

Committee: MERTON AND SUTTON JOINT CEMETERY BOARD

Date: June 2020

Wards; Borough Wide Merton and Sutton

Subject: Contractor Report

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1. That Members review the information and note the content of the report.
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1. Purpose of the Report and Executive Summary

1.1 This report to the Board reviews the activity from January 2020 to May 2020 and details the work activity for this period. It is intended that a report is presented to each meeting of the Board covering key areas of activity.

1.2 The report will cover the following areas.

1.2.1 Key performance activity

1.2.2 Complaints and compliments

1.2.3 Income

2. Details

2.1 Key Performance Activity

2.1.1 Grounds Maintenance

Scheduled works continued with a focus on critical tasks such as grass cutting, burials, topping up graves, and maintaining the planting and upkeep service.

Health and Safety Audit of Headstone Testing

This was suspended while Merton Council and Sutton Council finalised the memorial testing procedure. A decision by Merton and Sutton is still required as what to do with memorials which have failed the test and the families do not arrange for repairs.

Appendix 1 Letter to grave owner informing of failure of memorial.

New Bearer Beams/Replacement

The project started on January 13th 2020 arranged directly by Merton Council. To date only one beam has been installed, however, during the installation of this beam, Idverde highlighted on a number of occasions that the beam was not fit for purpose.

COVID 19

Idverde, in partnership with Merton and Sutton produced the Cemetery Business Continuity plan for dealing COVID 19. A weekly meeting with Merton, Sutton and idverde takes place to discuss the service activities to ensure that the service provided is safe and managed in accordance to government and industry guidelines,

Extra machinery was hired and grave shoring equipment was purchased by Merton and Sutton. Burial numbers increased from March 2020, resulting in and a third additional burial time slot being introduced at 3.30pm Monday to Friday to cope with the increased demand, this was also introduced on Saturdays. The chapel in line with government guidelines was closed with only grave side services taking place.

At the height of COVID 19 the mourner number was six, this has now been increased to ten. The cemetery opening times changed to 3pm Monday to Friday to protect the key staff and to discourage visitors using the cemetery for recreational purposes.

Grave digging training including using the dumper truck and excavator was undertaken by 5 staff creating extra grave diggers.

Burial numbers

See appendix 2 for Burial numbers.

Staff

During COVID 19 the MSJC staff remained at the cemetery. Two additional staff were redeployed from the parks service.

2.2 Complaints and Compliments

2.2.1 Complaints of detailed

Number	Reason
2	A number of complaints regarding the numbers of mourners allowed to attend the burial. At the height of COVID 19 the mourner number was six. This has now been increased to ten.

2.2.2 Summary of Compliment

Number	Reason
25	Many families have mentioned that the reduced mourners at grave side has made been a positive with the service being more intimate and personal for immediate family.
30	Lots of “thank you’s” and praise from families after the service has finished.
15	Various compliments ranging from the helpful advice and support from the cemetery office and cemetery staff during COVID 19.

2.3 Income

2.3.1 See Appendix 3: income figures January 2020 to 18th May 2020

4. Consultation undertaken or proposed

4.1 None for the purposes of this report.

5. Timetable

5.1 None for the purposes of this report.

6. Financial, resource and property implications

6.1 As contained in the body of the report.

7. Legal and statutory implications

7.1 None for the purposes of this report.

8. Human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications

8.1 None for the purposes of this report.

9. Risk management and health and safety implications

9.1 Considered within the Client Side Report.

10. Appendices

Appendices	1.Memorial letter 2.Burial numbers for January 2020 to May 2020 3.Income for January 2020 to 18 th May 2020
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Appendix 1

idverde SLWP Cemeteries
Cheam Park Depot, Tudor Close
Cheam, Surrey. SM3 8QS

020 3876 8806
slwpcemeteries@idverde.co.uk
www.idverde.co.uk

Dear Mr,

Merton & Sutton Joint Cemetery Grave No:

idverde manage the cemeteries for Merton and Sutton Councils'. We undertake routine maintenance work such as grass cutting, burial preparation, and memorial testing. We are now undertaking memorial testing throughout the cemeteries on behalf of both Councils. The method of testing we are undertaking is best practice as advised by the Ministry of Justice and Burial and Cemeteries Advisory Groups.

There are notices on the cemetery gates explaining the testing is taking place.

I regret to advise you that the memorial on the above family grave was found to be unsafe and has become a hazard to persons attending nearby graves and to staff working within the cemetery. In the interest of safety of all visitors and persons working in the cemetery the memorial has been temporarily made safe.

It is the responsibility of the owner of the grave to ensure the memorial is safety maintained. I would advise you to contact the stonemason who erected the memorial as making the memorial safe may be covered by their guarantee scheme. Alternatively please contact a stonemason who is registered with NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) or BRAMM (the regulatory body for memorial masons).

A memorial permit will be required for the stonemason to undertake the repair to ensure it is correctly fitted.

Should you have any concerns regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact the cemetery office.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Robinson
Cemetery Manager & MSJC Registrar

Wards: Borough Wide Merton and Sutton

Subject: INTERMENTS

Lead officer: Mark Robinson

Details of interment statistics are provided below

DETAILS

1.1 Burial numbers for the period January 2020 to May 2020

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
January	22	25	21	23	22
February	16	13	26	16	25
March	24	13	26	22	20
April	48	15	23	14	18
May	30	28	21	27	21
June		18	17	23	26
July		13	15	19	12
August		19	25	18	15
September		17	21	24	15
October		19	22	18	26
November		13	21	18	19
December		12	18	14	24
TOTAL		205	256	236	243

Merton & Sutton Joint Cemetery Income January 1st 2020 to May 18th 2020

MERTON & SUTTON	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total
Purchase & Interments	£51,885	£47,970	£72,948	£161,643	£80,420	£414,868
Memorials permits	£2,148	£2,261	£2,896	£100	£275	£7,680
Transfer of ownership	£824	£1,233	£206	£103		£2,366
Planting and Upkeep	£52	£12,723	£10,702	£877		£24,354
TOTAL:	£54,909	£64,187	£86,752	£162,725	£80,695	£449,268

It is important to note that due to approved banking protocols it is only possible at this point in time to confirm May income from 1st May to 18th May only. All monthly income totals will be fully reconciled at contract year end

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