



**Cemetery
Development
Services**

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Greenlawn Memorial Park

Needs Statement



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Introduction

Burial space in the UK is becoming scarce at an ever increasing rate. The Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) has estimated that within the next 5 to 10 years 30% of UK local authorities will have run out of burial space.

In a recent BBC survey out of 358 local authorities surveyed a quarter said they would have no room in 10 years. On a league table of years left, Tandridge Council were at the top with 0 years left Croydon were fifth 1.5 years left

The table below shows the bottom 50 authorities for future burial provision

AUTHORITY	REGION	Least number of years left
Tandridge District Council	South and South East	0
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council	North West	1
London Borough of Havering	London	1
Cannock Chase District Council	Midlands	1.5
London Borough of Croydon	London	1.5
Kirklees Council	North	2
Borough of Poole Council	South West	2
Gosport Borough Council	South and South East	3
Mole Valley District Council	South and South East	3
Crawley Borough Council	South and South East	3
South Holland District Council	East	4
St Edmundsbury Borough Council	East Anglia	4
Redcar and Cleveland Council	North East	5
Sheffield City Council	North	5
Rushcliffe Borough Council	East	5
Dacorum Council	East Anglia	5
Three Rivers District Council	East Anglia	5
Eastbourne Borough Council	South and South East	5
Christchurch Borough Council	South West	5
Ashford Borough Council	South and South East	6
London Borough of Barnet	London	6
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council	Midlands	7
North Devon Council	South West	7
Cotswold District Council	South West	7
Tewkesbury District council	South West	7
Ashfield District Council	East	8
London Borough of Islington	London	8
Peterborough City Council	East Anglia	9
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council	East Anglia	9
Wokingham Borough Council	South and South East	9
Burnley Borough Council	North West	10
Preston City Council	North West	10
Derby City Council	East	10
Corby Borough Council	East	10

Hertsmere Borough Council	East Anglia	10
Isles of Scilly	South West	10
Stroud District Council	South West	10
City of London	London	10
Boston Borough Council	East	12
Reigate and Banstead Borough Council	South and South East	12
Oxford City Council	South and South East	13
Warrington Borough Council	North West	15
Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council	North	15
Melton Borough Council	East	15
Northamptonshire County Council	East	15
Northampton Borough Council	East	15
Chelmsford City Council	East Anglia	15
Wolverhampton City Council	Midlands	15
Bracknell Forest Council	South and South East	15
Reading Borough Council	South and South East	15
Maidstone Borough Council	South and South East	15
Guildford Borough Council	South and South East	15
Bournemouth Borough Council	South West	15
London Borough of Bromley	London	15

Table extract from BBC survey

In Croydon burial provision will be exhausted at Greenlawn Memorial Park in Warlingham by 2014 and both Queens Road and Mitcham Road cemeteries are now full and can offer only reclaimed graves.

London Borough of Croydon commissioned an extensive and quantitative need assessment in 2010 which identified there to be a demand for 5,824 full body burials and 3,411 burials of cremated remains in Croydon Borough during the period 2009-31. Scenario testing demonstrated a hypothetical potential for a 20% increase in burial and 2.5% increase in interment of cremated remains in the same period. Within this provision, demand for 1,186 burial plots for the growing Muslim population has also been identified.

This baseline demand will outstrip supply within two years, resulting in a very significant residual need over the period 2011-2031. A need for up to 9,933 full body burials (FBB) and interment of cremated remains (ICR) has been identified to 2031, excluding any pandemic requirements, i.e. broadly 10,000 burials (6,500 FBB / 3,500 ICR) or 500 per year over the next 20 years.

It is also understood that burial space within Tandridge is also reaching capacity with the council-owned Caterham Cemetery currently full for new graves.

Much of the Tandridge enclave and its surrounding areas fall within sensitive aquifer sites, indeed all of Caterham falls within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone 2 which means that finding a site suitable for a new cemetery which meets Environment Agency guidelines will be very challenging.

Due to the increasing aging population and the increasing age of ethnic groups preferring burial, future burial demand is set to escalate both nationally and locally with a marked increase likely to occur around 2020.

Over the past 10 years Croydon Council has undertaken exhaustive searches for new burial space. (Report by Nathaniel Lichfield and site research by CDSL). Over 126 potential sites were reviewed sieved and filtered.

Search criteria included size, access, current usage, location LDP status, and most importantly environmental constraints.

Following the initial sieving exercise, numbers were reduced to 31, this was reduced by further filtering to 6 sites identified for detailed assessment.

From further groundwater and site surveys the option to extend Greenlawn was selected for its suitability as a cemetery as it was considered to have the least environmental, social and financial impact..

Being an extension to an existing burial ground it was also considered to be the most suitable as it would not require extensive infrastructure such as road access and egress and, being screened from residential properties, would have the least potential visual impact for local residents. In the meantime, Croydon has also taken measures to extend the life of its existing cemeteries including introducing the option to re-claim graves, however this has social (resistance to some of the bereaved to buying “second hand” graves) as well as sustainability issues.

Burial Provision in Croydon and Tandridge

In Croydon approximately 2,300 funerals take place each year. Of these around 1,900 (82%) choose cremation and the remaining 400 (18%) burial. Of the current 97 burials per year at Greenlawn, 52 are into new graves and the remainder are re-openings. (See table 1 below):

Table 1

Cemetery	Burials	%
Bandon Hill	117	29.3
Mitcham Road	177	44.4
Queens Road	7	2.0
Greenlawn	97	24.3
TOTAL	398	100

With the end of new burials

plots at Queens Road and Mitcham Road and the shortage of burial space provision in Tandridge, it is anticipated that this figure is likely to increase to around 130 per annum or 2.6 burials per week on average.

A high percentage of those choosing burial are people who hold evangelical, Roman Catholic and Muslim religious beliefs, who favour burial rather than cremation. The majority of Greenlawn burials are from Sanderstead, Coulsdon and other parts of the south side of Croydon, with about 17 to 20 per year from Tandridge (mostly Warlingham).

Population Growth and Demographic

Croydon's population has grown by nearly 8.5% between 2001 (335,100) and 2011 (363,400) and is expected to continue to grow.

Croydon has one of the largest percentages of Black British and Asian British in the UK and Greater London area. (see Table2 below). The preference within these communities is for burial with 85% choosing this over cremation as a result of cultural preference and religious requirement.

Table 2 (Source Croydon Observatory) numbers in thousands

	All Groups	White	Black or Black British	Asian or Asian British	Mixed	Other
Croydon	343	232	47	40	15	9
London	7,754	5,406	785	1,021	274	268
England	51,810	45,313	1,521	3,167	957	852
Croydon	%	67.6%	13.7%	11.8%	4.3%	2.7%
London	%	69.7%	10.1%	13.2%	3.5%	3.5%
England	%	87.5%	2.9%	6.1%	1.8%	1.6%

With the combination of increased national population growth, the impending increase in death rate at the end of the "baby boomer" period and the higher weighting of communities within the borough favouring burial for cultural and

religious need, the pressure on Croydon to provide comprehensive burial options is great.

Natural Burial Provision

In contrast to cremation, burial now offers many environmental benefits and sustainability aspects. The introduction of “woodland burial” (now natural burial) in 1993 highlights this option as the most environmentally friendly disposal option for human bodies (and is proposed at Greenlawn). Over 250 natural burial sites have opened since that date with at least 70% of these being private, reflecting demand from the bereaved.

The Natural Death Centre has called for all burial authorities to offer a natural burial option in order that people can be given an environmentally sound funeral option. No environmental burial option exists within Croydon and the closest (private) site is near Guildford.

The site proposed at Greenlawn lends itself to natural burial both in terms of the social demographics and as a sustainable option that will enhance the bio-diversity of the site.

Summary

Without the extension to Greenlawn cemetery bereaved people and the ethnic community will entirely lose the choice of a new grave, and a cemetery located south of Croydon. The only option, if Croydon is to continue to offer new burial space to the bereaved, is to either extend Greenlawn or open a new cemetery site in the borough. The latter option has been thoroughly explored as discussed in the introduction and no suitable site has been identified.

It is known that the bereaved prefer to be interred in the vicinity of their home. If no cemetery option is provided for residents south of Croydon centre, they will have only the option of a reclaimed grave at Queens Road and Mitcham Road cemeteries. These are both Victorian cemeteries situated in densely urbanised areas, which are relatively alien to their home areas, and are already under unsustainable usage pressure.

Since the early 1990's a small but increasing number of people have been opposed to cremation due to its high use of finite fuels and polluting emissions to air. The significance of these “sustainability” issues is expected to increase. Although it is early there is a recognizable trend that the increase in cremation from the 1950's to 1990's has ceased and a period of decline may now ensue with the balance tipping back towards of burial.

The recent small upsurge in burial has occurred through people attracted to ‘green’ or natural burial, which also benefits wildlife. It is proposed to make this type of burial available in the new extension at Greenlawn. A maximum of 50 natural burials per year by 2015 is anticipated. This figure may increase if it is possible to promote more grave purchasers each year to adopt natural burial rather than conventional graves.

The greatest determinant for need is reflected by the BBC survey illustrating both Croydon and Tandridge being at the bottom of the league table for available burial space.