

# CEMETERY



## Overview

Approximately 450 burials and 650 cremations are carried out each year at Waikumete with 50% of the ashes interred at the cemetery. Because of the age of the cemetery there are approximately 5,000 – 6,000 genealogy enquiries per year.

Waikumete Cemetery is acknowledged as having a very significant cultural, historical, ecological and landscape heritage, which is protected and managed for the benefit of the wider community.



In addition to managing the burials and cremations, the Waikumete Cemetery is also managed to implement the Waikumete Cemetery Conservation and Reserve Management Plan.

## Governing regulations

- Burial & Cremation Act 1964
- Cemetery & Cremation by law – WCC by law no 18 Cemeteries & Crematoria
- Historic places act 1993
- Local Government Act 2002
- Building Act 2004
- Reserves Act 1977
- Resource Management Act 1991

## Funding of cemetery

The cost of burials and cremations are paid by the family of the deceased within a framework of providing an affordable service for the Waitakere community.

The heritage and parks aspect of the cemeteries are funded from rates and special funds. Rates funding is also provided for the Returned Serviceman's areas which is partly funded by the Department of Internal Affairs.



### **Sustainability objectives**

*In keeping with Waitakere's eco city principles we will employ sustainable methods that safeguard the environment in both cremation and burial services*

### **Environmental objectives**

*To ensure that Waikumete complies with ARC resource consent conditions, including air discharge and water quality*

### **Cultural objectives**

*To ensure that the cemetery provides appropriate areas for a wide range of cultures and that management and staff are aware of, and meet, the various cultural needs*

### **Economic objectives**

*Where appropriate, services are paid for by users. Public good component expenditure is maintained to realistic levels*

### **Social objectives**

*To acknowledge the heritage aspect of the cemetery and the preservation of its buildings; to promote and provide burial and cremation services and to provide a recreational area to be enjoyed by all*

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## How we contribute to community outcomes

| Community Outcome        | Our contribution  |
|--------------------------|---|
| Vibrant Art and Culture  | Chapel of Faith in the Oaks<br>Burial records   |
| Urban and Rural Villages | Provision of cemetery and crematorium   |
| Green Network            | Weed control<br>Remedial tree work  |
| Autonomy                 | Urupa   |
| Healthy lifestyles       | The Cemetery is accessible to the public, including visitors to the city, for recreation purposes                         |
| Strong Communities       | Cemetery services, that are safe & meet health requirements, are available to the entire community                        |
| Strong economy           | The provision of the cemetery services are cost effective, maintainable and of a quality acceptable to the general public |

## Key services

### Funerals

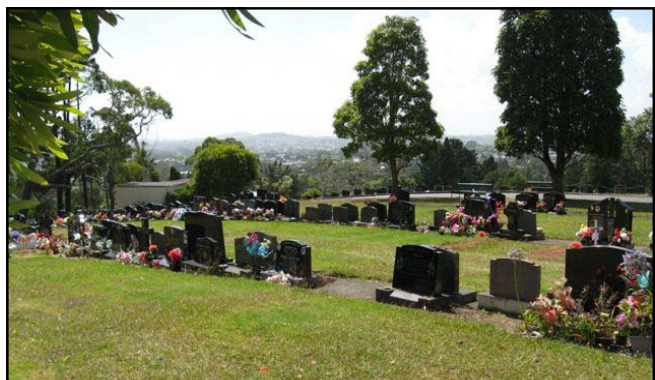
The chapels at Waikumete Cemetery provide facilities for upwards of 300 services per year.



### Burials

At Waikumete Cemetery and the Swanson Cemetery, the number of burials is higher than other cemeteries because of the range of the services available:

- Waikumete is the only cemetery in Auckland providing burial facilities for those of the Jewish faith, and one of two providing for Muslim burials.
- The Urupa area provides burial plots for urban Maori.
- The Returned Service persons section of Waikumete Cemetery is the largest such area in New Zealand.
- Waikumete also provides mausoleum sites, both private and public, as well as sites for eco-burials.



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## Cremations

The purpose built crematorium services approximately 600 cremations annually. The cremated remains of some 300 persons are interred or scattered within the cemetery ground each year.



## Genealogy

With the current interest in genealogy, searches of burial records are becoming more frequent.

Staff at Waikumete Cemetery handle around 5000 to 6000 enquiries annually. In August 2008, Council provided genealogy information on-line to facilitate a self-help service. Whilst this service is currently free, options are under consideration to allow charging to be introduced in the future.

## Gatherings

The Chapel of Faith in the Oaks is a heritage building erected in 1886, which is located in the grounds of Waikumete and is the scene of weddings, blessings and funeral services. It is also used for numerous film location shoots.

With the dissolution of the Chapel of Faith in the Oaks Trust, management of this facility reverted back to Council during 2008.



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## Capacity issues

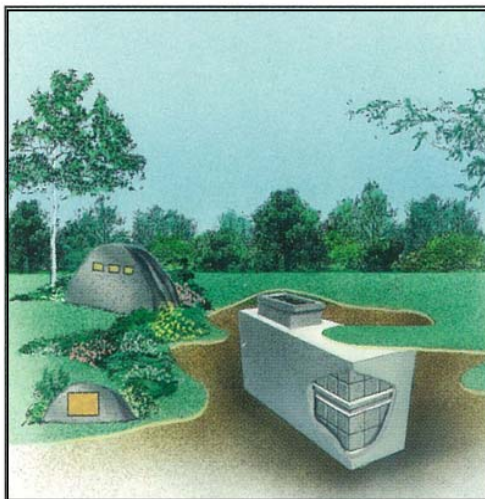
The Waikumete Cemetery and Reserve Management Plan identified that much of the undeveloped land is highly significant in terms of its ecological and landscape heritage value. Given this, the estimated life of Waikumete Cemetery for continuing burials is dependant on the options to be considered by Council in 2009; the life span could potentially fall within the range of 15 – 40 years.

Work has been completed on the new burial site 'Chapel View' which should be one of the main burial areas for a number of years and in the Muslim area concrete beams have been reduced in depth, to allow additional burials to take place. Consultation is also taking place with the community with regards to concrete vaulting the plots to allow increased burial capacity. In addition the "tack ons" onto existing grave areas (current unused sites at the ends of existing grave areas) and the development of mausoleum space will secure extra years of use.



Work is continuing to identify options for future cemetery capacity. While there are proposals to reclaim some of the bush line to increase the size of the burial areas, these will need to pass through extensive consultation.

Although attitudes towards alternative forms of burial are changing, there will be a demand for traditional burials in the foreseeable future. In order to continue the operations of the cemetery, development of future burial plots is a significant issue. The preferred burial methods are traditional burial plots and cremations, but a steady increase in interest for eco-burials and mausoleums, both public and private, this has encouraged the cemetery to develop further on the existing mausoleum sites on 2 levels (upper and middle) and a large 'public' mausoleum to house in excess of 200 interments. Consideration is also being given to provide alternative forms of burial, such as limited tenure, closer graves (honeycombing), and vertical stacking of graves.



*The way of the future—an artist's impression of concrete vaults that use vertical stacking, thus minimising space. This technique can be used for standard burials in poor terrain or difficult sites, such as on hilly land.*

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## Key projects for 2009/2010

| Type of work                                       | Project   |
|--|---|
| Maintenance  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roothing throughout the cemetery is being upgraded as part of</li> </ul>   |
| New development                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued upgrade of roading</li> <li>• Public Mausoleum planning and construction</li> <li>• Development of burial areas</li> <li>• Continued replacement of seats and bins</li> <li>• Continued manual grass cutting of old areas to ensure high standard of weed control. This will minimise complaints and encourage greater use of the area for passive recreation</li> <li>• Continued directional and informational signs to ensure continuity</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Increased security with additional cameras installed</li> <li>• Continued footpath upgrades at Waikumete.</li> <li>• Upgrade of drainage and water supply required due to the age of the pipes. This will ameliorate the current water supply issues affecting both staff and visitors.</li> </ul> |
| Enhancements to existing areas to create more room | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional "tack ons" in high demand areas</li> <li>• Muslim area concrete beams reduced in depth</li> <li>• Identify plots in the old areas that have either never been sold, or have never been used and passed their 'lease ownership'</li> <li>• Design and concept of canopy to enclose Chapel 1 to increase capacity issues</li> </ul>   |

