



Burial Management Plan

Dundee City Council

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1. Introduction & Statutory Framework

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

This Burial Management Plan sets out Dundee City Council's approach to the management and operation of its burial grounds. It provides a comprehensive guide for operational procedures, maintenance protocols, and contingency arrangements, ensuring that all burial grounds are safe, respectful, and compliant with national legislation. The plan also supports transparency for the public and provides assurance that statutory duties are being met.

1.2 Legal and Statutory Framework

This plan has been prepared in accordance with:-

- **Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act 2016** – establishing the legal framework for burial authorities.
- **Burial (Management) (Scotland) Regulations 2025** – requiring each burial authority to prepare and maintain a burial management plan by **1 March 2026**, and to review it annually.
- **Burial (Applications and Register) (Scotland) Regulations 2024** – governing application processes and record-keeping.

This plan applies to all burial grounds managed by Dundee City Council, including operational cemeteries and closed churchyards. It covers: -

- Procedures for coffin and ashes burials
- Maintenance and inspection regimes
- Equipment operation and servicing
- Contingency arrangements for unexpected events
- Training and competency requirements for staff

1.3 Other Legislation and Related Council Policies

In addition to the Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act 2016 and the Burial Management Regulations 2025, Dundee City Council ensures that burial operations comply with a range of statutory duties and best practice standards. These include the **Equality Act 2010**, which underpins our commitment to accessible and inclusive services; the **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974** and the **Occupiers' Liability (Scotland) Act 1960**, which require us to maintain safe environments for staff and visitors; and the **UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**, which governs the secure handling of personal data in burial applications and records.

This plan also aligns with wider Council strategies and policies, including the **Corporate Resilience and Business Continuity Plans** for emergency preparedness, the [Dundee Biodiversity Action Plan \(2020–2030\)](#) to support environmental stewardship, and the **Memorial Safety Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)** for managing headstone inspections and repairs. Together, these frameworks ensure that burial grounds are managed responsibly, sustainably and in accordance with both legal requirements and community expectations.

1.4 Plan Review & Public Accessibility

The Burial Management Plan will be reviewed annually to reflect changes in operations, burial ground status, and government legislation.

A copy of this plan will be made available to the public and the Inspector of Burial upon request to environment@dundeecity.gov.uk

It will be published on www.dundeecity.gov.uk (this link will be updated once the Burial Management Plan has been approved).

Supplementary Information:

For details on the management rules governing the use of burial grounds, please refer to www.dundeecity.gov.uk (this link will be updated on 1st March 2026 when the updated Management Rules for Cemeteries and the Terms and Conditions for Cemeteries are enacted.)

2. Burial Grounds Overview

2.1 Summary Table of Burial Grounds

Burial Ground	Address	Operational Status
1. Balgay Cemetery	40 Glamis Road, Dundee, DD2 1TU	New ashes burials only
2. Birkhill Cemetery	Coupar Angus Road, Dundee, DD2 5PP	New coffin and ashes burials
3A. Eastern Cemetery	Arbroath Road, Dundee, DD4 7RH	No new burials
3B. Eastern Cemetery	Muslim Trust – Section A	Privately Owned by MT
4. Western Cemetery	Perth Road, Dundee DD2 1NS	New ashes burials only
5. Pitkerro Grove Cemetery	Drumsturdy Road, Dundee, DD5 3NY	New coffin and ashes burials
6. Barnhill Cemetery	Strathmore Street, Broughty Ferry, DD5 2NY	No new burials
7. Benvie Graveyard	Invergowrie, Dundee, DD2 5LB	Closed
8. Fisher Street Graveyard	9 Fisher St, Dundee DD5 1EF	Closed
9. The Howff Graveyard	Constitution Road, Dundee, DD1 1LD	Closed
10. Logie Graveyard	Lochee Road, Dundee, DD2 2PR	Closed
11. Old Mains Graveyard	Mains Loan, Dundee, DD4 7AA	Closed
12. St Andrews Graveyard	2 King Street, Dundee, DD1 2JB	Closed
13. St Aiden's Graveyard	408 Brook Street Broughty Ferry, Dundee, DD5 2DA	Closed
14. St Peters Graveyard	Peter Street, Dundee, DD1 2EW	Closed
15. Roodyards Cemetery	Broughty Ferry Road, Dundee	Closed
16. Mains Kirkyard	2 Claverhouse Road, Dundee, DD4 9DL	Closed

(Full addresses and map references provided in Appendix 1)

2.2 Special-Designation Areas

- **Children's Sections:** Birkhill Cemetery, Pitkerro Grove Cemetery
- **Muslim Section:** Eastern Cemetery (Section A owned by the Muslim Trust) and Birkhill Cemetery
- **Jewish Section:** Eastern Cemetery
- **Chinese Section:** Pitkerro Grove Cemetery
- **Woodland Burial Area:** Birkhill Cemetery

2.3 Lair Sizes

Balgay, Eastern, Western, Barnhill Cemeteries:

2.74m long, 0.914m wide, no greater depth of 2.14m, and no less depth of 1.53m.

Birkhill and Pitkerro Grove Cemeteries:

2.74m long, 1m wide, no greater depth of 2.14m, and no less depth of 1.53m.

2.4 Burial Authority Contact Details

Email: parks.burials@dundeecity.gov.uk

Phone: 01382 431536

Website: www.dundeecity.gov.uk

3. Burial Procedures

3.1 Overview

This section sets out Dundee City Council's procedures for carrying out burials in its cemeteries, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and safe, respectful practices. Separate processes apply for coffin burials and ashes burials.

3.2 Coffin Burial Procedure

Coffin Burial Procedure	
Stage	Actions
Initial Contact	Funeral Director or applicant contacts the burial administration team to check lair availability and discuss any special requirements (e.g., coffin size, faith designation, accessibility needs).
Booking & Documentation	- Burial administration confirms lair availability and provisional booking in Plotbox. - Applicant submits burial application and supporting documents (Form 14 (death certificate), right of burial certificate). Applications must be submitted at least two full working days before the burial (excluding weekends and bank holidays). - Burial administration reviews all documents for accuracy and completeness. If correct, staff sign and date the application form to confirm approval. - Application and supporting documents are saved in SharePoint under the relevant cemetery folder. - Burial Order generated in Plotbox, ensuring correct section, lair, and associated fees are assigned, and emailed to burials.downfield@dundeecity.gov.uk for printing and on-site preparation.
Lair Identification	- Officer confirms information in cemetery lair book to schedule. - Officer locates lair, marks center with wooden peg, spray paints lair number. - Officer signs Burial Order and updates lair book, diary, and notice board. - Chargehand verifies lair location and signs Burial Order. - Proprietors contacted if tributes need removal. - Second Officer confirms lair before excavation.
Excavation	- Chargehand re-checks lair location. Tributes repositioned on headstone border if not removed. - Ground protection, batons, and boards placed. - Turf removed and stored for reinstatement. - Lair excavated using mechanical excavator; shoring installed progressively. - Soil placed on boards away from public path. - Grave dressed with artificial grass and laurels; spokes placed for flower board. - Machinery and tools removed from sight.
Interment	- Officer meets funeral cortège at main gate and escorts to lair. - Coffin carried by cemetery staff, funeral directors, or family. - Coffin lowered using safe lifting methods. - Flower board placed over open lair after service.
Backfill & Reinstatement	- Floral tributes placed aside. - Soil replaced in layers and compacted. - Turf reinstated, area tidied. - Tributes replaced on lair. - All equipment removed from site.

Admin Close-out	- Signed Burial Order scanned to parks.burials@dundeecity.gov.uk and uploaded to Plotbox. - Invoice raised in Plotbox and exported to Civica. - Burial record completed in Plotbox. - Lair book (register) updated.
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3.3 Ashes Burial Procedure

Ashes Burial Procedure	
Stage	Actions
Initial Contact	Funeral Director or applicant contacts the burial administration team to check lair availability and discuss any special requirements (e.g., coffin size, faith designation, accessibility needs).
Booking & Documentation	- Burial administration confirms lair availability and provisional booking in Plotbox. - Applicant submits burial application and supporting documents (Form 14 (death certificate), right of burial certificate). Applications must be submitted at least two full working days before the burial (excluding weekends and bank holidays). - Burial administration reviews all documents for accuracy and completeness. If correct, staff sign and date the application form to confirm approval. - Application and supporting documents are saved in SharePoint under the relevant cemetery folder. - Burial Order generated in Plotbox, ensuring correct section, lair, and associated fees are assigned and emailed to burials.downfield@dundeecity.gov.uk for printing and on-site preparation.
Lair Identification	- Officer confirms information in cemetery lair book to schedule. - Officer locates lair, marks center with wooden peg, spray paints lair number. - Officer signs Burial Order and updates lair book, diary, and notice board. - Chargehand verifies lair location and signs Burial Order. - Proprietors contacted if tributes need removal. - Second Officer confirms lair before excavation.
Excavation	- Hand excavation to required depth. - Ground protection and boards placed. - Turf removed and stored. - Grave dressed with artificial grass and laurels; flower board placed.
Interment	- Officer meets funeral party and escorts to lair. - Officer coordinates placement of casket or ashes. - Flower board placed over lair after service.
Backfill & Reinstatement	- Soil replaced and compacted. - Turf reinstated, area tidied. - Tributes replaced on lair.
Admin Close-out	- Signed Burial Order scanned to parks.burials@dundeecity.gov.uk and uploaded to Plotbox. - Invoice raised in Plotbox and exported to Civica. - Burial record completed in Plotbox. - Lair book (register) updated.

3.4 Managing Unexpected Increase in Burials

Dundee City Council has established procedures to respond effectively to any sudden surge in burial demand, ensuring continuity of service and compliance with statutory requirements.

3.4.1 Identification of Increased Demand

Council officers continuously monitor burial requests through the Plotbox management system, enabling early identification of trends and capacity pressures. Sections and lairs are tracked in real time, and any areas approaching capacity are flagged promptly to allow proactive planning. Triggers for activating surge measures include significant increases in weekly burial requests, public health alerts, or other emergencies that may impact normal operations.

3.4.2 Resource Allocation

Staffing: Allocate additional burial admin staff, Gardeners and ground maintenance operatives and gravediggers as required.

Equipment: Ensure all relevant staff have access to any additional machinery and maintenance tools as required.

3.4.3 Liaison and Coordination

The Council maintains established communication channels with key partners, including the Scottish Government for policy guidance, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) for environmental considerations, and NHS Scotland for health-related updates and forecasting. Funeral Directors would be kept informed to ensure burial times and requirements are managed appropriately. The Environment Service maintains a list of contacts for each organisation and will ensure consistent communication as appropriate.

Funeral Directors and the public would be provided with updates on any temporary changes to burial procedures through direct liaison, the Council's website, and other communication channels. Coordination with neighbouring local authorities to ensure consistency of messaging and approach.

3.4.4 Temporary Measures for Mass Fatality

In extreme circumstances, temporary measures may be implemented. These include identifying suitable locations within burial grounds for mass burials and accelerating burial procedures while maintaining cultural and legal compliance. Additional trained operatives may be deployed to assist with grave preparation and funeral processes.

4. Equipment Operation and Servicing

Dundee City Council ensures that all equipment used in burial operations and cemetery maintenance is operated safely, serviced regularly, and recorded in compliance with statutory requirements. This section outlines the procedures for equipment operation, maintenance, and contingency planning.

4.1 Operation Guidelines

All equipment, including excavators, shoring systems, lawnmowers, and hand tools, is operated only by trained staff who have received appropriate safety instruction. Staff must: -

- Complete daily pre-use checks using depot plant checklists.
- Wear appropriate PPE (e.g., gloves, steel-toe boots, eye protection).
- Follow manufacturer operating instructions and Council safety protocols.
- Record any defects or issues immediately for remedial action.

4.2 Maintenance and Servicing

Equipment servicing is carried out in accordance with manufacturer specifications and Council policy:

- Weekly plant checklists submitted by each depot.
- Large machinery and vehicles must have daily logbooks completed before use.
- All powered equipment serviced by the Council's Fleet Department; records maintained centrally.
- Lifting equipment and shoring boxes inspected twice yearly by Zurich (Council's insurer).
- HAVS (Hand-Arm Vibration Syndrome) monitoring undertaken using Reactec devices or manual logs; operatives attend occupational health screening.

4.3 Staff Training

Dundee City Council is committed to ensuring that all staff involved in burial operations and cemetery maintenance are fully trained and competent in their roles. Training covers a wide range of operational and safety requirements, including grave excavation, shoring techniques, equipment operation, memorial safety inspections, and health and safety protocols such as HAVS monitoring. Staff receive a combination of formal training courses, in-house toolbox talks, and on-the-job instruction delivered by qualified trainers or equipment suppliers. All training is recorded in individual staff training records and reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with statutory obligations and best practice standards. Refresher training is provided as required, and specialist qualifications (e.g., LANTRA certification for excavator and shoring systems) are maintained for key operational roles.

5. Maintenance of Burial Grounds

Dundee City Council is committed to maintaining all burial grounds in good order, ensuring they remain safe, respectful, and welcoming for visitors. Maintenance activities are carried out by trained staff in accordance with statutory requirements and best practice standards. This section outlines the arrangements for general grounds maintenance, amenities upkeep, environmental strategies, and inspection cycles.

5.1 General Ground Maintenance

All general ground maintenance tasks are performed in-house by Dundee City Council staff.

5.1.1 Lawn Maintenance

Grass is cut approximately fortnightly from March to September, weather permitting.

5.1.2 Shrub and Hedge Maintenance

Hedges are trimmed twice per year to prevent overgrowth and ensure clear pathways.

5.1.3 Weed Control

Manual weeding and application of environmentally friendly weed treatments are carried out as required from April – October.

5.1.4 Leaf Clearance

Fallen leaves are cleared as required during autumn to prevent hazards and to keep the grounds neat.

5.1.5 Tree Management

Regular inspections are conducted annually by the Forestry team, with maintenance tasks, such as removing deadwood, completed as needed.

5.1.6 Sunken Lairs

Reinstated as required; soil added and turfed between October and March or seeded between April to September.

5.1.7 Supporting Dundee's Nature Network

Dundee's cemeteries and graveyards provide important stepping stone sites in Dundee's Nature Network. Appropriate management interventions are implemented to further enhance their nature network role. This can include biodiversity grassland management, installation of bird boxes and planting which is attractive to pollinators.

5.2 Amenities Upkeep

5.2.1 Bins and Waste Management

Bins are regularly emptied to prevent overflow and maintain cleanliness. Bins are inspected weekly for damage or wear, ensuring they are functional and aesthetically in line with surroundings.

5.2.2 Benches

Inspected regularly for safety and repaired or replaced as needed.

5.2.3 Signage

Signage is inspected quarterly to ensure all information is visible, accurate, and well maintained. Damaged or faded signs to be replaced or repaired promptly. Signage to be placed effectively to guide visitors to lairs, amenities and exits.

5.2.4 Parking Areas

Parking areas are checked weekly to ensure they are free of debris and dangerous potholes with parking lines repainted as required and accessibility markings are kept clearly visible.

5.2.5 Accessibility Features

Ramps and pathways maintained to ensure safe access for all visitors.

5.3 Environmental/Biodiversity Strategies

Dundee City Council supports sustainable practices through: -

- Recycling initiatives within cemeteries.
- Habitat protection and biodiversity enhancements in line with the [Dundee Biodiversity Action Plan \(2020–2030\)](#).
- Management of perennial grass areas and woodland burial sections to encourage wildlife.

5.4 Wildlife Management

Dundee City Council actively monitors wildlife activity within its burial grounds to prevent disruption to lairs and memorials. There is currently no badger population in Dundee cemeteries; however, regular checks are carried out to identify any signs of burrowing species or other wildlife that could impact site integrity. If evidence of inappropriate disruption is found, Animal Control will be contacted promptly to implement appropriate measures.

5.5 Inspection Schedule

A structured inspection regime ensures that burial grounds remain safe and well maintained: -

- **Routine Visual Checks:** Conducted regularly to assess overall site cleanliness and identify minor maintenance needs.
- **Intermediate Inspections:** Focused reviews of memorials, pathways, fences, and other structures to detect wear, damage, or safety concerns.
- **Comprehensive Site Assessments:** Full evaluations of headstones, memorials, and infrastructure, including long-term maintenance planning and prioritisation of works.

With regard to ensuring the safety of headstones and memorials, potentially unsafe monuments are identified by operational grounds maintenance staff during routine five-year surveys, as well as inspections of adjacent memorials surrounding ongoing interments. All reasonable efforts are made to contact the proprietor of any identified unsafe headstone or memorial. When contact is established, proprietors are informed of their responsibility to ensure the safety of their monument. If contact details are unavailable, the Council places a notice at the location requesting that proprietors make contact within three weeks. Should no response be received, the Council will proceed with necessary works on their behalf.

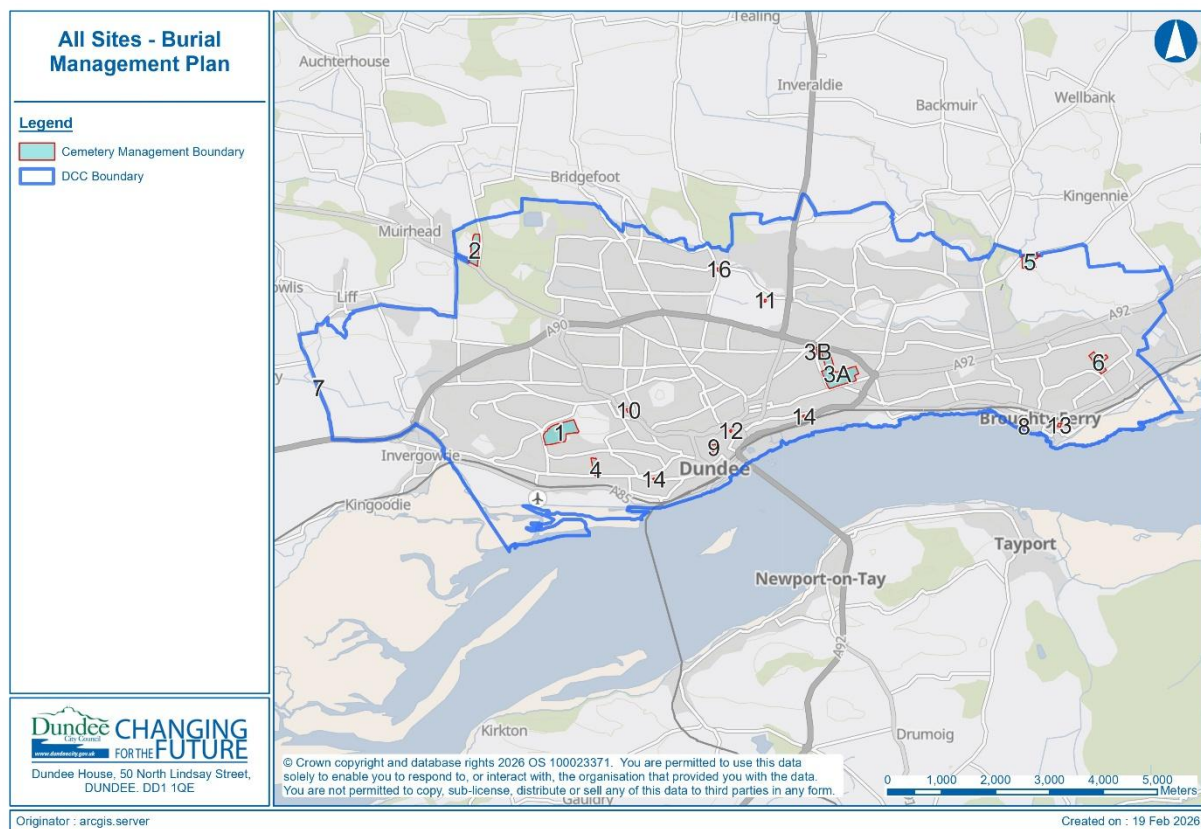
In cases where a headstone or memorial presents an immediate risk, the Council implements interim measures to protect public safety until permanent remediation can occur. For long-term safety, the Council or its contractors may either lay the monument flat or partially bury it to allow for future re-erection by the family. Monuments exceeding 5 feet in height are added to the Council's stabilisation programme and will be repaired accordingly.

6. Contingency Plan for Unexpected Disruption to Operations

To ensure continuity of burial services and safeguard public health during unforeseen events, contingency measures will be implemented in line with Dundee City Council's Corporate Resilience and Emergency Communications procedures. These measures cover scenarios such as severe weather, coastal erosion, site access incidents, staff shortages, ICT failures, resource breakdowns, and public health emergencies. Actions include diversion arrangements to alternative cemeteries, temporary closure and cordoning of unsafe areas, deployment of emergency contractors and backup equipment, and activation of manual booking systems if digital platforms fail. A priority matrix will guide essential tasks, and updated contact lists will support rapid communication with staff, funeral directors, and stakeholders. All responses will be documented for compliance and reviewed regularly to maintain resilience and service continuity.

Location Map of Cemetery Sites

Map of all sites across Dundee



Please click on the links below to see further information regarding individual cemeteries – including location maps, addresses and operational management regimes.

- 1 [Balgay Cemetery](#)
- 2 [Birkhill Cemetery](#)
- 3A [Eastern Cemetery](#)
- 3B [Eastern Cemetery – Muslim Trust](#)
- 4 [Western Cemetery](#)
- 5 [Pitkerro Grove Cemetery](#)
- 6 [Barnhill Cemetery](#)
- 7 [Benvie Graveyard](#)
- 8 [Fisher Street Graveyard](#)
- 9 [The Howff Graveyard](#)
- 10 [Logie Graveyard](#)
- 11 [Old Mains Graveyard](#)
- 12 [St Andrews Graveyard](#)
- 13 [St Aidens Graveyard](#)
- 14 [St Peters Graveyard](#)
- 15 [Roodyards Graveyard](#)
- 16 [Mains Kirkyard](#)