

**DRAFT Communications and Consultation plan – Long Term Options for Southwark’s Cemeteries**

**Introduction:**

Southwark’s cemeteries are nearly full. We have an urgent situation on our hands, and we are no different to many local authorities up and down the country. We want to make the right decision for the future of the burial service in Southwark.

So Southwark Council will be undertaking a borough wide public consultation in April to gather views from residents about the future of the boroughs' cemetery service. The consultation will provide an opportunity to have a conversation with residents about the lack of burial space in the borough and consider the options for addressing it.

We are keen to hear ideas for the service and shall be using various methods to engage Southwark and Lewisham residents in the consultation and let them know about the ways to get involved.

**Objectives of the consultation:**

- Using a range of methods to gather a broad range of views about the future of burial services in the borough
- To see if there are any good ideas that we have not yet considered
- To enable residents’ views to shape the decision about the future of the burial service in Southwark

<b>Timescales</b>
Options for consultation agreed 19 <sup>th</sup> April 2011
Consultation begins end 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2011
Consultation ends 31 <sup>th</sup> July 2011
<b>Messages</b>
Southwark Council wants to hear your views about the cemeteries and crematorium service in the borough
The council is close to running out of burial space and the cabinet have agreed a plan to create short term burial space in Southwark
There are a number of options that might secure the long term future of the cemeteries that we want to seek people’s views on
Nothing has been decided about the long term future of burials in the borough and won’t be until a full consultation exercise has been completed

<b>Stakeholder Groups to be consulted</b>
Friends of Honor Oak Park
Lewisham Councillors
Southwark Councillors
Lewisham Residents within 0.5 km of the cemeteries
Site users (dog walkers, play area users)
Residents who have already contacted the council about Honor Oak Park locking at night and cemeteries (Full list being developed)
Local Tenants and Resident Associations (Southwark and Lewisham) (Full list being developed)
Southwark Residents – borough wide
Exclusive rights of burial holders
Funeral Directors (Full list being developed)
Social Services commissioning team
Voluntary Sector organisations representing the elderly and other interest groups
Network Rail
Faith leaders/groups (Full list being developed)
One Tree Hill Allotment Society
Friends of One Tree Hill
Friends of Nunhead Cemetery
Friends of Peckham Rye Park
Lewisham Parks team
London Football Association
Institute of Cemeteries and Crematorium Management
Forest Hill Society
Environment Agency
Southwark Planning

<b>Consultation Methods</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
<b>Raising awareness of consultation</b>	
Notice in newspaper	April, May
Information on Southwark Website	From 8 <sup>th</sup> April, to be updated once options and questionnaires are available
Notices around site	Beginning of consultation end April/beginning May
Press releases – raising awareness of consultation	
Southwark Housing News	June
E-Bulletin	May
Social media – Facebook page	May
Through existing networks i.e. Friends groups	Email in May
Southwark Life	8 <sup>th</sup> April for initial awareness raising, next edition for full questionnaire July TBC
Information leaflet with stats and facts about burial	All stakeholders in advance of public consultation
Links to consultation web page on email signatures	Parks & Open Spaces user groups
<b>Sharing information/gathering views</b>	
Targeted meetings	Beginning May
Public meetings	May, July
Community Council	May date to be confirmed
Local Assembly (Lewisham)	If meeting date is available May, June or July
Cllr meetings	Meetings May
Direct Mail survey	May
Web survey	May, June
Usage survey & questionnaire	Cemetery Users

<b>Draft Questions for Surveys/Questionnaires</b>	<b>Reason for Question</b>
Where do you live?	To gain an understanding if answers to questions below differ depending on where residents live
What is your own personal preference burial or cremation?	To get an up to date picture about personal preference from residents

Draft Questions for Surveys/Questionnaires	Reason for Question
What is the reason behind this preference? (Culture, religion, family tradition, other)	To understand what influences choice of burial
What would be important to you when selecting a grave space? (price, locality, environment, family links)	To understand what is important to those who do opt for burial as an option
Do you visit the cemeteries or crematorium in Southwark? (yes or no)	To understand if people have had a recent experience of the current service and whether this impacts on responses
Why do you visit the cemeteries or crematorium? (visit a relative's grave, visit a plaque, for recreation etc)	To understand what links respondents have with the cemeteries and crematorium and how this influences responses
What do you consider to be the standard of the cemeteries or crematorium infrastructure? (poor, average, good, excellent)	To understand how the cemetery environment impacts on users/visitors
What would improve the experience of visitors to the cemeteries or crematorium? (better maintenance, improved appearance, other, nothing)	To understand what we might do better in the future
Do you think that it is important to continue for the borough to supply grave space? (yes or no)	To understand how important it is to provide cemetery space
Do you think that the following is an option that Southwark should consider in order to create burial space? (each option as yes or no, with explanation of option and costs)	If residents think that it is important to continue to offer burial as an option – what options they consider to be most appropriate