

**COUNCIL  
ACTIVITIES:**

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- Framework of the LTCCP
- **Activity Plans**
  - Democratic and Corporate Services
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Cemetery

What we do

Approximately 550 burials and 600 cremations are carried out each year with 30% of the ashes interred at the cemetery. Because of the age of the cemeteries there are approximately 5,000-6,000 genealogy enquiries per year.

Waikumete is the only cemetery in Auckland providing burial facilities for those of the Jewish faith and is one of only two providing for Muslim burials. The Urupa area provides burial plots for urban Maori who do not wish to be, or are not affiliated with any particular marae.

The local provision of burial and crematoria services has a positive impact on the community in terms of easy access to the burial and ashes interment sites of loved ones.

The 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. For example the gum land and bush land and the areas around the graves are the site of many rare and endangered native plant species, some of which do not exist anywhere else in the city. The management of the cemetery reflects these disparate values.

In addition to managing the burials and cremations, the Waikumete Cemetery is also managed to implement the Waikumete Cemetery Conservation and Reserve Management Plan. This includes grounds maintenance, weed removal and restoration of both the natural and cultural heritage values present within the cemetery. Many of the buildings are maintained by the Property Services section of the Council, as part of its portfolio of heritage properties.

The services the Council provides at the cemetery can be summarised as:

- Burials
- Cremations
- Ash internments
- Chapel facilities
- Genealogy enquiries
- Provision of a park facility
- Conservation of a significant cultural and natural heritage site

Why we do it

The Council provides this service as part of its primary contribution to the following community outcomes:

Green Network – He tuituitanga kakariki	Weed control
	Remedial tree work

Te Mana Whakahaere – Autonomy	Urupa
Urban and Rural Villages – Nga kainga taone, tuawhenua	Provision of cemetery and crematorium
Vibrant Arts and Culture – Toi me nga Tikanga Taketake	Chapel of Faith in the Oaks
	Burial records

Each local authority is charged with making provision for burial of the dead (Local Government Act 2002). Although the Act does not specify how provision must be made, the Council has provided a burial service and sites at the Waikumete Cemetery and the smaller Swanson Cemetery since 1989.

Managing the impacts of council activities

The operation of this service has some negative impacts on the environment, with discharges to air as a result of cremations and to land and water as a result of burials. In addition the creation of the infrastructure and impermeable surfaces associated with burial sites can have some negative impacts on the environment. Although Waikumete Cemetery is designated in terms of the Resource Management Act, in all instances where there may be negative environmental effects, resource consents are applied for and the conditions implemented. For example the recent installation of the new cremator has been done in accordance with its resource consent, and appropriate emission control technologies are used to ensure that the air quality requirements are adhered to.

In addition to these negative impacts, Waikumete and Swanson Cemeteries have a number of positive environmental, social and cultural impacts. Both areas act as an open space (Waikumete Cemetery is held by the Department of Conservation under the Reserves Act) and are important places for local communities to recreate and contemplate.



*Mausoleums at the Waikumete Cemetery.*

Levels of service

All customers can expect a pleasant environment; sympathetic, helpful, accurate, prompt service, good understanding and knowledge of culture and customs. Provision is also being made to upgrade the chapels and offices, so as to enhance the atmosphere of the facilities.

**Changes to levels of service**

The Council is consulting with the community to determine whether to plan for a reception centre at Waikumete so that it can provide holistic funeral facilities. The Council has also planned for an increase in the landscaping of the grounds immediately surrounding the Chapel and graves at Waikumete and to better link this area with other significant heritage assets within the grounds. This work is in accordance with the Waikumete Cemetery Conservation and Reserve Management Plan. The levels of service below are expected to be achieved on an annual basis.

The Council has a Customer Services Charter that incorporates a compliments and complaints process. A database is maintained of all compliments and complaints. The database will be monitored to ensure appropriate levels of customer service are maintained.

Our levels of service to Waitakere residents

Function	Level of Service Statement	How we will measure this	Future Targets	
			To be achieved by 2009	To be achieved by 2016
Burials	To ensure that all burials are carried out within appropriate timeframes	Percentage of burials that have been carried out within the appropriate timeframes*	98% per annum	98% per annum
Cremations	To ensure that all cremations are carried out within appropriate timeframes	Percentage of cremations that have been carried out within the appropriate timeframes*	98% per annum	98% per annum

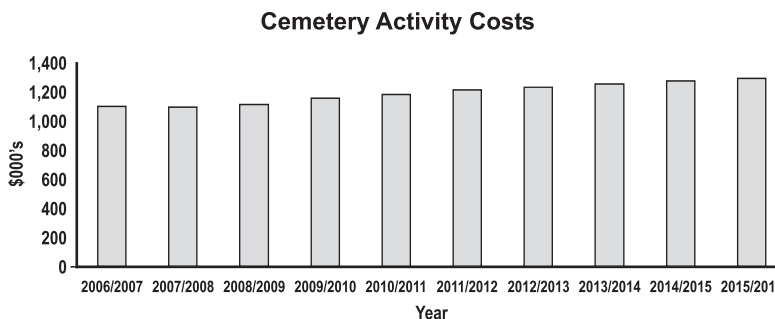
Function	Level of Service Statement	How we will measure this	Future Targets	
			To be achieved by 2009	To be achieved by 2016
Conservation of heritage sites	To conserve cultural and natural heritage sites for future generations	Compliance is maintained for all restoration work which impacts on the natural and cultural heritage features of the cemetery	100% compliance per annum	100% compliance per annum

\* Appropriate timeframes are to accommodate cultural requirements.

Maintenance and operations

The maintenance of the grounds continues to be the single most expensive item of expenditure after payroll.

In addition to grounds maintenance, there is ongoing work implementing the physical improvements identified in the Waikumete Cemetery Conservation and Reserve Management Plan. This includes rehabilitation of the road network, weed control programmes, re-vegetation and restoration, and development of interpretation and way finding signage.



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Cemetery *(continued)*

Asset information

The Council owns the buildings at Waikumete and the land at Swanson. The cremators and associated equipment are also owned by the Council. The Chapel of Faith in the Oaks, situated in the cemetery grounds, is also owned by the Council, but is leased to the Chapel Restoration Trust. The burial plots are owned by the families of the person interred in the site.

Major Asset Category
New cremation equipment
New excavator
Improved roading
Hospitality lounge
Improvements to chapels and office complex

Future demand

Although attitudes towards alternative forms of burial are changing, there will be a demand for burials in the foreseeable future. In order to continue the operations of the cemetery, development of future burial plots is a significant issue.

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 could be less than 15 years.

Work is currently underway identifying possible new sites for a cemetery, in conjunction with other work looking at the wider open space and strategic land needs for the city as it grows. It is noted that some areas (such as the Hebrew area and the Urupa) have considerable capacity - sufficient for many decades at the current uptake. It may be that Waikumete continues to provide a limited range of special burials, as well as ongoing cremations and interments, and that another locality is developed as a cemetery for other burials.

Consideration is also being given to provide alternative forms of burial, such as limited tenure, closer graves (honeycombing), public mausoleum and vertical stacking of graves. Consideration will also be given to pricing to encourage cremation.

What we are planning for the future

It is proposed for the Council to continue to provide a burial, cremation and interment service as a core service. Planning for the location and method of the burial service in the long term is currently underway.

An important issue for the Council is how to continue to provide the services at a cost acceptable to the public. This is in the face of increased competition from the private sector (for cremations) and from other cemeteries in the region (for burials). Options to develop further revenue from services not currently being charged for (e.g. genealogy research) or to provide other sources of income (such as flower sales) are also being investigated.

Proposed future works programme

The future works programme is focused on continuing to upgrade the older areas by improving roads and footpaths, putting in place better signage and protecting and interpreting the many heritage features. The implementation of the Waikumete Cemetery and Reserve Management Plan is provided for, and a Landscape and Enhancement Plan will be prepared to guide this. In addition development of further burial areas will occur each year, to keep pace with the demand for burials.

Projects	Plan 06/07 \$000's	Plan 07/08 \$000's	Plan 08/09 \$000's
Grounds Maintenance	327	346	369
Weed Control	40	36	32
Remedial Tree Work	70	36	16
Roading and footpath improvements	366	352	363
Fixtures and Furniture	20	21	21
Conservation Plan work – Future Years	297	103	106
Development of Burial Areas	300	309	317

Funding the cost – who pays?

The cost of burials, cremations and interments are paid by the family of the deceased within a framework of providing an affordable service for the Waitakere community. Differential charges are applied to different plots, reflecting that some areas of the cemetery are more desirable for burials. Rates funding is primarily directed at the heritage and parks aspect of the cemeteries, as well as a subsidy for the Returned Servicemen's areas. A limited amount of funding for the latter is also provided from the Department of Internal Affairs.

Capital projects relating to the park and heritage conservation components are funded from the Waikumete Memorial Park Special Fund.

The heritage and parks functions are funded from rates and reserves as it is considered that these provide wide benefits to the community by providing these for the enjoyment of all.

New capital expenditure is funded from loan as this is considered to benefit both the current and future community. Renewals are funded from the proceeds from rating for depreciation as this funding is considered appropriate as depreciation reflects reduction in service potential and expenditure on renewals is to restore service potential. As some of the capital expenditure can be attributed to growth, a portion is funded from Development Contributions.



*A Techscape contractor undertakes lawn maintenance at the cemetery.*



*The Cenotaph is a memorial to First World War soldiers.*

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## Cemetery Activity Costs

<b>Details</b>	<b>2006/2007 Budget \$000's</b>	<b>2007/2008 Forecast \$000's</b>	<b>2008/2009 Forecast \$000's</b>	<b>2009/2010 Forecast \$000's</b>	<b>2010/2011 Forecast \$000's</b>	<b>2011/2012 Forecast \$000's</b>	<b>2012/2013 Forecast \$000's</b>	<b>2013/2014 Forecast \$000's</b>	<b>2014/2015 Forecast \$000's</b>	<b>2015/2016 Forecast \$000's</b>
<b>Activity Costs</b>										
Maintenance and Running Costs	1,099	1,093	1,109	1,155	1,179	1,209	1,231	1,252	1,275	1,293
Depreciation	225	237	243	249	259	281	284	277	246	266
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,324</b>	<b>1,330</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>1,404</b>	<b>1,438</b>	<b>1,490</b>	<b>1,515</b>	<b>1,529</b>	<b>1,521</b>	<b>1,559</b>
<b>Activity Revenue</b>										
Burials and Cremations	1,172	1,225	1,277	1,331	1,386	1,439	1,492	1,540	1,593	1,641
Development Contributions	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	53
General Rates	39	30	24	25	7	12	-	-	-	-
Waikumete Cemetery Fund	110	72	48	48	45	39	35	29	24	24
Depreciation Reserve	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,377</b>	<b>1,383</b>	<b>1,405</b>	<b>1,457</b>	<b>1,491</b>	<b>1,543</b>	<b>1,580</b>	<b>1,622</b>	<b>1,670</b>	<b>1,718</b>
<b>Net Activity Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>159</b>
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>										
Capital Expenditure	1,945	1,232	1,162	1,411	2,176	2,210	4,537	2,265	1,265	1,529
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,945</b>	<b>1,232</b>	<b>1,162</b>	<b>1,411</b>	<b>2,176</b>	<b>2,210</b>	<b>4,537</b>	<b>2,265</b>	<b>1,265</b>	<b>1,529</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>										
Waikumete Cemetery Fund	40	103	106	109	112	114	117	119	121	123
Accumulated Funds	297	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Development Contributions	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	53
Depreciation Reserve	60	61	64	65	66	68	70	71	72	72
Loan	1,495	1,015	939	1,184	1,945	1,975	4,297	2,022	1,019	1,281
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,945</b>	<b>1,232</b>	<b>1,162</b>	<b>1,411</b>	<b>2,176</b>	<b>2,210</b>	<b>4,537</b>	<b>2,265</b>	<b>1,265</b>	<b>1,529</b>

**100 % Allocated to Urban and Rural Villages**

## Conclusion

Sustainability is dependant on the Council's ability to provide a consistent supply of burial space. The Council will need to investigate a number of options for long term planning with regard to additional development on the site and/or implementation of new burial technologies to increase current capacity or purchasing of land elsewhere in the city to secure future cemetery capacity and the eventual closure of Waikumete Cemetery when capacity runs out.