



ADUR & WORTHING COUNCILS

Job Description & Person Specification

Authority	ADC / WBC
Directorate	Operations and Sustainability
Post Title	Burial Grounds Officer
Post Number	
Accountable to	Burial Grounds Team Leader
Key leadership relationships	<p>Internal: Members of the Council, Chief Officers and all other appropriate Council officers and managers</p> <p>External: Members of the public, Funeral Directors, Officiants of Services, Contractors.</p>
Work style	This role does not fall within the Blended Working Policy
Last updated	20.01.2025

Job Description - Principal purpose of job (role summary)

As Burial Grounds Officer you will support the BurialGrounds Team Leader to ensure that each burial follows the Cemetery Operatives Training Scheme standards for effective, efficient and safe burials, that lead to smooth funeral services that meet the cultural needs of clients.

You will also have a major role in improving and maintaining the burial grounds to a standard reflective of the importance and benefits that green spaces provide to the bereaved and other site users.

Your manager will empower you to apply our principles - resilience, adaptability and participation - to your working practices.

Expectations of post holder

Willingness to embrace change and ability to adapt to new ways of working
Enthusiasm for working across teams in collaboration and partnership in order to help deliver Our Plan
Act with honesty and openness, and be brave enough to contribute your ideas and get involved
Bring your passion for delivering a high quality service for our residents to your role
Engage proactively in your performance and development conversations, and embrace opportunities to learn and grow
Live how we work with each other and our customers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We listen • We say what we think & do what we say • We are inclusive & kind • We are ambitious • We think & act beyond ourselves and our service • We are a team
Promote the service and Councils positively at all times

Role specific Duties and responsibilities

Grave works: Pre-excavation preparation, ground support, preparation, interment, backfilling, exhumation

Funeral attendance: follow Bereavement Services code of conduct for attending funerals and dealing with unforeseen situations at funerals

Burial ground maintenance: carry out memorial application compliance checks, memorial safety checks. Inspect for grave sinkage and any reactive or planned maintenance to paths, walls, fences, roads, etc. Carry out topping up graves, seeding or turfing, grave planting / maintenance. Reporting any hazards or incidents.

Burial administration: Complete and return documents such as Digging Tickets and other burial handover documents. Advise of any hazards or incidents encountered during grave preparation.

Communication: communicate with others, including clients, the public and colleagues, basic IT systems use.

Team working: work alone and as part of a team effectively and recognise how all staff are dependent on each other to meet business objectives.

Health and safety: apply relevant health and safety processes and procedures. Implement specific industry information on hazards relevant to burial and horticultural environments. Follow safe systems of work and safety information provided by Bereavement Services. Implement environmental protection policies and procedures.

Environmental: prevent and control local pollution incidents e.g. use of spill kits.

Planting: plant growth and development; care for plants correctly in different environments, including basic irrigation methods, planting methods and identifying plant deficiencies. Install various soft-landscape materials e.g. shrubs, trees, herbaceous, bedding, grass areas and seed. This will include site preparation, planting, sowing, turfing, preparation of seedbeds and mulching.

Soil cultivation: cultivate and improve soils by mechanical methods and by hand to encourage growing media and soils.

Tools, equipment, heavy machinery and machinery: safely use tools e.g. spades, rakes, shovels; equipment e.g. tape measure, measuring stick, spirit level and machinery e.g. excavator, dumper, ride on and/or pedestrian controlled mowers, hand held trimmer, hedgecutter. Report any defects or if supplies become low. Ensure compound, materials and equipment are secure at all times.

Vegetation control: follow processes and methods of site clearance, using tools and machinery for pruning and vegetation control, including basic turf management. Follow weed control methods.

Maintain hard structures: maintain structures relevant to the business activities.

Site presentation: work to a specified finish.

Undertake correct pruning techniques for a range of plants.

Work without causing damage to features present such as graves, memorials and/or turf.

Methods used to measure and set out a site g. use of tape measures and measuring wheels, defining features by using string lines or aerosol markers, the principles in defining site levels using manual or electrical equipment.

Undertake all duties in accordance with Council policies, the Code of Conduct for Officers, and in particular policies relating to Customer Care and Equal Opportunities

Undertake any duties regarding health, safety and welfare at work, civil contingencies and business continuity which may reasonably be allocated to the postholder as a result of legislation, codes of practice or Council policies

As the post holder, you will be required to undertake such other duties as may be required within your grade and competence, and therefore the list of duties in this job description should not be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive.

Duties will be set out in this job description but please note that the Council reserves the right to update the job description, from time to time, to reflect changes in, or to, the role. The post holder will be consulted about any proposed changes. Significant permanent changes in duties and responsibilities will require agreed revisions to be made to this job description.

Adur & Worthing Councils recognise the need to ensure the welfare of children and vulnerable adults when they come into contact with services provided by the Councils. Employees, volunteers and Elected Members have regular contact with the general public during the course of their work and are in a position to observe signs which might indicate that a person is at risk of harm and abuse. If signs, which cause concern, are observed, all employees (temporary and permanent), volunteers and Elected Members have a duty to report allegations, disclosures and suspicions of abuse or neglect in line with the Councils' [Safeguarding Policy](#).

Person Specification:

<p>The core skills and competencies below are taken from our organisational Skills and Competencies Framework v1.0 and are an indication of the expectations we have of our employees. The full document will be shared with you as part of the onboarding process.</p>	
Participative	<p>Build strong relationships with people inside and outside your team and organisation to make a difference to improved outcomes for the local area</p> <p>Engage in clear and positive written and verbal communication to help people understand what you want to achieve and how they can help</p> <p>Value the unique strengths of people from different backgrounds to promote a culture of inclusion, equality and diversity</p> <p>More detail can be found in the Participation Skills & Competencies.</p>
Adaptive	<p>Adopt an active interest in learning and development opportunities that will enable you to strengthen and broaden your skills</p> <p>Experiment with new ways of working to help continuously improve how we deliver outcomes (including through the use of digital tools and platforms)</p> <p>Anticipate new challenges & opportunities to be able to adapt to change around you</p>
Resilient	<p>Embrace a consistently positive attitude and effectively prioritise workload to support your own wellbeing</p> <p>Cultivate a supportive environment with colleagues so people feel part of a team that looks out for each other</p> <p>Prioritise the use of resources that helps us be financially and environmentally sustainable</p>
Leadership	<p>Be open to coaching approaches to support others in finding solutions to problems</p> <p>Role model the principles above to inspire others to demonstrate positive behaviours</p> <p>Develop an understanding of the political processes that guide our organisation and show commitment to the safeguarding of others</p>

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<p>To have or be prepared to train in the following:</p> <p>Cemetery Operative's Training Scheme (COTS), including excavator and dumper use.</p> <p>Full driving licence to drive transit of similar, plus towing</p> <p>English and maths: Functional Skills Maths and English Level 2 or equivalent</p>	<p>Horticultural qualification</p> <p>LANTRA M1/M2 Working on Single Carriageways</p> <p>LANTRA Level 2 Award in Chainsaw maintenance and cross cutting</p> <p>Emergency first aid: Level 3 award in emergency first aid at work.</p> <p>Pesticides: Level 2 Principles of Safe Handling and Application of Pesticides Guidance OR Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Pesticides</p> <p>LANTRA Awareness of Integrated Weed Management</p>
Knowledge	<p>To be able to take photos, send and receive email and texts, complete electronic forms on a mobile device</p> <p>Able to use a computer for email, H&S software and other bespoke Council software.</p>	<p>Working knowledge of the Institute of Cemeteries and Crematorium Management Charter for the Bereaved</p>
Experience	<p>Health and safety; have a safety-led mind-set for self, colleagues and the public.</p>	<p>Experience of using heavy machinery, hand tools and mechanical equipment and plant</p> <p>Must be able to hand dig a grave when required.</p> <p>Vegetation control</p> <p>Use of shoring</p> <p>To work on an exhumation when required</p>
Communication	<p>Customer care; show dignity, respect and empathy when dealing with others, including clients, the public and colleagues.</p>	

	Team working; work alone and as part of a team effectively and recognise how all staff are dependent on each other to meet service objectives.	
Relationship Building	Able to remain calm under pressure Able to deal effectively with site users	
Analytical	Will be able to deal with minor issues e.g. soil types, items on graves etc. Identify, record and report hazards and incidents	
Planning/ Organising	Follow instructions written and verbal Complete forms Carry out checks Able to read a map and use measurement devices Decision making; adopt a pragmatic timely approach by identifying appropriate solutions to practical problems	
Other requirements	A 'hands-on' role Frequent manual handling of heavy and/or awkward equipment Work in confined spaces Managed exposure to vibration and noise Sites are dispersed across Arun, Adur & Worthing. There are 15 sites and the postholder will travel between sites, transport crews or machinery safety and legally between sites if required. Attitude; have a positive and motivated attitude towards work, including having pride in one's work. Work is generally based outside and undertaken throughout the year. Flexible approach to work with occasional overtime and weekend working.	

	Valuing kindness and compassion in the workplace Acceptance of political restriction Able to travel within the Adur and Worthing Districts	
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Job description & Person Specification agreed by:

Post holder (Print name):	
Signature:	
Date:	