

East Devon District Council

Cemetery Regulation Consultation

Comments and Responses

Consultation period: 01.12.2023 to 22.01.2024



Report of Cemetery Regulation Consultation Comments

The table below shows the questions asked in the recent Cemetery Regulation Consultation. You will see the questions asked in the consultation, comments from the public and EDDC officer responses.

Please note – Not all questions appear on the table below, but will appear on Appendix ? (Cemetery Regulations Consultations Visual Feedback report) as some were a selection only response and not a comment response.

Comments highlighted in **yellow** indicate a change/proposed change to the draft regulations.

2. New graves will be allocated in strict rotation. They are not available for selection other than the option of a grave in consecrated or un-consecrated ground (un-consecrated ground is available for funeral rites of different denominations, non-denominational and humanist burials). How far do you agree with this proposed system?	
Comment	Response
I have previously responded to this consultation. I am not sure whether I have made my views known about the condition of Sidmouth Cemetery, parts of which are neglected/abandoned. Those parts have been especially identified for abandonment in the current management plan. This management decision is justified by the view that the area concerned comprises old graves that are therefore not visited. But this is completely untrue. I recently took a quick cursory look and found that a large number of graves within the sector were post 1950, and some were as recent as the 1980s. I am sure everyone will agree that this is not acceptable. I think the policy is wrong, but it is made even worse by the completely false justification. In short, there is no logical reason to sub-divide the cemetery into different management areas. It looks suspiciously like a cost-cutting measure dressed up as environmentalism.	This comment is not relevant to this consultation
Family may want to be buried close to each other	If families wish to be buried in the same area of the cemetery there is no reason why graves cannot be pre-purchased by family members, and we would aim to accommodate a request for them to be in the same area
Allocation of a grave in the middle of a section may be unsuitable for people with a disability or frailty to visit the grave for their loved one	Unfortunately, there are a limited number of graves that are in proximity of the pathways.
I agree with the choice of consecrated or un-consecrated ground. Strict allocation is convenient for the operators but sometimes circumstances may arise where discretion is required.	Bereavement services staff are conscious that there may be occasions where discretion in allocating a grave is required.

My dad was able to buy 5 plots side by side I would like to be able to do the same for my children	Under burial law only the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial has the right to authorise burials, placing of memorials or to be buried themselves. It would not be practical for an individual to purchase graves for their children as the likelihood is that the purchaser would pre-deceased their children. There is always the option that when the parent dies, and a grave is allocated any children could pre-purchase an adjacent grave.
While I agree with the principle of equity I wonder if there cannot be provision for reservation - on the payment of a fee - so that family, or association, relations might be buried in the same area? Colyton allows for this with a reservation for, I think, 50 years.	We do allow people to pre-purchase the exclusive right of burial in a grave.
People should be free to choose	For administration purposes we need to manage how we allocate graves. We are only able to allocate graves that have been marked out to ensure proper placement. Graves and ashes plots are marked out a row or part row at a time.
I feel that cemetery management is imperative and reserving spaces is poor for all concerned	
This is fair to all	
It gives fairness to all	
Families should be allowed to be together	If families wish to be buried in the same area of the cemetery there is no reason why graves cannot be pre-purchased by family members, and we would aim to accommodate a request for them to be in the same area.
Selection is not likely to be practical.	
Consideration needs to be given to families who wish for family graves to be clustered as near to other graves as possible. Why should grave purchasers not be allowed to choose those plots that are available what reason does the Council have for trying to prevent choice.	Due to a number of the sections of the cemetery being full there may not be a grave available close to where family members have previously been buried. Depending on availability family members can pre-purchase burial rights and we would aim to accommodate a request for them to be in the same area.
Agree - however purchase and reserve graves should be available to purchase. Eg. Muslim faith only allows one person to be buried per grave. Exceptions should be able to allow purchase and reserve so (for example) Husband and wife can be buried next to each other.	For example, if a husband and wife wish to be buried in separate graves it would be possible that at the time of the burial of the first deceased to also pre-purchase the burial rights in the next grave.
In principal I agree, but some people may feel strongly about being buried close to loved ones	Subject to availability.
I agree, with the proviso that all graves should be dug at least double (maybe triple) depth initially, so that spouse(s) or close relative(s) might be added at a later date.	All our lawn graves can be dug to double depth. Due to the nature of the ground in our cemeteries it is not practical to permit the digging to triple depth.

My family have a plot in the Sidmouth cemetery which I trust will be reserved for my family	If the Exclusive Right of Burial has been pre-purchased in a grave or ashes plot the holder of these rights may authorise burials/interment of ashes, placing of memorials and the right to buried themselves.
There must be an option to inter next to or with an already deceased loved one	Subject to space in grave or ashes plot or the pre-purchase of an adjacent grave or plot.
We should be able to chose which cemetery we want to use	Yes.

3. No interment will be permitted unless the body of the deceased person is contained in a coffin considered to be suitably biodegradable. How far do you agree that only biodegradable coffins should be allowed?	
Comment	Response
A coffin is something of personal choice and deceased would want to rest in peace in a safe place	Having taken advice from the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management
If you are thinking in terms of wicker coffins, I totally disagree. Wisk to keep the tradition of wooden coffins.	The wording in section 16 a Coffins and Caskets to be amended to "No burial shall take place unless the body(ies) of the deceased person(s) is contained in a suitable biodegradable coffin, casket or shroud"
It depends on each persons budget it seems that biodegradable coffins are more expensive, this needs to be looked into	We will accept coffins and ashes caskets made from biodegradable materials, this includes traditional wooden coffins or ashes caskets. We wish to avoid burials or interment of ashes in metal or plastic coffins or ashes caskets.
makes sense	
Tree are now other environmental options such as water degradation, that should be allowed	
People should be free to choose	
anything to help the ecosystem is a bonus	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
There are a vast array of natural options and these should be encouraged at all times anyway, this furthers that	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
It makes sense. Burial should also be considered with no coffin.	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
Sustainability is key in everything	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
To protect the dignity of the person who has died and assist with carrying them.	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
Biodegradable is preferable but beyond reach for some people due to cost	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
Some people would have opposite preferences on this.	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
We should leave the planet in the way we found it, we do not need non biodegradable coffins. All the coffin is doing is going in the ground anyway	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
Why does the coffin need to be biodegradable, this is an example of political correctness being imposed on others.	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
What exactly is biodegradable? If wooden coffins are allowed-fine.	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
Most coffins are made of cheap materials anyway so will eventually biodegrade. Often biodegradable coffins are more expensive than a normal coffin. It's not something that has experienced economies of scale yet. It will affect those with limited funds. - very strongly disagree	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
Natural burials are not contained in a coffin. This needs to be broader so that you can cater for all types of burials and emerging burial practices	Section 16 of regulations to be amended to cover this
Families should be allowed to decide what they want for their loved one	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations

I agree, up to a point. Metal coffins should not be allowed, and natural wood / wicker &c should be encouraged. Plastic or metal handles are not biodegradable, nor are plastic name-plates. It's true that coffins are readily available with wooden handles, but wooden nameplates are rare except on woven (wicker &c) coffins. Your policy needs to be specific on this, for the avoidance of doubt.	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
Biodegradable should also be fully defined in terms of length of time it takes and also that all components are biodegradable such as handles, nails, etc	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
My sons remains were returned to this country in a secure coffin which I doubt is fully degradable	In a case such as this we would work with the funeral director to ensure the dignity of the deceased.
It is acceptable that as a skeleton is involved, the coffin becomes irrelevant.	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
In this time and age of our planet dealing with pollution everything, including coffins should be biodegradable	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
It is unreasonable to place this restriction upon the families of the deceased and could cause serious problems if the requirement is incompatible with the wishes of the deceased. Unnecessary bureaucracy, in my view.	See above amendment to wording in section 16 of regulations
Depends on the cost some people may not be able to afford it	
Common sense	

4. How far do you agree that only biodegradable caskets or similar suitable containers should be allowed?	
Comment	Response
I presume that this does not preclude the scattering of ashes ie. dispersal of ashes without any form of container.	Scattering of ashes is still permitted in the Gardens of Rest in Sidmouth and Seaton cemeteries.
Persons personal choice	We will accept coffins and ashes caskets made from biodegradable materials, this includes traditional wooden coffins, shrouds or ashes caskets. We wish to avoid burials or interment of ashes in metal or plastic coffins or ashes caskets.
environmentally appropriate	
Good for the environment	
People should be free to choose	
biodegradable caskets will help to some extent	
Same as coffins, with the available options there is no reason not ton	
Sustainability is key in everything	
People should have a choice	See above.
They are normally made of timber which will biodegrade	
Ashes can be used for other purposes, some people have spread them elsewhere like in their gardens	We permit the scattering of ashes in the Gardens of Rest in Sidmouth and Seaton cemeteries
Sometimes relatives might want to relocate the ashes to other graves or different cemeteries for a variety of reasons	Exhumation of ashes is subject to receiving the correct Exhumation Licence from the Minister of Justice and the Diocese of Exeter.
Freedom of choice.	
Disagree but not as strongly as coffins but the same reasons still stand, but, because it's an ashes it'll mean it'll be cheaper than a coffin.	We will accept coffins and ashes caskets made from biodegradable materials, this includes traditional wooden coffins, shrouds or ashes caskets. We wish to avoid burials or interment of ashes in metal or plastic coffins or ashes caskets.
I don't see any reason why they shouldn't be biodegradable	
I agree for burials of ashes in earth (subject to same questions re plastic name-plates as for coffins). However, for placement in memorial walls, where these are provided, a metal or plastic container seems entirely suitable..	Not applicable, East Devon District Council do not have columbarium.
Usually they are poured out of a container into the ground	In East Devon managed Cemeteries we require ashes to be contained in a biodegradable casket.
Unlike a skeleton ashes do not stay together....you may as well scatter....it also allows removable as one entity if ever required	
See answer on 3b. Everything should be biodegradable in our time and age	
More unnecessary bureaucracy, and possible complications for a grieving family.	Funeral directors will assist families with their choice of casket.
Depends on cost	

5. How far do you agree that no more than two grave spaces may be purchased by one person?	
Comment	Response
I am unsure as to the need for a restriction to be imposed.	There is a finite space within the cemeteries, and to give residents an equal opportunity the number of graves that can be purchased by one person is therefore restricted.
A person may be wanting to secure a place for their child especially if they cannot answer for themselves	Under burial law the only the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial has the right to authorise burials, placing of memorials or to be buried themselves. It would not be practical for an individual to purchase graves for their children as the likelihood is that the purchaser would pre-deceased their children. There is always the option that when the parent dies, and a grave is allocated any children could pre-purchase an adjacent grave.
It could be hard on people who want all their immediate families to be buried together. On the other hand, some family members may move away and be buried elsewhere, so the grave becomes unavailable to others for 50 years	There are a number of graves within our cemeteries where the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial was purchased a number of years ago and no burials have taken place we presume that in some cases the holder of EROB has moved away and their burial has not taken place. Under burial law, unless we can contact the holder of the EROB we can't re-sell these rights until 50 or 99 years has passed.
Does this cater for large families?	This regulation does not preclude other family members purchasing their own burial rights.
I think this should be determined on a one to one basis. see the earlier response.	We do allow people to pre-purchase the exclusive right of burial in a grave.
People should be free to make more purchases	See previous response.
my deceased father purchased a plot for my sister in 1960, it is behind my grand parents and his plot is in front of theirs - he purchased his plot for burial but has been interred as ashes and his wife and potentially myself or brother will also like to be there as well	Provided that the EROB has been transferred to the executor or next of kin of the original purchaser further interments can take place.
I don't feel there should be any reservation only at need	
If people want more than two spaces that's fine as long as the cost is for the number of persons and that there is room to accommodate!	There is a finite space within the cemeteries, and to give residents an equal opportunity the number of graves that can be purchased by one person is therefore restricted.
Providing they are for close family i.e. parents, siblings etc, there should be a higher limit. Especially if for ashes internment, rather than burial of an intact body.	See previous response regarding burial law.
Because everyone has a right to a plot	A local authority is not obliged in law to provide burial facilities.
If a family wish to be together then she should be allowed to purchase a plot the size they need.	This regulation does not preclude other family members purchasing their own burial rights.
Families want to stay together especially if local to area	

Families should be allowed to be together	
Why would the Council wish to prevent a family purchasing more than two graves to ensure that all family graves are situated nearby to each other	
Larger families	
I think there may be instances when people want to have more than two spaces.	
When one's family have been in an area for many years it is nice to have their graves together	
Some people have no partner or children and would like to be buried with other family members	
If a grave has been purchased and a burial is taking place, a person should be able to purchase more than two i.e. for grandparents and parents and themselves.	See previous response regarding burial law.
no preference.	
This answer has been based on split families.	
Why does one person need more than one space, perhaps exceptions could be made in extreme circumstances but really it should be one body to one slot	
Depends if they are buying for a family plot. Eg. 3 grave spaces. The wording of this question is vague - One person may buy separate plots for mother, father and siblings.	See previous response regarding burial law. Family plots of 3 grave spaces are not available in lawn cemeteries.
Is this grave spaces or is it exclusive rights of burial? There should be no limit on the amount of exclusive rights of burial someone can own. This could exclude large families or multi generations from interring loved ones if this was capped.	See previous response regarding burial law
Purchased! You have to buy the plots! Every day is a school day	There is no requirement to purchase the EROB in a grave, but a non-related burial can take place in the same grave and no memorial can be placed.
You need provision for two parents and at least one child. By all means enforce a maximum of two plots, but these need to be at least double and preferably treble depth graves.	All our full graves can be dug to double depth. Tripple depth graves must be dug to a minimum of 7ft 6 there are health and safety issues digging to this depth particularly in wet weather the ground in our cemeteries is not always stable.
We are too many ppl on this planet, needing too much space when we are alive. The dead won't care how much space they need, we have to make sure they don't take up even more space	

6. Full lawn graves have capacity for two full burials and up to four sets of ashes contained in caskets.	
Comment	Response
If the first person who dies wishes to be cremated then up to two sets of Ashes should be allowed to be interred under the headstone either side of the ground anchor	It is proposed to amend the regulations to allow for this to happen.
up to six sets of ashes	It is proposed to amend the regulations to allow for up to six sets of ashes to be interred in full grave, following the adoption of these regulation. In the past there has been no uniform interment pattern across all three cemeteries to permit six sets of ashes where ashes have previously been interred due to the risk of disturbance.
up to three full burials should be allowed	All our full graves can be dug to double depth. Tripple depth graves must be dug to a minimum of 7ft 6 there are health and safety issues digging to this depth particularly in wet weather the ground in our cemeteries is not always stable.
It could be potentially more - in London they're digging for 3 coffins and 6 ashes round the sides of the grave (1 x @Head, 1 x @Foot, 2 x Either side - so 4 in total on the sides) Ultimately this means more revenue for the council as well as keeping families happy due to them being able to be buried together	See responses above
Double depth graves should be dug as standard with a maximum of 6 (2+4) in any one grave. There should be no single depth graves dug	If the EROB is purchased it is the choice of the holder whether to have one single depth burial. Where the EROB is not purchased the Council may authorise those graves be dug to double depth.
Treble depth would be better.	See previous response

7. All applications relating to inscriptions on memorials must be made in writing to the Council. Inscriptions must be simple and reverent and in keeping with surrounding memorials.	
Comment	Response
I have never noticed any inscription that would cause offence. So do not feel there is a need for this to be regulated. Some are just simple statements of name, date of birth, date of death. Others show love and affection.	Fortunately, EDDC Bereavement Services have never had to deal with an inscription with inappropriate wording. We need to legislate for the occasion that this may happen in the future in one of our cemeteries. It has been reported by other burial authorities that they have had to negotiate where inappropriate inscriptions have been requested. Our local stonemasons have also requested this clause in our regulations.
Inscriptions are personal and should remain that way	
Why should someone in the council hold sway over the writing on gravestones. Too much bureaucracy.	
It adds to a bureaucratic process...that responsibility can be placed with the funeral directors.....I'm not sure approval from a council employee is appropriate	
A funeral is the last thing you can do for a loved one and a way of making them immortal, if a person can afford the inscriptions no rules should be given as to what is written.	
Whilst obviously the inscription needs to be appropriate as an inscription but what difference does it make to the Council to allow any inscription provided it is not offensive to others why restrict choice.	
This would be a limit on free speech, as long as it is not offensive, I do not see the problem with someone having what they want written on their memorials.	
It's very personal to a family what is written not strangers making a decision	
Yes, the overall appearance / feel of the cemetery is important	
Who decides what is acceptable. I think it's better to state inscriptions should not contradict current law , not racist/ sexist / human rights legislation	
A simple headstone rather than large and difficult to maintain items everyone should however be able to have their name where buried	

<p>This is shutting the gate once the horse has bolted, as with churchyards there is too much precedent at this point to change the rules especially on something so visible If not monitored it may not be appropriate in this new world it must be respectful</p>	See above.
<p>Dignity and discretion should be the keywords here, with some leeway for personalisation.</p>	See above.
<p>Always give suggestions, to head people in the right direction with their choice of wording.</p>	Stonemasons work with families to design headstones. Our local stonemasons have also requested this clause in our regulations.
<p>Inscriptions should be sensible and show respect.</p>	See above.
<p>Simple is a very vague term - Traditionally memorials would have c.90 letters - In loving memory, name, dates and verse. But recently (within the last 5-10 years) people want more, ultimately the memorial should be individual like the person and not generic. When you start dictating that they can have a simple inscription I believe it'll cause problems. However memorials should be in keeping with the surroundings. More emphasis should be placed on Natural English Stone (reduces carbon footprint and is in keeping as that's what historically they would use) as well as monoliths - these are safer than lawn memorials because they have to be snapped before they'll ever fail and possibly injure someone.</p>	See above.
<p>Agree applications should be made to council but wonder what is considered simple and reverent. Years ago it would have been considered wrong not to wear black to a funeral. Fortunately this view has altered. The same needs to be considered re headstones to reflect more personal view.</p>	See above.
<p>Gravestones are not just for the person who has died and their family. A graveyard is for all those who have passed away, their families and for visitors.</p>	See above.

8. With the approval of the Council, inscriptions may be added to the back of headstones.	
Comment	Response
I'm not sure about this. Perhaps if it limited to the people buried in the grave (names, dates etc) but nothing additional.	
Memorials are expensive starting at £1000 and going all the way up to £140k (admittedly I've seen them go this high in London not Devon) but people aren't going to be able to afford to change them. Additional on the back should be allowed	
Only plot numbers should be on the rear of the memorials. No edging should be permitted to graves for ease of maintenance	
Only for the ones interred in the grave.	
Should be allowed anyway	

9. Headstones shall only be constructed of granite, slate or other similar natural hard stone.	
Comment	Response
Should biodegradable headstones not be an option? The only downside is the aesthetic aspect as the headstone slowly biodegrades.....	
It would be in keeping with the churchyard	
Some may not be able to afford headstones, but still need to have a marker.	
so far as possible headstones would be constructed from 'local' material and again, so far as possible, a harmony in size and design adds to the character of the cemetery.	
hard wearing and durable enough for continued maintenance around them	
Again from management point of view softer materials are more prone to deterioration and therefore pose a risk to all	
It may require more investigation into other materials that may be acceptable and environmental friendly	
Cemeteries are places of historic interest and as such, memorials should be as 'permanent' as possible, and as able to withstand age and weather related wear and tear as much as possible.	
These materials have stood the test of time	
Plastic and metal deteriorate and cannot be fixed permanently.	
New composite materials may be forthcoming	
Should be as local to the area as possible, and in keeping with our headstones in the site.	
It must last.	
Everything should be relatively uniform	

<p>I agree but hard stone is a very vague term. For example Portland stone is considered a soft stone but is everywhere and is safe and will not fail.</p> <p>Slate should be no thinner than 1.5 inches.</p> <p>Bath stone should not be allowed due to it being a very soft stone that will eventually crumble in the elements.</p> <p>Granite needs a greater consultation - personally I'm very against it. High carbon footprint due to it being quarried all over the world and sent to china or India to be worked. Very unethical due to the poor working conditions and low pay. It maybe the cheapest stone in the UK but there's reasons why it's so cheap. This needs a greater consultation.</p> <p>I have seen glass memorials before and these are safe as they are often 3inches thick made of laminated glass. These are so few and far between it seems pointless banning them and should be considered on a case by case basis.</p>	
<p>Need to be of tough material to last but not sure what other options could be available?</p>	
<p>If the caskets etc are biodegradable, what will happen to the headstones once they and the bodies are gone?</p>	<p>This is covered by Local Authorities cemetery order.</p> <p>(5) The burial authority may, at the expiration of the period of any grant under (b) or (c) of paragraph (1) or under (b) or (c) of paragraph (1) of article 9 of the order of 1974 or any enactment replaced by those provisions, or of any extension of such period—</p> <p>move to another place in the cemetery; or</p> <p>remove from the cemetery, for preservation elsewhere or for destruction,</p> <p>any tombstone or other memorial which has not been removed from the cemetery by the owner of the right to place and maintain it in the cemetery.</p>
<p>As stated in my previous answers the family should decide not for a Council !</p>	
<p>Natural stone is the most attractive</p>	
<p>Looks better</p>	

It is reasonable to insistence upon certain standards and consistency, that also reflect past customs and practices.	
This would be cost restrictive. Hard stone is incredibly expensive	
Headstones shall only be constructed of Granite, Slate, or other similar natural hard stone	

10. Sculptures are only permitted if they form an integral part of the headstone and are carved from the same piece of stone and fall within the maximum permitted size. Do you agree with this?	
Comment	Response
Up to a point. Cemeteries are places of historic interest and as such need to be aesthetically interesting. Perhaps sculpture could be considered on a case-by-case basis?	All memorial applications are checked against the requirements of the regulations.
They should fall within the permitted sizes of a memorial but, they shouldn't have to be carved from the same piece of stone. Cosmolux statues are perfectly safe and pinned to the base of the memorial. There is more chance of the memorial causing an injury to someone than that Cosmolux statue will.	This clause in the regulations was requested by a local stonemason who advised us on the safest form of construction.

11. Only tablet style memorials are to be permitted on ashes plots in any of the council's cemeteries. All tablets shall be constructed of granite, slate or other similar natural hard stone. How far do you agree with this proposed requirement?	
Comment	Response
In keeping with the churchyard	
Lettering on tablets soon deteriorate on tablets due to the weather. Could small headstones be used as used for babies or allow the tablets to be wedge shaped so rain runs off.	The ashes sections in our cemeteries are laid out to only accommodate tablet style memorials not the small headstone style.
Consistency and harmony of the marking of interments is important. The problem about tablets, lying flat in the ground is that they get overgrown and make maintenance difficult.	Following the adoption of these regulations it will be a requirement for stonemasons to fix any memorial tablet to a 2" concrete foundation thereby lifting the memorial above ground level.
There should also be space for personal memorials eg flowers/ ceramic messages	Following the adoption of these regulations a vase hole will be permitted in tablet memorials.
Why can't people choose	Uniformity.
As long as this is already the case, if an ashes section has upright stones then you make no positive by now taking that option away	The only ashes section where upright stones were permitted is XF in Sidmouth cemetery and this area is now full. All subsequent areas have only permitted flat stones.
As long as this is already the case, if an ashes section has upright stones then you make no positive by now taking that option away	See comments above
It makes it easier for maintenance in the cemetery	
The current section exists because masons / people did not adhere to the regulations and, once a breach was made, others were difficult to refuse. The current section is fair to all and standardised. There are many variations in colour, inscription etc. that can be used to personalise a plaque.	
Again, must be in keeping with the type of stone tablets in the site.	
Makes sense.	
I would not want my ashes to be in a graveyard so I do not need an opinion on this, I would rather have mine scattered somewhere else	Not applicable
We're back to the hard stone- my point on this still stands. However, if the ashes plot already contains cremation lawn memorials then cremation lawns should be allowed. Reasonably this could only be enforced on a new plot as it could be argued that for example - Aunt Mary has a cremation lawn next door and Uncle Robert can't have one even though they're next door to each other.	If relatives were in next door plots in an area of the cemetery that was brought into use prior to these regulations, we would ensure that memorials matched.

Whatever the family decide not Council	
By all means limit their size, but there is no good reason to exclude statuary incorporated in an upright stone.	Space in the ashes sections is limited to the plot size and the ashes sections have not been marked out to permit upright stones and statuary.
The same memorial should be permitted for ashes as graves	
No need for anything bigger to make sure the dead don't take up too much space	
I think it is possible to incorporate a little more flexibility, whilst maintaining a respect for all concerned.	
As above this excludes those whose budget will not reach the cost. It will also potentially cause an increase in the cost to everyone buying hardstone memorials	

12. Do you agree with the proposal that Exclusive Rights will not be sold to Funeral Directors, their agents or other persons for resale but will be granted to a single or a couple of named owners?	
Comment	Response
Absolutely. There should be no agent required to access burial sites. Perhaps the Council might consider resale/reuse after a given period of time for sustainability purposes. Memorials could be retained.	The option to extend the period of the EROB is being discussed within the revised regulations. If the EROB is not extended at the end of the term the rights revert to EDDC, therefore if there is space still within a grave or ashes plot, under burial law the Council can authorises further burials or resell the burial rights
This would then ensure that the grave/memorial marker stays in the family and there is no chance of an unrelated burial being interred there.	This is correct for the term of the EROB. If the burial rights are not renewed at the end of the term the rights revert to EDDC.
Not sure what this means exactly	Burial rights will only be sold to individual(s) and that they will not be sold to funeral directors for commercial resale.
Maximum of two owners for a plot. Plots should never be should to anyone else apart from family and friends. There was a case where a cemetery would sell purchase and reserve plots to anyone, a funeral director came along and brought the whole plot and sold them at a premium making themselves a very large profit.	

13a. Burial fees and Purchase of Exclusive Rights of Burial will be doubled where the deceased is not a resident and the exclusive rights holder is not a resident. How far do you agree with this proposed requirement?	
Comment	Response
<p>Provided that the deceased has lived permanently and continuously in the district for a significant period (say, 10 years?) at any time, it seems appropriate NOT to charge double. Consider as an example someone who has lived in East Devon all their life but is 'forced' to move away from the district in his/her dotage to live with family elsewhere but continues to regard East Devon as 'home' and wants to be buried here.</p>	<p>Charging of double fees for non-residents is not a new proposal this stipulation was in the three separate sets of regulations that have been in force since 1952 for Sidbury and Sidmouth and 1974 for Seaton. The Council provides cemeteries for residents/council taxpayers. Fees are only doubled if the deceased was not a resident of the district twelve months prior to death. Doubling of burial fees, purchase of EROB for non-residents is standard practice for burial authorities. If we don't conform to standard convention, we open ourselves up to "Grave Tourism" As there are areas of the country where burial space is no longer available.</p>
<p>If you have over away but wish to be with parents then allow but you pay a premium</p>	
<p>Surely we should be able to be buried anywhere in the UK, just as we able to move house to anywhere in the UK, without incurring double costs.</p>	<p>A local authority is not obliged in law to provide burial facilities.</p>
<p>The deceased may have lived in East Devon but moved to be near family in another part of the country. Special circumstances may apply.</p>	<p>How would an officer define special circumstances?</p>
<p>My wish is to be buried in the village where I was born and brought up, although I don't live there now.</p>	
<p>As a resident of Sidmouth, my dad purchased burial plots for himself and 4 children. My husband died and because we live in Mid Devon I had no option but to pay double fees. I don't agree with this. If a plot has been purchased that should be it. If a person is living elsewhere if they have family members already buried in Sidmouth they too should have the option to buy.</p>	<p>When the exclusive right of burial is purchased for a grave/plot the burial fee is not included in this fee.</p>

I understand that space is limited and perhaps residents have first priority but expressing this in terms of pricing doesn't seem to me the most sympathetic way of doing it. Non residents are likely to have some kind of connection; good idea to explore what that is when an application is made.	What guidelines would an officer use?
Ideally a resident would be buried where they die however, I feel families should be considered to be laid to rest together but space needs to be available	
Grave tourism is a thing and London cemeteries suffered with people cherry picking their burial grounds, this negates that	
Residents should always be given priority	
Deceased not Resident There should be dispensation of more than 12 months if someone has to go into care which is not in East Devon or moves away but needs looking at on an individual basis depending on how many years they have lived in the area and how long they have moved away for and/or for what reason.	Non-residents for the purpose of these regulations are defined as persons who were not residents of East Devon at the time of the death of in the previous 12 months.
Families would not want the trauma of having to pay double. They may have married or moved away, for very personal reasons.	
Agree that	
Why should non residents be charged more for the same plots	
Seems rather exclusive.	
If the deceased is not a resident should be doubled. However if the purchaser of ERB is not a resident but the deceased is, it shouldn't be doubled as the deceased is still a resident.	If the deceased was a resident of East Devon we don't charge the family, even if they live away , double burial fees or for the purchase of EROB.
Family of deceased may not live in East Devon but the deceased did.	
Someone may still have a strong connection with an area even if not a resident and shouldn't be penalised because of that.	EDDC provide three cemeteries for the benefit of residents.

<p>I agree the fees should be doubled if the deceased is not a resident but not the second point. If the resident is deceased and has lived in the area for sometime and wishes to be buried in the area, you cannot penalise their family/exclusive rights holder if they have decided to live elsewhere.</p>	
<p>Can we charge people who come here to die more for other things! Maybe stipulate that they have actually contributed to the district to qualify</p>	
<p>Extra charges should not be made where the deceased was a long-time resident, who had to move away for reasons of care in old age. Where there is no such connection by current or former residency, perhaps consider restricting burial to cremated remains rather than whole body.</p>	
<p>People should be treated equally when they are deceased.</p>	
<p>The purpose of the plot is to be near to loved ones. The deceased might have moved away for many reasons. Eg Armed Forces, could be anywhere in the world with an address no longer in the area, but obviously family members will wish them to return home. This rule needs include a line about links to family and definitely exclusion for Armed Forces</p>	
<p>Direct relatives of residents or people who were residents should be afforded the same rights as current residents.</p>	<p>EDDC provide three cemeteries for the benefit of residents.</p>

14. Plastic ornaments, wind chimes, or similar items are not permitted on any grave or ashes plot. How far do you agree with this proposed requirement?	
Comment	Response
<p>Wind chimes can be a noise nuisance, but plastic ornaments are quite acceptable, they do not interfere with other users of the cemetery.</p> <p>Silk or plastic flowers are very acceptable. Silk flowers these days are quite realistic. In cold weather, such as now, it is not always practical to arrange real flowers with water freezing in their vases. Rather than leave a grave unadorned, whether through weather or frailty, I feel strongly that we should have the option of artificial flowers. When you look at the graves, the mix of real and artificial add to the loving feel of the cemetery, a delightful sight.</p>	<p>These regulations aim to be mindful of The Council's Climate change Action Plan. Under the theme of protection and enhancing the natural environment we wish to eliminate the use of plastics in our cemeteries.</p> <p>Respondents to this consultation have voiced an opinion that silk flowers be permitted, these still contain plastics in the stems and materials.</p> <p>The draft regulations may be amended to refer to The Council's Climate Change Action Plan.</p>

15. Artificial flowers, whether silk or plastic are not allowed. An exception to this rule is made for Remembrance Day poppies and traditional Christmas wreaths which are permitted and will be removed when they fade or decay. How far do you agree with this proposed requirement?	
Comment	Response
Regarding silk flowers some people cannot always visit all the time but like to think that they have not forgotten their loved ones and it brightens up the grave. Regarding leaving ornaments and memorabilia it's a way the living person wants to remember their loved ones and a coping strategy	<p>These regulations aim to be mindful of The Council's Climate change Action Plan. Under the theme of protection and enhancing the natural environment we wish to eliminate the use of plastics in our cemeteries.</p> <p>Respondents to this consultation have voiced an opinion that silk flowers be permitted, these still contain plastics in the stems and materials.</p> <p>The draft regulations may be amended to refer to The Council's Climate Change Action Plan.</p>
Artificial flowers can be very attractive these days. Silk not plastic.	
Let families mourn their lost ones in peace and respect without burdening them with more regulations. When it's difficult to make regular visits to family graves and with the high cost of flowers we should be allowed to place artificial flowers there in their place as long as its tidy.	

16. Do you have any other comments you wish to make in respect of the proposed Regulations for Management and Control of Cemeteries in East Devon?	
Comment	Response
<p>Considering that the maintenance of cemeteries is costly for Councils and that land is a finite resource, should cremation not be promoted and burial discouraged? An effective way of doing that would be to raise burial fees (and fees for the interment of ashes) and charge only a nominal fee for the scattering of ashes.</p>	
<p>It's up to the family to decide what they want to put on their loved ones grave. Everyone is different its a place to go and remember.</p> <p>We as a family would like to maintain the graves ourselves and not for street scene to strim over it and if this means putting up a little wooden then so be. This should be allowed and by doing this street scene will know which areas to strim. and stop the destruction of flowers and other objects as they do so.</p> <p>Some families live far away and can only put up artificial flowers why is this a problem?</p> <p>Some graves aren't marked except with a spiked memorial vase and artificial flowers why do street scene feel it necessary to just strim over them and break them</p> <p>Sidmouth cemetery is a cut through to the knap I think a sign for NO Dogs allowed should be placed at the entrances. Unless it's a guide dog for those visiting a grave.</p> <p>Gates should remain open at all times.</p> <p>What is the main reason for this is it lack of resources and money so if everything is kept on the stone ledge of a headstone it's easier to cut, (maybe the option of maintaining it ourselves should be thought about) is it because more people are coming into the area so more graves are needed.</p>	<p>There are NO DOGS allowed signs on the gates to Sidmouth cemetery.</p> <p>Not all comments applicable to this regulations consultation</p>

<p>I have a problem with how the grave yard is taken care of eg grass cutting management of wild plants I make visits to my relatives graves in Sidmouth and I am finding bracken growing throughout the grave and at Christmas I struggled to put a wreath on the grave it is quite upsetting to see the state especially as my grandfather was the local gravedigger for this churchyard and took pride in his work</p>	<p>Comment not applicable to this regulations consultation</p>
<p>I like walking around Sidmouth cemetery and reading the messages on the graves- they are historical messages</p>	
<p>It would be appreciated that future maintenance of seaton cemetery is done with care consideration and respect</p>	<p>Comment not applicable to this regulations consultation</p>
<p>Who has responsibility for tree planting in Seaton woodland section? StreetScene planted 40 trees in the Seaton woodland section in 2023. The new policy says that tree planting will be at the cemetery department's discretion – and if they don't plant a tree, the area will become grassland. But this area is called the 'woodland section' – not 'grassland section'. How do they explain this?</p>	<p>This comment was received by email from EDDC Horticultural Technical Officer. We emailed this response to him: Who is responsible for tree planting in Seaton woodland section? As with any grounds work within the three cemeteries It has always been the understanding of the licensing manager and cemeteries register that the planting of trees in the woodland section falls to Streetscene. The wording in section 12 of the cemetery regulations may be ambiguous when it says "We will plant trees and shrubs, at our discretion, to enhance the woodland feel".</p> <p>To clarify this ambiguity the wording could be changed to "Streetscene will plant trees and shrubs, at their discretion, to enhance the woodland feel".</p>

The Council has climate change targets – but this is not mentioned in the policy. Why not? The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan is a key informant of planned improvements, such as the transition towards greater ecological and environmental sustainability. The Council's 'Council Plan 2020-24' highlights the priority of working towards 'a greener East Devon'. Why isn't this mentioned in the new cemetery policy?

This comment was received by email from EDDC Horticultural Technical Officer.

We emailed this response to him:

As you have raised The Council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan I have looked at it in line with the cemetery regulations. The only area I can identify where this plan has any relevance would be under theme 4 "protecting and enhancing the natural environment" in relation to condition 34 "Floral Tributes, Planting and Ornamentation" d) Artificial flowers, whether silk or plastic are not allowed. An exception to this rule is made for Remembrance Day poppies and traditional Christmas wreath which are permitted and will be removed when they fade or decay. E) Plastic ornaments, wind chimes or similar items are not permitted on any grave or ashes plot.

The regulations could be amended to state that these clauses are in line with The Council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.