.49	£ 750.00
Memorial Inspections & Maintenance							£ 750.00			£ 750.00
Cemetery Refurbishment						£ 614.71	£ 2,000.00	£3,642.00	£ 3,642.00	£ 750.00
Electricity - Chapel of Rest	£95.68	£90.00	£ 100.00	£ 134.05	£ 150.00	£ 51.83	£ 150.00	£ 51.83	£ 88.85	
Administration @ 4 hours/interment	£264.00	£234.60	£ 275.00	£ 280.00	£ 334.80	£ 385.00	£ 330.00	£ 244.00	£ 366.00	£ 386.40
Mileage/interment (0.45*28.48 miles)	£51.00	£45.00	£ 55.00	£ 54.00	£ 54.00	£ 90.97	£ 155.95	£ 38.88	£ 77.98	£ 77.98
Software support		£150.00	£ 215.00	£ 197.00	£ 375.00	£ 206.78	£ 645.00	£ 782.50	£ 782.50	£ 456.00
NNDR										
Total	£5,804.68	£4,869.60	£ 5,645.00	£ 3,686.87	£ 4,903.80	£ 3,521.95	£ 8,380.95	£7,264.66	£ 9,364.25	£ 6,770.38
cost per interment	£1,024.36	£973.92	£ 1,129.00	£ 614.48	£ 358.97	£ 586.99	£1,341.17	£ 1,560.71		£ 1,128.40
Income										
Interment Fees								£ 945.00		£ 1,500.00
Memorial Fees								£ 260.00		£ 840.00
Grave Space Fees								£ 695.00		£ 1,060.00
Total	£2,480.00	£675.00	£ 3,525.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 2,750.00	£ 3,190.00	£ 3,440.00	£1,900.00	£ 3,257.14	£ 3,400.00
Balance	-£3,324.68	-£4,194.60	-£2,120.00	-£686.87	-£2,153.80	-£331.95	-£4,940.95	-£5,364.66	-£6,107.10	£ 3,370.38

Table 1

There are currently no Earmarked Reserves available for maintenance of the Cemetery, Churchyard and Memorial Garden (these having been drawn down in the current FY for additional work to Cemetery Trees).

It is good practice to ensure that year on year there is adequate provision for 10 years interments. A brief look at the number of interments over the past 3 years, compared to the space currently available does seem to indicate that there is sufficient provision at present.

Comparisons with fees of other cemeteries in West Suffolk and neighbouring districts are attached as **Appendix A**.

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It should be noted that Best Practice Guidance is that fees should be a flat rate, with no difference between parishioners and non-parishioners. In order to manage a 10 year supply of space, the parish has amended the terms of accepting interments to limit to persons who have lived in the parish, or those with a direct familial connection (Grandparent, sibling or child).

Fees and charges have been increased to take account of the current rate of inflation (2.6%). Charges for contractors and materials have increased over the past year. Increases relating to children have been held below the rate of inflation. The proposed changes to fees and charges, therefore, are:

		Person 18 years plus	Still born child or a child under 18 years *
Part 1.	Interments		
a)	standard lawn type grave(for depth one, or two)	£310.00	£130.00
b)	of cremated remains	£220.00	£90.00
Part 2	Exclusive Right of Burial – for a period of 75 years from first interment		
a)	In an earthen grave in any full-size plot approximately 8' x 4' (2440 mm x 1220 mm)	£310.00	£130.00
b)	for cremated remains within the Cremated Remains area in a cremated remains plot approximately 3' x 3' (910 mm x 910 mm)	£310.00	£90.00
Part 3	Monuments, Gravestones, Tablets & Inscriptions		
a)	A headstone	£190.00	£75.00
b)	A tablet on a cremated remains plot	£119.00	£75.00
c)	Each inscription after the first	£135.00 ** this fee cannot be claimed for from CFF	
Part 4	Other		
a)	Exhumation	Double the current relevant interment fee	
b)	Surrender of Grave Space	Buy back at half the current listed Exclusive Right of Burial Fee	
c)	Transfer of Exclusive Right of Burial (ERB) and drafting of statutory declaration for lost deed	£65.00	
d)	For every certified copy of an entry in the registers	£32.50	
e)	For every search covering a period of not more than one year	£30.00	
f)	for every search covering a period of more than one year <div style="text-align: right; margin-right: 20px;">for the first year for every additional year</div>	£30.00 £15.00	

Table 2

The Estates Committee considered the proposed fees and charges at its meeting on 14th November (**Min. EC.21.11.10** refers) and agreed fees as proposed, noting that fees and charges should be kept in line with inflation.

Recommendation:

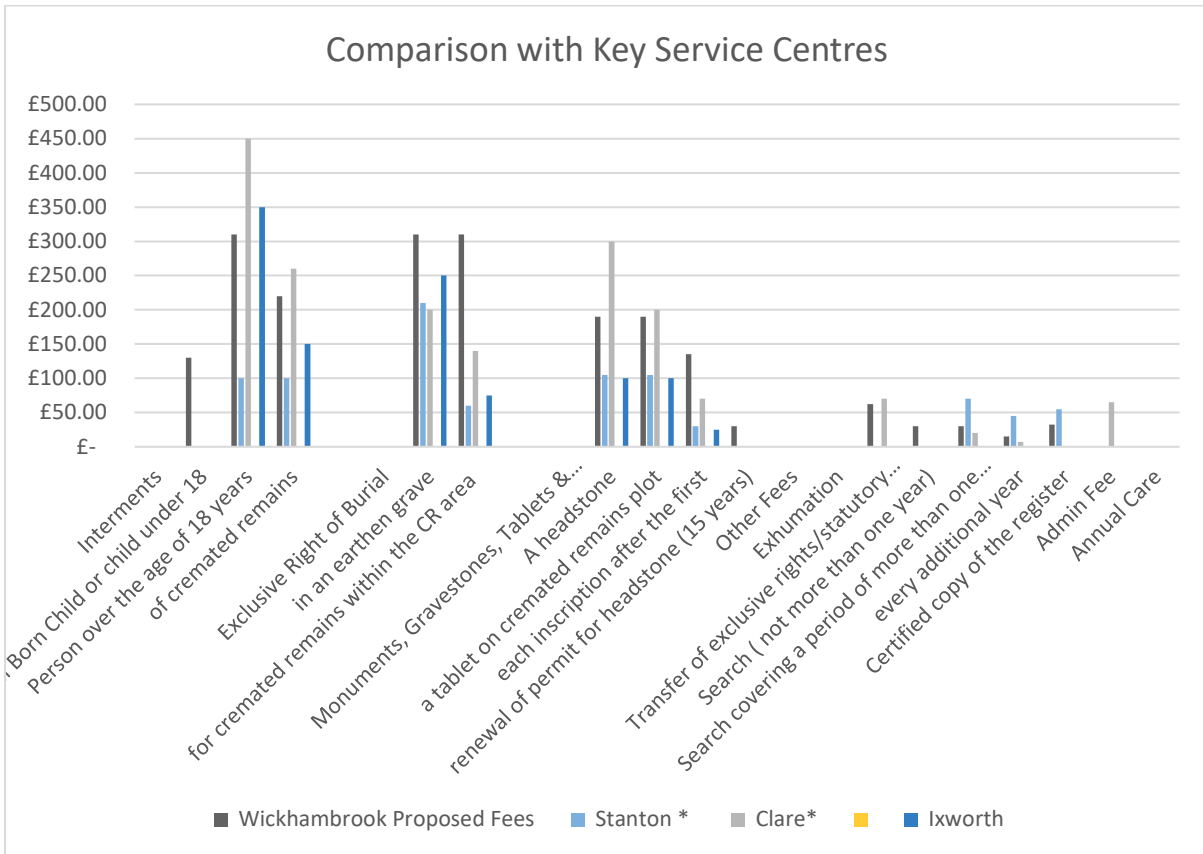
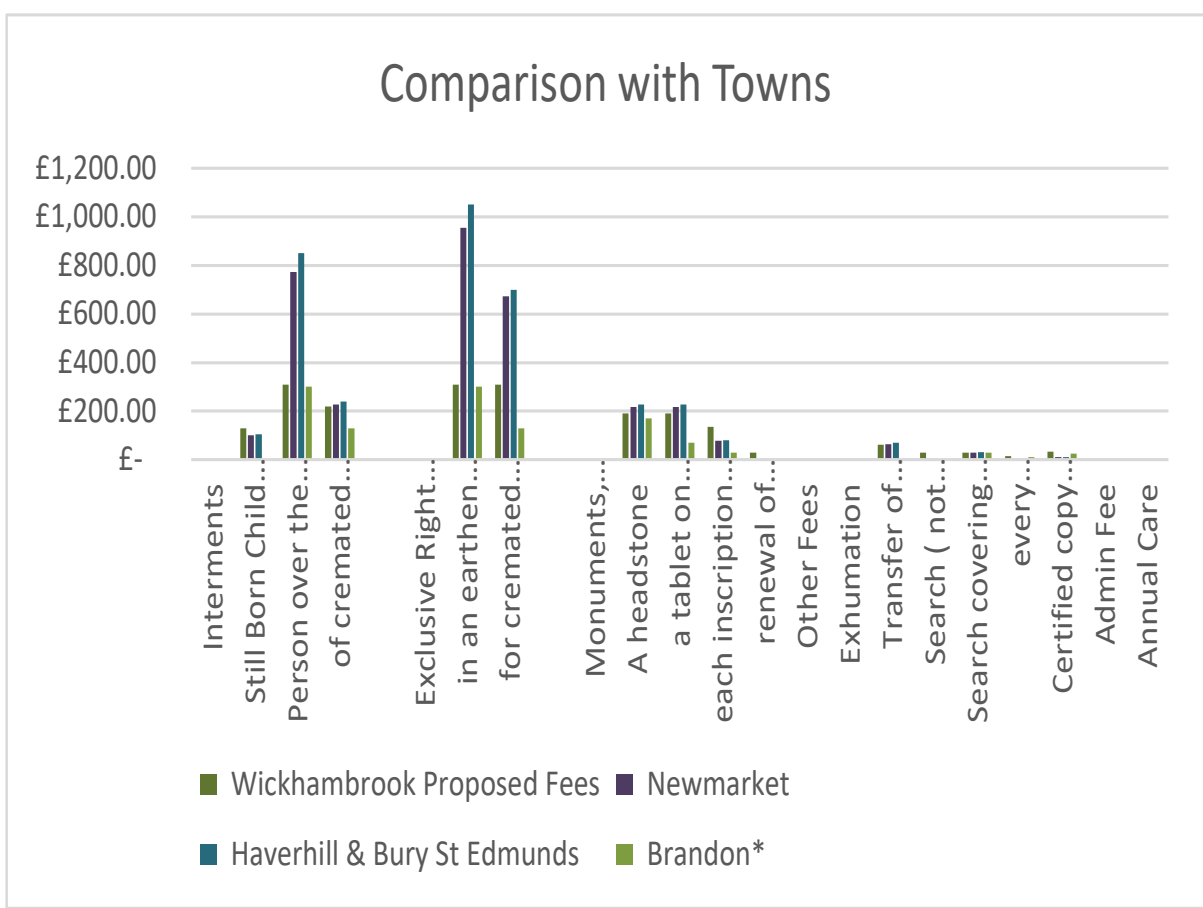
The parish council adopt the proposed fees and charges, (taking into account any revisions agreed at the meeting) set out at Table 2 to WPC.24.11.08) with effect from 1st April 2025.

ⁱ Arnold Baker on Local Council Administration – ref Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977, SI1977/204, art 4(1).

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	2022-23	2024-25	Wickhambrook Proposed Fees		Newmarket		Haverhill & Bury St. Edmunds		Sudbury		Stanton *	Elmswell	Clare*
Interments													
Still Born Child or child under 18	£ 125.00	£ 130.00	£ 130.00	£ 100.00	£ 105.00	no charge	no charge	£ 68.00	£ -				
Person over the age of 18 years	£ 250.00	£ 300.00	£ 310.00	£ 774.00	£ 851.00	£ 925.00	£ 100.00	£ 148.00	£ 450.00				
of cremated remains	£ 175.00	£ 215.00	£ 220.00	£ 228.00	£ 240.00	£ 425.00	£ 100.00	£ 122.00	£ 260.00				
			£ -										
Exclusive Right of Burial													
in an earthen grave	£ 250.00	£ 300.00	£ 310.00	£ 955.00	£ 1,050.00	£ 525.00	£ 210.00	£ 179.00	£ 200.00				
for cremated remains within the CR area	£ 175.00	£ 300.00	£ 310.00	£ 672.00	£ 700.00	£ 525.00	£ 60.00	£ 101.00	£ 140.00				
			£ -										
Monuments, Gravestones, Tablets & Inscriptions													
A headstone	£ 150.00	£ 185.00	£ 190.00	£ 218.00	£ 228.00	£ 210.00	£ 105.00	£ 111.00	£ 300.00				
a tablet on cremated remains plot	£ 150.00	£ 185.00	£ 190.00	£ 218.00	£ 228.00	£ 210.00	£ 105.00	£ 111.00	£ 200.00				
each inscription after the first	£ 100.00	£ 130.00	£ 135.00	£ 78.00	£ 80.00	£ 120.00	£ 30.00	£ 68.00	£ 70.00				
renewal of permit for headstone (15 years)	£ 25.00	£ 30.00	£ 30.00										
Other Fees			£ -										
Exhumation			£ -										
Transfer of exclusive rights/statutory declaration	£ 50.00	£ 60.00	£ 62.50	£ 63.00	£ 70.00	£ 75.00			£ 70.00				
Search (not more than one year)	£ 15.00	£ 30.00	£ 30.00										
Search covering a period of more than one year - 1st year	£ 15.00	£ 30.00	£ 30.00	£ 30.00	£ 31.50	£ 15.00	£ 70.00		£ 20.00				
every additional year	£ 7.50	£ 15.00	£ 15.00			£ 6.00	£ 45.00		£ 7.00				
Certified copy of the register	£ 25.00	£ 30.00	£ 32.50	£ 10.00	£ 10.50	£ 10.00	£ 55.00						
Admin Fee												£ 65.00	
Annual Care						£ 100.00	(grass cutting and tidying up only)						
* Parishes charge double for non-residents													
All fees relating to a burial (either full or cremated remains) of a child under the age of 18 or a baby stillborn after 24 weeks of pregnancy will be claimed for by West Suffolk Council from the Child Funeral Fund (CFF) which is funded by Central Government.													
Towns													
Key Service Centres													
Local Service Centres													
Type A Villages													
Not Classified or not in district													

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