

West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council

Item 8 : Annual Review of Cemetery fees and charges

Report of M Ramshaw, Parish Clerk

Cemetery Fees

The Parish Council conducts an annual review of cemetery fees and charges in the context that maintenance and development of the cemetery should be self-financing, in accordance with good practice.

The review also takes into consideration inflation as calculated by the Office for National Statistics (OFNS)

Historical fee increases include 1.8% in 2020/21, 2% in 2021/22, 5% in 2022/23, 11% in 2023/24 and 5% in 2024/25.

In the approved budget for 2025/26, an indicative increase of 2% was applied to burial fees and charges. The most recent ONS inflation rate is around 3.5%

During the recent review of cemetery policies, a number of new fees were also approved for introduction, but have yet to be applied as the New Rules & Regulations are now scheduled to come into effect from 1/4/25. The new charges are shown in italics.

Please see the table below which gives the current rates along with some example % increases:

CURRENT BURIAL FEES		POTENTIAL INCREASES		
ALLOCATION OF GRAVE PLOT WITH EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OF BURIAL	CURRENT RESIDENT FEES	10%	5%	2%
3ft X 7ft SINGLE PLOT	390	430	410	400
3ft X 7ft DOUBLE DEPTH	650	715	685	665
CREMATED REMAINS Plot (3ft x3ft)	195	215	205	200
**SINGLE CHILD BURIAL PLOT (3ft up to max 7ft)	Free	Free	Free	Free
RE-OPEN FEE FOR SECOND BURIAL				
DOUBLE GRAVE PLOT	195	215	205	200
CREMATED REMAINS	60	70	65	65
Above prices are doubled for out of area resident				
MEMORIAL FEES				
HEADSTONE (All plot types)	100	110	105	102
GRAVE PLOT KERB SET (WHERE PERMITTED)	100	110	105	102
CREMATED REMAINS DESKTOP/TABLET	75	85	80	80
ADDITIONAL MEMORIAL: DESK TOP/ TABLET	75	85	80	80
MEMORIAL VASE	50	55	55	55
ADDITIONAL INSCRIPTION TO A HEADSTONE	35	40	40	40
REPLACEMENT HEADSTONE OR KERB SET (WHERE PERMITTED)	35	40	40	40
REPAIR TO MEMORIAL	35	40	40	40
MEMORIAL TREE LEAF (20 years lease & Inscription)	180	200	190	190
OTHER FEES				
Copy of EROB Deed	35	40	40	40
Transfer of EROB Deed	35	40	40	40
Cemetery Searches	35	40	40	40
Figures rounded up to nearest £5				

Expenditure on the general maintenance of the cemetery since 2018 remains significantly higher than income generated as illustrated in the table below:

YEAR	INCOME	*Expenditure
2018/19	£1525	£12951
2019/20	£2668	£9049
2020/21	£2871	£6916
2021/22	£1114	£5021
2022/23	£2806	£7257
2023/24	£2127	£5098
2024/25 (up to Jan 25)	£572	£4469
2024/25 Forecast Outcome	£900	£7270
2025/26 Budget	£918	£10000

*This includes, ad hoc environmental improvements, planned grounds maintenance, responsive grounds maintenance, water rates, and waste collection services.

As a result of the current contractor giving notice that they don't wish to be considered for a contract renewal, it is envisaged that the cost of the maintenance contract will increase along with other costs associated with the Cemetery. This is at a time when income has fallen for the last two years.

As a result, Parish Council should consider an appropriate level of increase to apply to the Cemetery fees.

Memorial Tree Leaf Fee

In September 2022 our memorial tree was installed and became operational. Individual leaves are currently offered for a fee of £180.00 for a 20-year lease, including inscription and a colour motif.

The current cost of replacing a blank leaf with an inscribed leaf with a motif is £87.00 (£65.00 without a motif)

The supplier has advised of price increases as follows from 1/4/25

- With motif - £90.00 (3.5% increase)
- Without motif £65.00 (4.8% increase)

Our current fee of £180 is applied whether or not a motif is requested, in accordance with the Parish Council's agreed charging structure to only have one fee. To date all leaves purchased have included a motif.

The current OFNS inflation rate is around 3.5%.

In order to meet the increased cost of supply and contribute towards the aim for the cemetery becoming self-financing an increase in our fee is recommended. Please see table below for an indication of potential increases:

Current Price	5%	10%	20%
£180	£189	£198	£216

For Consideration:

1. Burial Fees

Parish Council consider this report and agree a % increase on burial fees with effect from 1/4/2025

2. Memorial Tree Leaf Fee

Paris Council consider this report and agree a % increase with effect from 1/4/25

Mark Ramshaw

Parish Clerk – 14th February 2025