

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

**COMMUNITY SAFETY, ENVIRONMENT AND
RESIDENTS SERVICES POLICY AND
ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE**

1 March 2017



Cemeteries update

Report of the Director for Safer Neighbourhoods

Open Report

Classification: For Policy and Accountability Review and Comment

Key Decision: No

Wards Affected: Fulham Reach and Munster

Accountable Director: David Page

Report Author:
Ian Ross
Parks Manager

Contact Details:
Tel: 020 7938 8194
E-mail: Ian.Ross@rbkc.gov.uk

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is to give the committee an update on the cemeteries within the management of Hammersmith & Fulham Council along with giving some background to the service and the work undertaken.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report
- 2.2 Provide comments on the proposed new Cemetery Rules and Regulations
- 2.3 Acknowledge the hard work and support given to the council by the Friends of Margravine Cemetery in the management and upkeep of Margravine Cemetery

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Hammersmith & Fulham Council has four cemeteries under its management, two within the borough, these being Fulham (Fulham Old) and Margravine (Hammersmith Old) and two in the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames, these being Mortlake (Hammersmith New) and North Sheen (Fulham New).
- 3.2 It is not uncommon for London boroughs to own and operate cemeteries outside of borough boundaries due to the limited burial space available within central London.
- 3.3 The core business of the service is to manage the operation and administration of the borough's cemeteries and ensure compliance with cemeteries and burial related legislation, primarily the Local Authority Cemeteries Order (LACO) 1977.
- 3.4 The service manages the statutory requirement to maintain legal records of all interments (the burial of ashes or coffins), discharges the council's legal duties in relation to the transfer of ownership of plots, authorises the placing of memorials in accordance with the appropriate guidance and local rules and also provides discretionary services to the public such as a search facility for people carrying out genealogy research.
- 3.5 It also provides advice in relation to burials, memorials and ownership of graves and acts as the face of the council for all users of the cemetery and bereavement service.
- 3.6 The expenditure budget for cemeteries in the current financial year is £837,000 and the income budget for cemeteries in the current financial year is £833,000.

- 3.7 Management of the service was contracted out to Idverde (formerly Quadron Services) in 2012 as part of the council's grounds maintenance contract. Prior to that the service was managed in-house.
- 3.8 Additionally, Idverde are also responsible for the maintenance of the cemeteries (primarily grass cutting) and preparing graves ready for the interment of ashes and coffins.
- 3.9 All cemeteries under the management of the council are multi-faith.

4. AVAILABLE SPACE

- 4.1 Available grave space is reducing year on year. Legislation does allow for the reuse of graves albeit 75 years after the last burial and the expiry of the exclusive right of burial.
- 4.2 Graves sold pre-1967 were done so with a 100 year exclusive right of burial and since 1967 have been sold with a 75 year exclusive right of burial. A number of authorities have taken the decision to reduce the exclusive right of burial to over half what is offered by the council often making this conscious decision with the re-use of grave spaces in mind
- 4.3 Taking account of above means in reality it could mean some plots are not available for use for over 150 years. At whatever point grave spaces do become available for re-use it is likely there will be significant cost in readying them for use and as historic graves were not used sequentially or in order then the period quoted above is likely to be even longer if whole sections were to be considered for re-use.
- 4.4 Grave space has always been available to non-borough residents albeit they have been charged a premium and pre-2008/09, as outlined above, could not purchase plots in reserve. Over the last couple of years, the premium has typically been twice the price charged to borough residents.
- 4.5 Prior to 2004 only borough residents were allowed to purchase and reserve plots (at this time only North Sheen and Mortlake were active cemeteries) and this was restricted to one per household.
- 4.6 In 2004 purchasing in reserve was stopped but subsequently re-introduced in 2008 with the restriction on the number of plots that could be purchased per household being lifted. Additionally, in 2008 the ability to purchase and reserve was offered to non-borough residents.
- 4.7 In 2011/12 the service introduced the opportunity to purchase graves in the two in-borough cemeteries (Fulham and Margravine). These were at a premium price of £10,000 (these have risen since then) given their prestige and limited supply and only available to borough residents. From 1 April 2015 these plots were made available to non-borough residents with a 50% premium charged on top of the price offer to borough residents.

- 4.8 Table 1 (Appendix 1) shows the number of total grave spaces that are available across the four cemeteries, including the average number of graves sold on an annual basis, and ultimately the estimated number of years until stock fully depletes (based on current sales)
- 4.9 Table 1 (Appendix 1) indicates the borough's cemeteries at North Sheen and Mortlake have enough new grave space to last in excess of 10 years but as demonstrated in table the table in paragraph 5.4 the trends for burials does fluctuate greatly from year to year. It would prudent within the next 5 years for the council to start planning longer term for what it will do as space reduces.

5. INCOME/NUMBERS OF BURIALS

- 5.1 The number of burials carried out annually, and consequently the income collected by the council, can vary greatly as there are external factors that affect this.
- 5.2 The service has four main income streams: (1) grave space fees (the purchase of grave space – both at need and in reserve); (2) interments (the burial of a body in a grave); (3) memorials and inscription fees; and (4) grave upkeep charges.
- 5.3 Table 2 (Appendix1) shows the historic income achieved across all council cemeteries between 2010/11 and the current financial year. Fees and charges have been uplifted each year so will account for some increases in the income outlined in the table.
- 5.4 Table 3 (Appendix 1) looks at historic sales performance in terms of number of sales. As with income this table shows that numbers can fluctuate significantly between years.

6. MEMORIALS

- 6.1 The council has a duty of care as the landowner to ensure that memorials within the cemetery are safe. Where this is not the case the council has the power to effect repair or lay down a memorial and seek to recover the cost from the grave owner.
- 6.2 At present the council tests all memorials for stability every 3 years. The next sets of tests are due to take place in 2017/18 (next financial year).
- 6.3 When last tested in 2014/15 a number of memorials did fail the stability test and those identified as being high risk were either banded or laid down.
- 6.4 As the memorials most likely to fail the stability test are older ones where the owner is likely deceased the decision of what action to take will rest with the council
- 6.5 Officers will report the results of the stability tests planned for next financial year along recommendations to the Cabinet Member covering cemeteries on

completion. Depending on the results this could greatly change the landscape of the cemeteries and also leave the council incurring significant costs.

7. CEMETERY RULES AND REGULATIONS

- 7.1 The existing Cemetery Rules and Regulations were last amended/updated in May 1970.
- 7.2 Following a request from the Friends of Margravine Cemetery to update the rules and regulations for memorials within Margravine Cemetery to ensure new ones and those being repaired continue to be in keeping with the historic nature of the cemetery officers have taken the opportunity to update and amend the Cemetery Rules and Regulations as a whole.
- 7.3 A copy of the updated and amended Cemetery Rules and Regulations are in Appendix 2. These remain work in progress but comments from the committee would be welcome.

8. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 8.1 While the borough have a number of active Friends Groups in parks we only have one that covers a cemetery, the Friends of Margravine Cemetery (FoMC).
- 8.2 The FoMC formed in 2006 and their mission is '*to promote for the public benefit, the conservation of the flora, fauna, monuments, buildings and burial records of the Margravine Hammersmith Cemetery London and the introduction of improvements to the cemetery and its management so long as they are compatible with the conservation of nature*'.
- 8.3 The FoMC have been an extremely successful group and are now a registered charity (Charity no. 1131288) and company limited by guarantee as well as being a member of the National Federation of Cemetery Friends.
- 8.4 The FoMC have been instrumental in supporting the council's application for Green Flag Award since 2009. Additionally, the FoMC now the Your Neighbourhood category of London in Bloom and were one of only two borough sites to be graded as 'Outstanding' for the last two years.
- 8.5 A shared aspiration by the FoMC and officers over the next year is to identify and apply for external funding with a view to preserving the historic features of Margravine Cemetery.
- 8.6 The FoMC have undertaken surveys of the daily footfall in the cemetery. When last undertaken in September 2016 5,685 people were counted entering or leaving through the north gates (by Barons Court underground station), up from 3,961 in September 2009, an increase of 40%
- 8.6 A summary of FoMC achievements can be found in Appendix 3.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Expenditure on Cemeteries in the borough consists of general maintenance costs, NNDR, salaries and the costs associated with burials (grave digging and interments). Income for Cemeteries is outlined in paragraph 5.2.
- 9.2 Available grave space in the borough is falling each year, and with Exclusive Rights of Burial Rules applying reuse of existing graves will not be an option for the foreseeable future. The creation of additional grave space within or outside the borough needs to be considered, as the expenditure on cemeteries is funded almost entirely by income from the sales of graves and interments.
- 9.3 There is a risk that income will fall in the future if further grave spaces are not made available, and a growth bid may be required to reduce the income budget and to cover unavoidable expenditure such as grounds maintenance which will be incurred irrespective of sales.
- 9.4 Implications verified/completed by: *Lucy Varenne, Finance Manager, tel: 020 7341 5777.*

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT

No.	Description of Background Papers	Name/Ext of holder of file/copy	Department/ Location
1	Cemeteries – Variation to Grounds Maintenance Contract	Ullash Karia	Safer Neighbourhoods

APPENDIX 1

Table 1:

	Total grave spaces available	Reserved graves	Available graves	Number of graves used for new burials in 2015/16	Estimated years until stock depleted
Mortlake	901	176	725	62	12
North Sheen	716	148	568	46	12
Margravine	170	1	169	0	169
Fulham	100	0	100	0	100

Table 2:

Year	(1) Grave space fees	(2) Interments	(3) Memorials and Inscription fees *	(4) Grave upkeep charge	Total Cemetery Income	Income Target	Income vs Target
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
2010/11	209	352	32	0	593	N/A	N/A
2011/12	298	372	42	0	712	N/A	N/A
2012/13	272	334	39	0	645	774	-129
2013/14	374	334	38	6	752	794	-42
2014/15	327	346	34	6	713	833	-120
2015/16	344	412	48	6	810	833	-23
2016/17 **	311	347	37	5	701	833	TBC

* Includes interment of cremated remains, change of grave ownership, and chapel income

** Year to date

Table 3:

Year	Standard graves	Premium graves sold	Interments *	Total Number of Sales	Annual movement
2010/11	122	0	258	380	N/A
2011/12	134	0	244	378	-1%
2012/13	120	1	297	418	11%
2013/14	113	5	281	399	-5%
2014/15	114	2	197	313	-22%
2015/16	124	1	233	358	14%
2016/17 **	144	2	163	309	TBC

* Includes interment of cremated remains, change of grave ownership, and chapel income

** Year to date

APPENDIX 2

Draft Cemetery Rules and Regulations

**HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM COUNCIL
CEMETERY REGULATIONS**
Draft for comment

LOCATION OF OUR CEMETERIES:

Hammersmith & Fulham Council is responsible for four cemeteries, two of which are within the borough boundary and two of which are in the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames. The full addresses of our cemeteries are:

Margravine Cemetery (also known as Hammersmith Old Cemetery), Margravine Road, London W6 8HA. For a map please [click here](#).

Fulham Cemetery (also known as Fulham Old Cemetery), Fulham Palace Road, London SW6. For a map please [click here](#).

Mortlake Cemetery (also known as Hammersmith New Cemetery), Clifford Avenue, Richmond, SW14 7BU. For a map please [click here](#).

North Sheen Cemetery (also known as Fulham New Cemetery), Lower Richmond Road, Surrey TW9 4LL. For a map please [click here](#).

CONTACTING US:

The Cemetery Office is based within North Sheen Cemetery (in the centre next to the chapel) and is open Monday-Friday 9am-4pm on these days with the exception of public holidays. Due to the nature of our business it may not be possible for the office to be staffed at all times.

The address of the office is:

Cemetery Office
Hammersmith & Fulham Council
North Sheen Cemetery
Lower Richmond Road
Richmond TW9 4LL

Our telephone number is: 020 8878 1934 (if no one answers your call please leave a message).

Our email address is: cemeteries@lbhf.gov.uk

GETTING HERE:

All our cemeteries can be reached by public transport. We suggest you visit the Transport for London website to ensure you get the most up to date and accurate public transport travel information. Their journey planner web page can be reached here: <https://tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey>.

OPENING HOURS:

The official public opening hours of all our cemeteries is as follows:

January	9am-4pm
---------	---------

February	9am-5pm
March	9am-6pm
April	9am-7pm
May to July	9am-8pm
August	9am-7pm
September	9am-6pm
October	9am-5pm
November and December	9am-4pm

The council reserves the right to alter these times without notice or close/limit access to the cemetery at any time however where possible such changes will be notified in advance.

FUNERAL BOOKINGS (GENERAL):

1. Following an initial booking by telephone the Cemetery Office must receive written confirmation of details of the proposed burial using the Notice of Interment form (either scanned or faxed) in good time (3 working days) to get the grave prepared. A hard copy must be with the Cemetery Office along with the specified coffin/casket/urn sizes and payment (please note: we do not accept cash) at least one working day before the funeral can take place. Exceptions may be made where religious/cultural practices require prompt interment.
2. The consent in writing of the owner (in the case of multiple ownership all owners) of the Exclusive Right of Burial must be given in advance to the Cemetery Office (except where the owner is being buried).
3. Interments are available throughout the year (subject to availability) with the exception of weekends and public holidays. The first interment of the day will not take place earlier than 9.30am and the last interment of the day will not take place later than 3pm.

In all cases it is important that times are strictly adhered too to ensure there are no clashes.

4. The Registrars Certificate, or the Coroners Order, for the disposal of the body to be buried must be given to a council officer or representative overseeing the interment in advance. For the interment of, or scattering of, cremated remains a certificate must be produced from the Cremation Authority. **Failure to do so may cause delay or stop the interment taking place.**
5. Funeral Directors are required to give notice to the Cemetery Office in advance whenever a funeral is likely to be attended or followed by an unusually large number of persons, or a family back-fill is requested. It is the Funeral Director's responsibility to ensure that attendees comply with the instruction of a council

officer or representative and allow them to discharge their duties in accordance with the law and cemetery regulations.

6. Bodies of persons dying of infectious diseases must be taken straight to grave.
7. No body shall be buried in any Vault or Walled Grave unless in a hermetically sealed coffin or separately entombed in an airtight manner, that is by properly cemented stone and/or brickwork, which shall never be disturbed. The building of a Vault or Walled Grave shall be subject to the permission of Cemeteries Manager at the time of building.
8. Only council staff or their appointed representative will be permitted to excavate or reopen a grave or vault.
9. It is the responsibility of the person(s) arranging the funeral, that where needed the memorial is removed at least 48 hours before the interment. The memorial removed must be placed in a location agreed by the Cemetery Office. In the case of full memorials must be returned to the grave 12-14 months after burial (subject to ground conditions). The person(s) arranging the funeral will also be responsible for returning the memorial. This must be carried out by a NAMM/BRAMM (or any future recognised industry body) approved stonemason.

MEMORIALS (GENERAL):

10. The council's approval must be obtained in all circumstances before any memorials or article is erected or placed on or over a grave space. A drawing showing the form, dimensions and materials together with a copy of every inscription using the correct form must be submitted to the Cemetery Office. In the case of private graves, the correct form must be signed by the registered grave owner(s). NB. We strongly advise against purchasing a stone before permission has been granted.
11. A permit to install/work will only be issued on the receipt and clearance of the appropriate fees.
12. All works/fixings must be undertaken by a NAMM/BRAMM (or any future recognised industry body) approved stonemason and be in accordance with the relevant legislation and British Standards.
13. The council will not be responsible for the safe keeping of, or for accident or damage to any memorial or receptacles or other articles, and it is incumbent upon the grave owner to keep the same in good repair.

CREMATION PLOTS:

14. In the sections of the council's cemeteries laid out for the interment of cremated remains the following Regulations shall apply in addition to those applicable to the cemeteries as a whole, except where any inconsistency arises at which point those specific to Cremation Plots shall prevail:

- The space allocated for each cremation plot for the interment of cremated remains shall be 1ft 6ins by 1ft 6ins
- A memorial in the form of a tablet 10ins by 7ins may be placed centrally on each cremation plot, the edge of such tablet being parallel to the boundaries of the plot space
- Such tablet shall be supplied by an accredited memorial mason on behalf of the purchaser(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial in each cremation plot and shall be fixed so that the top of the tablet is at ground level.
- Mounds will not be permitted over any cremation plot. The space between the memorial tablet shall be turfed and maintained by the council
- Purchasers of cremation plots shall not carry out or have carried out any turfing of or work to the plot as such work will be carried out by the council to their own requirements
- Nothing shall be planted or placed on any cremation plot
- A copy of the proposed inscription to be placed on the memorial tablet shall accompany every application and will be subject to approval. The correct form must be completed
- Trade name(s) shall not be cut on the top face of the tablet

MEMORIALS (MARGRAVINE AND FULHAM CEMETERIES):

15. Taking into account the historic nature of the above cemeteries it has been deemed that memorials (including the restoration of existing) must be in keeping with existing memorials and the cemeteries as a whole.

16. The following is meant as a guide:

- Memorials must not exceed 5ft in height above the landing or ground level. Exceptions may be made where a traditional design such as an obelisk is proposed.
- The style should be 'traditional'

- The material should be natural stone preferably sourced from within the UK
- Colours should be muted and in keeping with adjacent memorials
- High polishing and sand blasting will not be permitted
- Lettering must be 'traditional' and a muted colour. Lead lettering will be permitted
- Landings will not exceed 6ft 6ins by 2ft 6ins and be either York Stone or reinforced concrete. The minimum depth of the landing should be 4ins and completely hidden.
- Chippings must be natural stone and of a muted colour and fixed
- The council reserve the right to notify and consult with established and recognised groups linked to these cemeteries but the final decision will lie with the council
- Temporary markers on graves can be a simple cross or name plate

17. The following will not be permitted on graves:

- Lanterns, candles, windmills, placards, toys or other items related to the deceased
- Electronic devices powered by battery or solar power
- No plastic flowers or plastic wreathes

TRADITIONAL MEMORIALS (MORTLAKE AND NORTH SHEEN CEMETERIES):

18. The following is meant as a guide:

- Memorials must not exceed 5ft in height above the landing or ground level
- Landings will not exceed the grave space and be either York Stone or reinforced concrete. The minimum depth of the landing should be 4ins for graves 6ft 6ins by 2ft 6ins and 6ins for all larger graves
- Tiles will not be permitted

LAWN MEMORIALS (HEADSTONE ONLY):

19. These regulations are applicable to private graves within Mortlake and North Sheen Cemeteries on sections/plots designated as 'Lawn' sections.

20. The following is meant as a guide:

- Headstones must not exceed 3ft 6ins in height above ground level, 3ft in width and 6ins in thickness.
- The headstone must be erected at the head of the grave in line with existing headstones
- The memorial must be fixed in accordance with the relevant legislation and British Standards (this should be stated on the correct form)
- Vases or flower containers must not exceed 10ins in diameter or 9ins in height and must be placed at the head of the grave. If a headstone already exists any such or flower container must be erected on the bases of the existing memorials and not placed on the burial area
- Footstones, kerbs, landings or any memorial or monument other than those specified above will not be permitted

21. On 'Lawn' sections at Mortlake and North Sheen Cemeteries the council will provide a concrete foundation 9ins (or shallower) below the ground level through the length of each row of graves. All headstones must be fixed securely to such foundations and stonemasons must provide all necessary materials for the execution of this work at the time of erection.

22. It will not usually be necessary to remove a 'Lawn' section headstone for future interments and provided they are installed correctly therefore particular attention must be paid to their sound and correct erection.

MEMORIALS (NON-PRIVATE GRAVES):

23. The council will be responsible for the purchase and erection of memorials on non-private graves. The inscription will be of a standard and simple nature e.g. name of deceased and date of birth/death.

TURFING OF 'LAWN' SECTIONS:

24. Grave owners will not be permitted to carry out any turfing or planting of their graves as all such work will be undertaken by the council at its sole discretion to its own requirements.

MEMORIAL TESTING:

25. The council reserve the right to carry out Health and Safety testing of any memorial or headstone within the cemetery by a qualified individual/company and

where the grave owner is still alive seek to recover reasonable costs for making safe. Where there is no living grave owner the council reserve the right to simply lay down the memorial or headstone, or in extenuating circumstances remove the memorial.

STONEMASONS:

26. All stonemasons entering the cemeteries to execute works must be NAMM/BRAMM (or any future recognised industry body) approved. Before any works take place a permit to work must be obtained from the council and presented to the Cemetery Office on the day of intended work.
27. All memorials must be prepared ready for fixing before being brought into the cemetery and stonemasons must provide their own plant and tools to execute any work(s).
28. Works of every description must be carried out continuously and completed without delay (unavoidable causes excepted).
29. Works may only take place during the opening hours of the Cemetery Office. Under no circumstances should works take place or materials be delivered on a weekend or public holiday.
30. No cleaning of stones by mechanical means will be permitted.
31. The stonemason will be responsible for the removal of all rubbish, refuse, stones, etc. associated with their work and must dispose of them in a legal way not within the cemetery.
32. Canvassing or soliciting for works or orders is strictly prohibited.
33. Where reasonably requested by a council officer or representative, stonemasons shall cease work to allow an interment to take place.
34. All stonemasons will have appropriate public liability insurance and present themselves in a manner befitting a cemetery.

GENERAL OBLIGATIONS FOR ALL:

35. The council reserves the right to require the owner of a grave upon written notice sent to their last known address, to remove or replace forthwith any memorial which it in their opinion has become unsafe or dilapidated, and the event of such

notice not being complied with, within 3 months (or sooner if deemed appropriate) of receiving this notification the council shall not be liable to any person in respect of any such memorial, headstone receptacle or other articles removed by them under this clause.

36. Mounds over graves are not permitted in the cemeteries.

37. Plans of the cemeteries and also the Register of Burials, are kept at the Cemetery Office are open to inspection by prior appointment.

38. The owner of any private graves may place shrubs or plants thereon within the limits assigned, and shall keep the same in proper and tidy condition. The Council reserve the right to prune or remove any planting as part of cemetery grounds maintenance standards.

39. Children will not be permitted into the cemeteries unless accompanied by an adult. Dogs must be on a lead at all times. No vehicle or cycle will be permitted into the cemetery unless in attendance at a funeral or used in connection with cemetery business. A council officer or representative may refuse admission of any private vehicle. Speed limit of 5 mph must be observed by all vehicles.

40. Dead flowers, waste paper and other refuse and litter must be deposited in the receptacles provided for the purpose in the cemeteries.

41. Photographs of graves may only be taken with the consent of the owner of the grave, and of the Cemetery Manager.

42. No person shall engage in any selling or buying of goods and services within the cemetery. Everyone within the cemetery shall conduct themselves in a quiet and orderly manner

43. Gratuities to any employees of the Councils are strictly forbidden.

44. Penalties for Offences:

- a. (Every person who shall wilfully destroy or injure any building, wall or fence belonging to the Cemeteries, or destroy or injure any tree, or plant therein , or who shall daub or disfigure any wall thereof , or put up any bill therein or on any wall thereof, or wilfully destroy, injure, or deface any monument, tablet, inscription or gravestone, within the Cemeteries or do any other wilful damage therein, shall forfeit for every such offence a sum not exceeding five pounds (Cemeteries Clauses Act, 1847, section 59).

- b. Every person who shall play at any game or sport, or discharge firearms, save at military funeral, in the Cemeteries, or who shall wilfully and unlawfully disturb any persons assembled in the cemeteries for the purpose of burying anybody therein, or who shall commit any nuisance within the cemeteries, shall forfeit for every such offence a sum not exceeding five pounds (Cemeteries Clause Act, 1847, section 59).

45. The Council reserves to itself the right to make any alterations or additions to the foregoing Regulations from time to time, as may be found necessary or desirable.

The above regulations are as approved and adopted by the Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham on the 12th day of May, 1965, to take effect on and from 13th May, 1965, and amended on the 5th day of January, 1966 and 1st May, 1970.

APPENDIX 3

Some of the achievements of the Friends of Margravine Cemetery

- Carrying out annual tree planting and over the years we planted hedging and clumps of native species to ensure succession – and annual pruning - and regular watering in summer of new planting – often a daily task in periods of hot weather. Initially funded by a National Lottery grant
- We were the first group to persuade the Borough to pioneer areas of wild flowers and long grass – now much enjoyed by the public
- Organising public information about Margravine cemetery park through our website and twitter account, and in the cemetery – the noticeboard, leaflets, and interpretation board
- We have encouraged the borough to dramatically reduce pesticide use but suggesting alternatives – for instance we regularly handpicked the box tree caterpillars through summer 2016
- Professional surveys have been commissioned and paid for – general invertebrates, moths, bats and lichen and include the first survey ever for moths, bats and lichen. There is a regular monthly count for birds. (The council has surveyed the flora). These surveys inform future planning.
- We keep a photographic record of all the unusual species that inhabit the cemetery
- Our initiative and biodiversity data secured Margravine Cemetery's status to be raised from local to one of borough-wide importance (Grade II)
- We have a groups who carry out gardening – planning, planting, weeding, watering - especially the central round bed – and general tidy ups – including digging up the Ailanthus suckers when we first had long grass! We work closely with the much-valued on-site gardeners
- Participating in tree care – planning annually with parks officer as we have many aging trees
- We have asked for/provided/fully supported bird boxes and log piles for nesting birds and insects
- We initiated and followed up research into the cemetery's history, initially with the borough archivist 2006
- A joint project with the U3A (University of the Third Age) logged the memorials' inscriptions and traced the life story of some buried there

- Gathered the evidence and requested the (successful) Grade II listing of the Reception House (and we also cleared its gutter to encourage first aid repairs). See the DCMS website news item 28 Oct 2016
- Jointly funded professional condition surveys of the Reception House and the Young mausoleum (already Grade II listed) with the borough
- Working with the borough - planning a HLF joint bid to restore these Listed Buildings at Risk
- We undertook a survey of the boundary wall and gates, as well as the structures in the cemetery to assess condition and to encourage timely, small repairs
- When the Broad memorial (Grade II listed), the bronze memorial to the man who cast Eros, was pushed over, we organised its rescue. A friendly funeral director provided a crane and masons to do the work
- We hold meetings with the council and the contractors on a regular basis and liaise with the parks police
- We worked with the council to ensure the sale of the Lodges incorporated good planning advice
- Holding regular walks, talks, meetings, and distribute a bi-annual newsletter for members
- We have entered the cemetery/park for London in Bloom each year – one of the only 2 to get ‘Outstanding’ in the borough the last 2 years for the ‘It’s your neighbourhood’ category. A Silver gilt for ‘Your community’ – a new award. We also meet with the judges of the Green Flag award
- Working with Urbans Studies to involve younger people. We also prepared 2 trails
- A close relationship with William Morris Sixth form and also the local neighbourhood group
- We have undertaken two surveys of the daily footfall. We counted 5685 people entering or leaving through the north gates September 2016, up from 3961 in September 2009, an increase of 40%
- 130+ paid-up members. A vibrant group who - as well as the above - are the cemetery’s eyes and ears – watching over it on a daily basis and reporting anything that needs reporting