

**apse** online seminar

# APSE Cemeteries and Crematoria Seminar

Caring and Sharing—the changing roles and responsibilities of Bereavement Services Managers

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# Norwich Natural Cemeteries

Susan Moore – November 2020

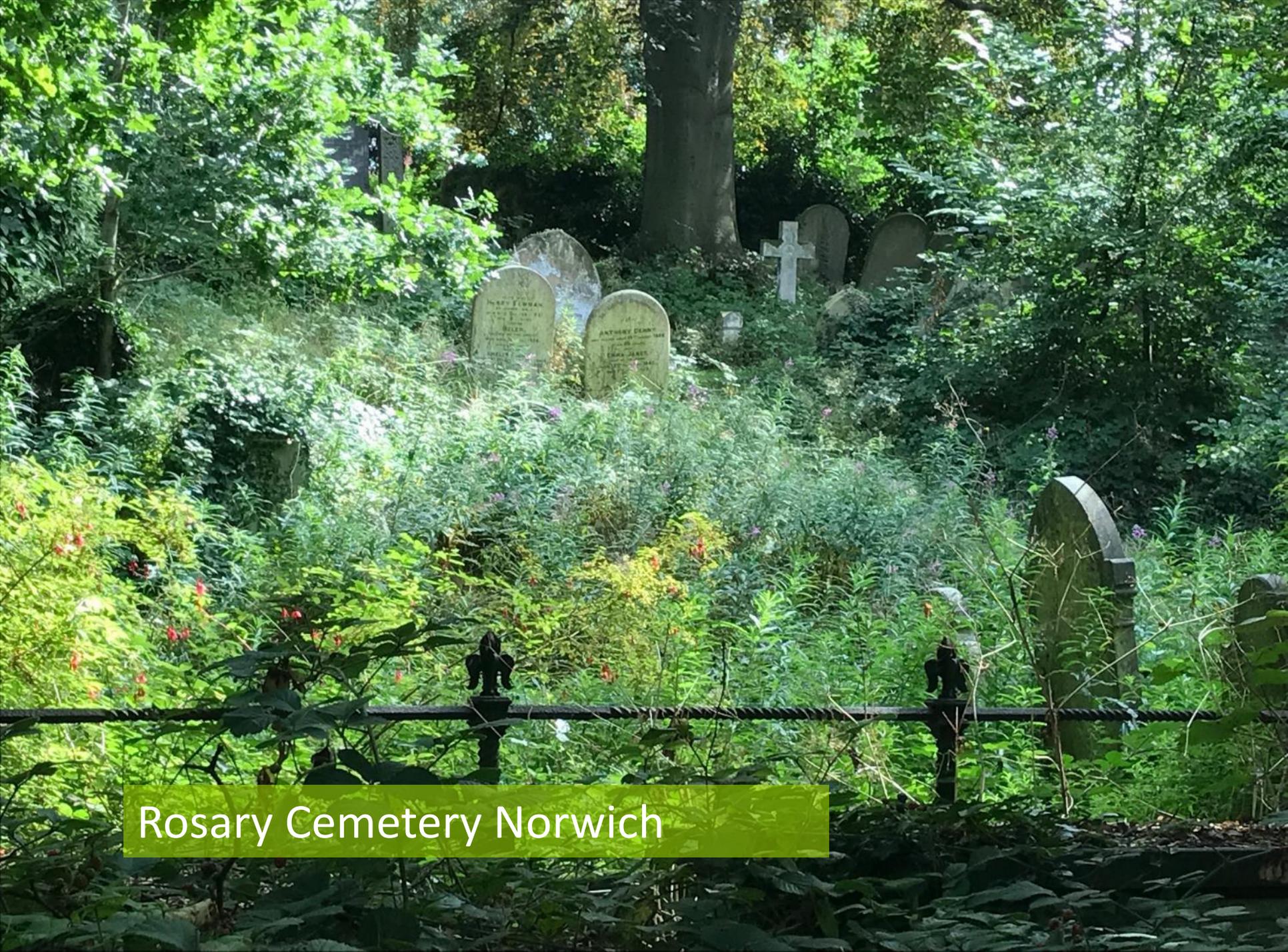


[www.norwich.gov.uk](http://www.norwich.gov.uk)

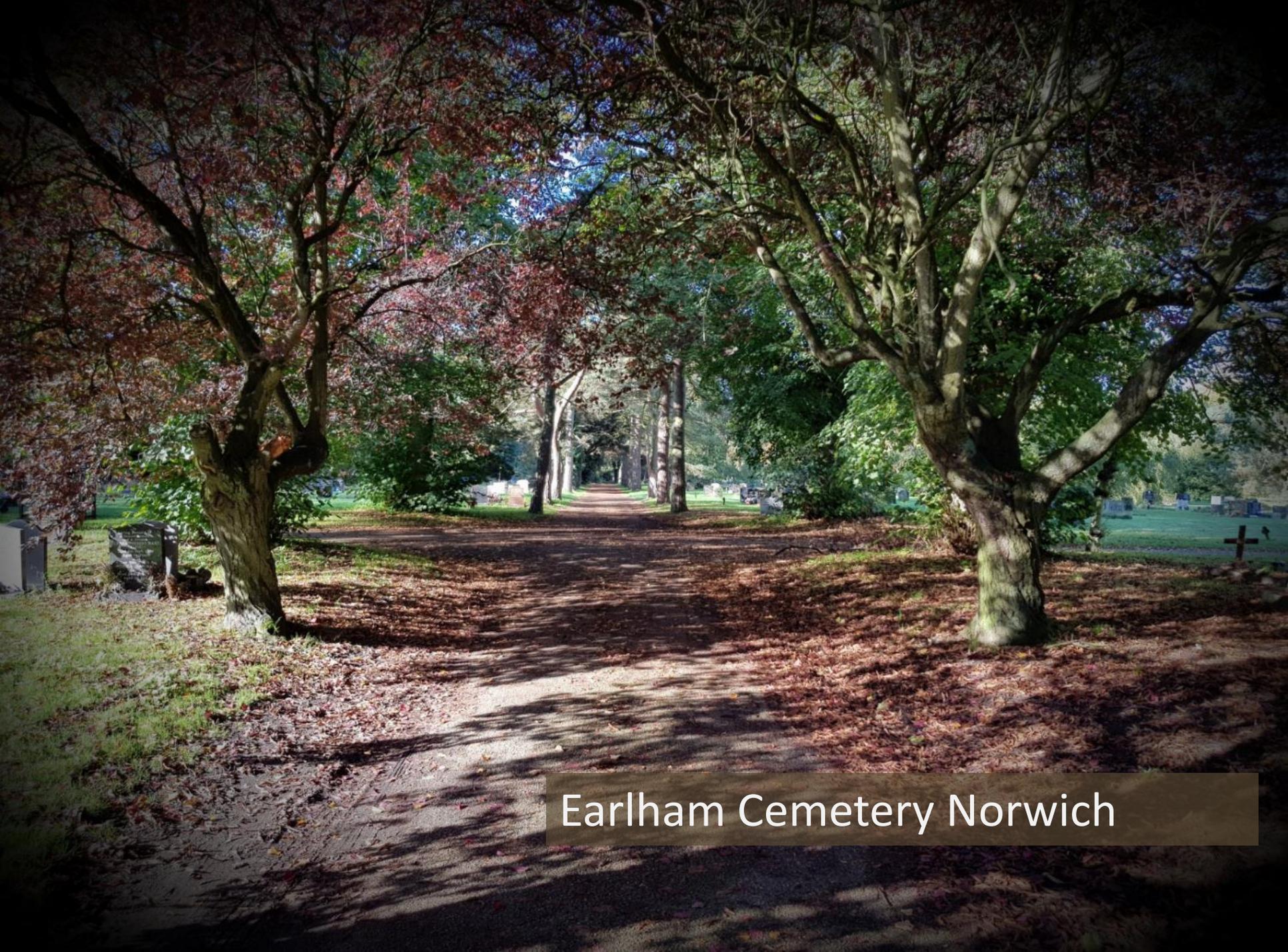


**NORWICH**  
City Council

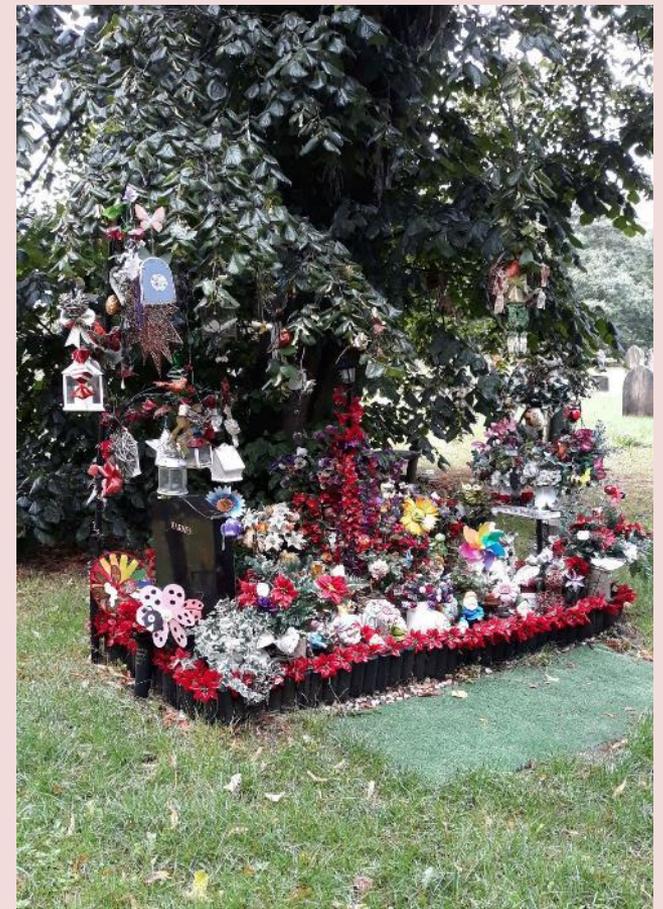
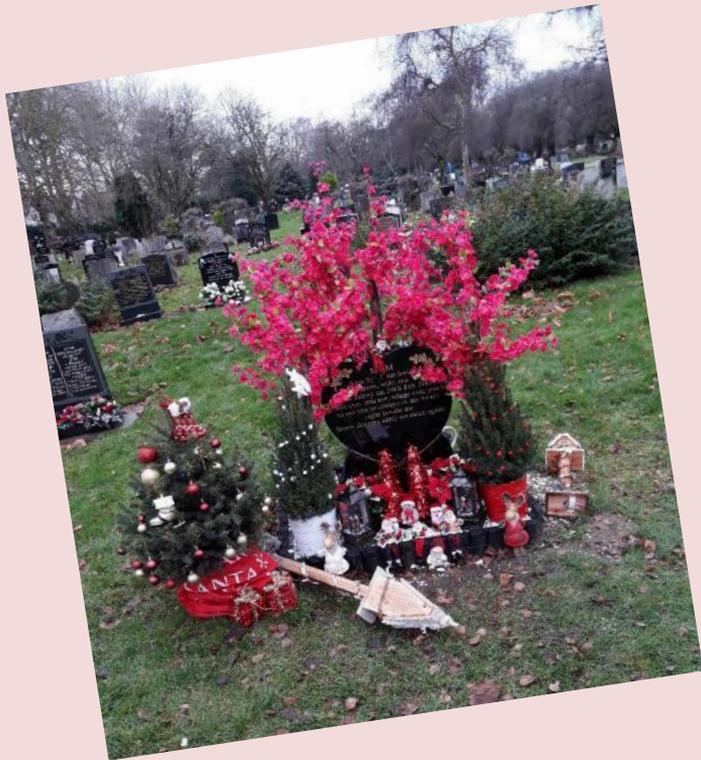
- 
- **Introduction**
  - **Where are we now?**
  - **Sustainable living**
  - **Sustainable dying**



Rosary Cemetery Norwich



Earlham Cemetery Norwich



## Christmas Past 2017 /18

- Excessive amounts of plastic flowers and decorations and Christmas lights placed on graves
- Wreaths are left to rot as few families remove them in new year
- At least 40 work hours in organised clearance by team in February
- Christmas waste, filling 5 flat bed lorry loads, sent to landfill
- Customer complaints for and against removal



## ELF N SAFETY GONE MAD Mum ordered to take down Xmas tree from baby son's grave by jobsworth council

**Eastern Daily Press**

*'He can't be here to open presents with us' - Mother ordered to remove Christmas tree from the grave of her stillborn son*

**M** News ▶ UK News ▶ Christmas trees

## Devastated mum has been ordered to take down CHRISTMAS TREE from her baby boy's grave

Stephanie Browne said she was heartbroken after being told to move the

**Mirror**

SHARE



COMMENTS

By Red Williams

13:58, 12 DEC 2017 | UPDATED 18:51, 12 DEC 2017

NEWS

**Mail** Online

**Grieving mother is ordered to take down the 6ft Christmas tree over her stillborn baby's grave after council say cemetery users complained**



**However Public opinion in comments section was predominantly in favour of the removal :**

- I don't think I'd be too pleased visiting my recently deceased family members grave if right next to it was a six foot plastic tree.
- Its distracting, disrespectful to other mourners and in poor taste
- I actually find it offensive that people cover the graves in this way
- Must admit it's a bit OTT
- There are strict rules governing memorial stones in cemeteries to ensure no OTT memorials

## CITIZEN

By increasing the awareness of the environmental damage of single-use plastics and promoting alternatives, the aim is to reduce and ultimately remove the use of all plastic items in and around graves.



## What did we do ?

- Signage
- Citizen magazine articles
- Planted Christmas trees by the children's sections and at the main entrance
- Provided wooden decorations and pencils to decorate



## CITIZEN

“There is growing evidence that plastic waste is having a significant and detrimental effect on the environment. Removing plastic items from our cemeteries is a small but important step to tackling this issue in Norwich.

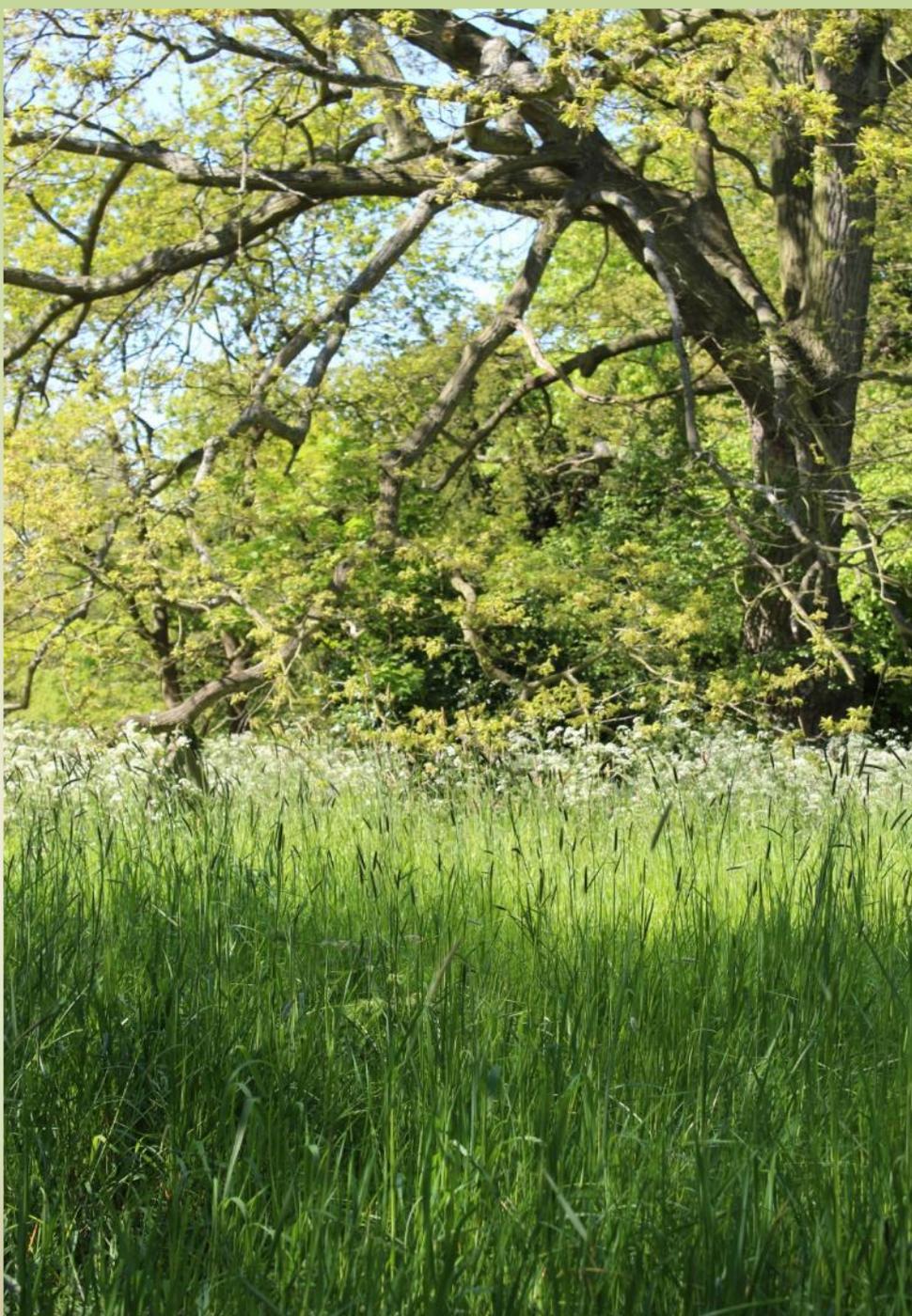




Sustainable living

**Wild flowers in the Cemetery are important for pollinators such as bees, butterflies and hoverflies..**





**Areas of the cemetery that are left slightly “unkempt”, with longer grass, small patches of brambles and ivy on trees are vital for hibernating invertebrates, nesting birds and animals such as hedgehogs. While the Cemetery harbours good numbers of species, there is a national decline in most invertebrates, as well as birds and mammals, so it is very important to not only maintain what we have, but to improve areas for wildlife as well – Jeremy Bartlett (Friends of Earlham)**



Cemetery Wildlife

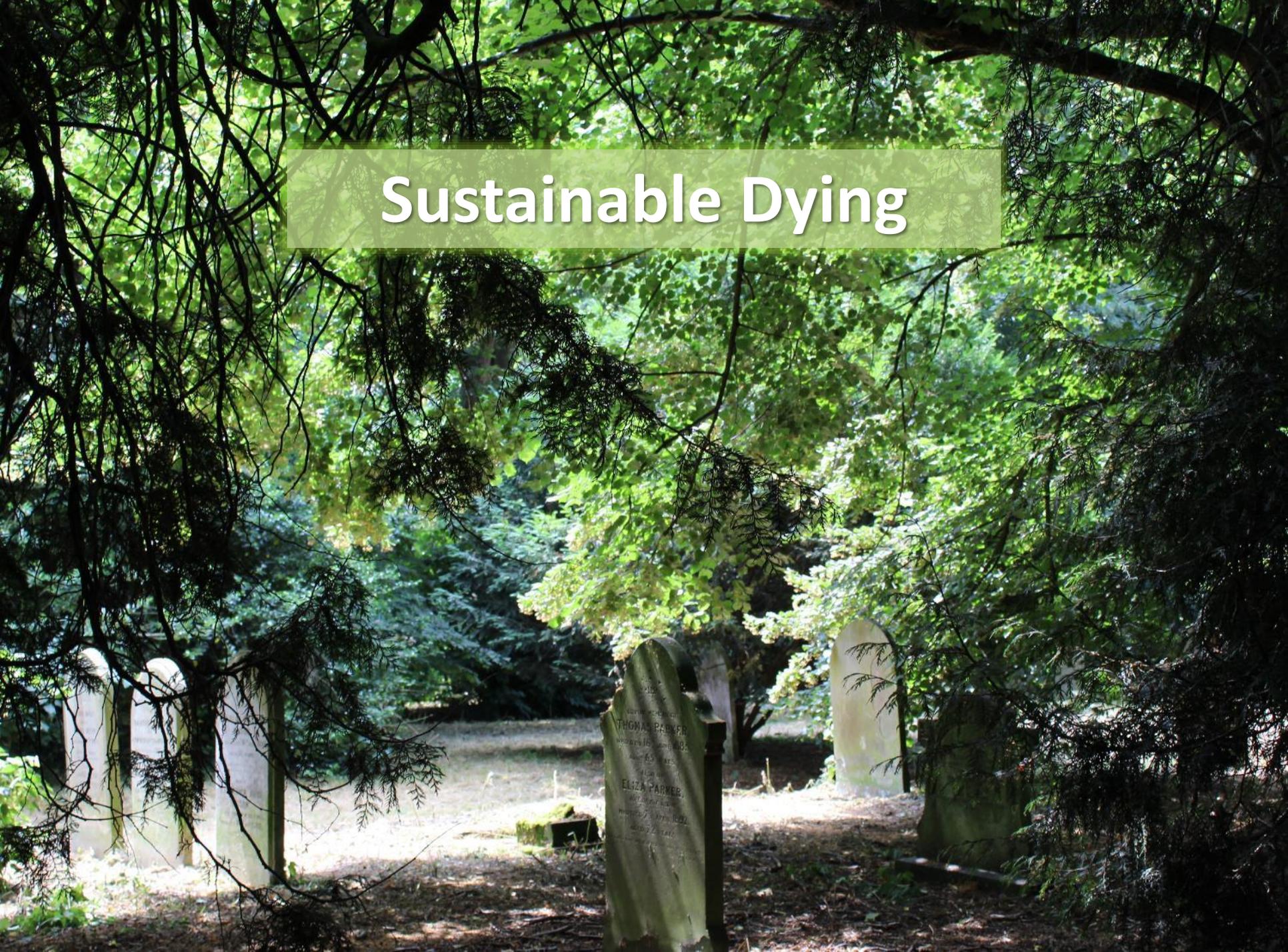
# Cemetery Wildlife



A photograph of Earlham Cemetery, showing several large, mature trees with dense green foliage. In the foreground, there are several large, rounded, light-colored gravestones. The ground is covered in green grass and small purple flowers. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

**Earlham Cemetery is a very important green space and has been described as the one of best green spaces for wildlife inside the city's ring road. Not only is it important for wildlife but it acts as a "green lung" and its tranquillity and greenery are of great benefit to the mental and physical health of local residents, especially those without cars – Jeremy Bartlett (Friends of Earlham)**

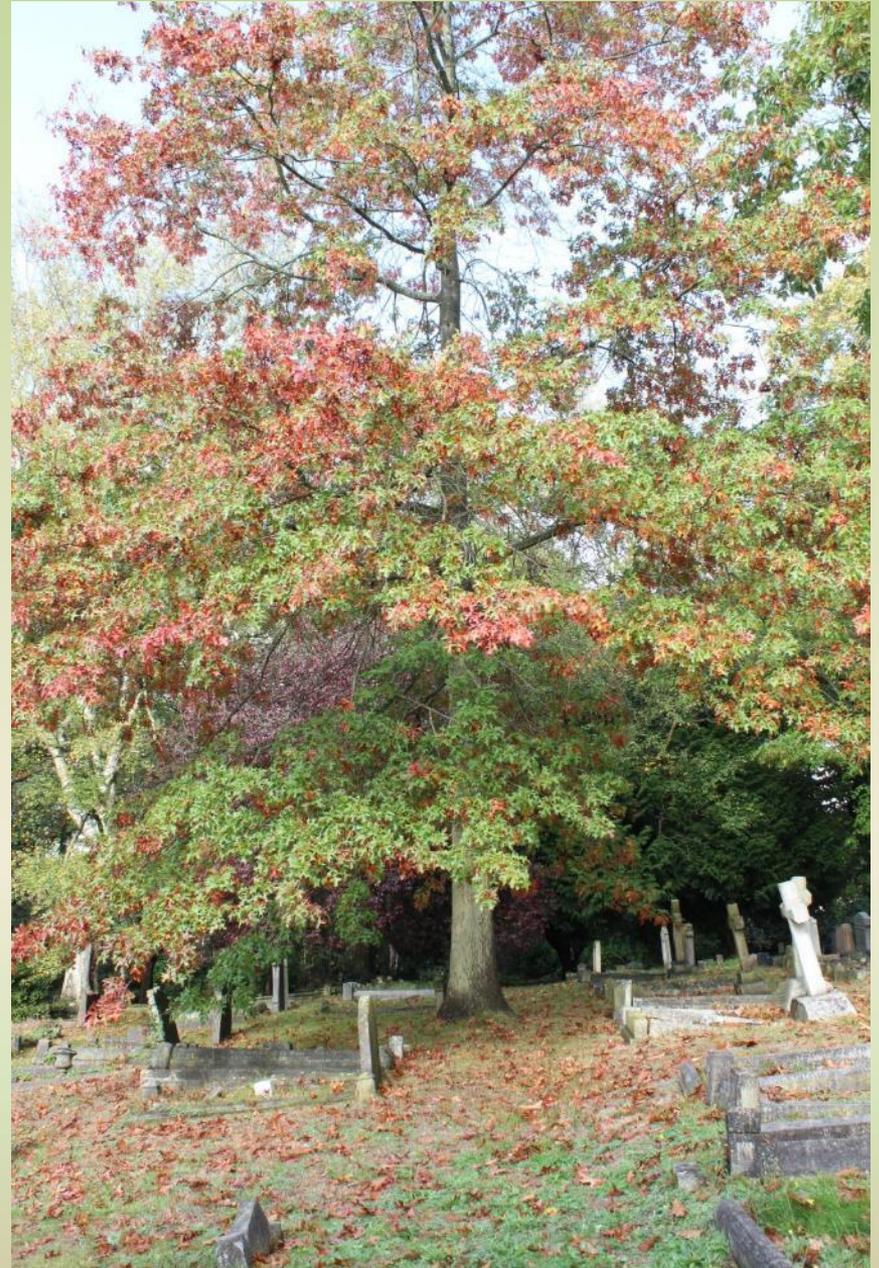
# Sustainable Dying



A photograph of a natural burial site. In the foreground, there is a dense field of purple flowers, likely Salvia, with green foliage. In the background, a large, smooth, light-colored stone marker stands upright. The scene is set in a lush, green environment with trees and bushes in the background. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**Natural burials enhance  
the Cemetery, by allowing  
the area to be managed  
with wildlife in mind.**

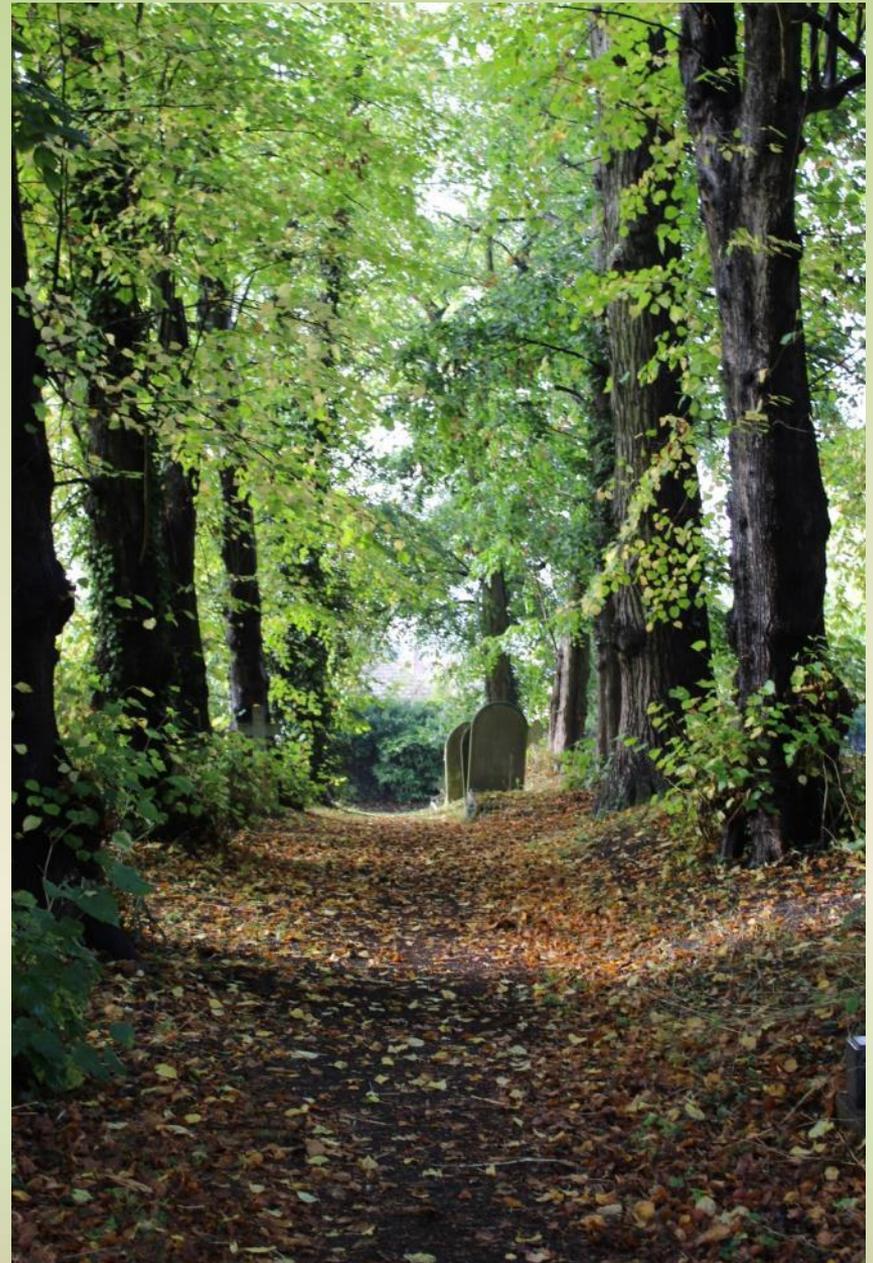
**If natural  
burial is  
chosen then  
the body  
becomes a gift  
to nature –  
Ken West MBE**





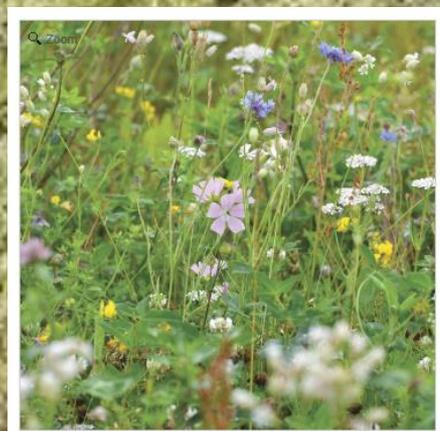
**What can we do ?**

**"Natural burial is not about harking back to some dreamy arcadia but about taking the best from the past, adding present day knowledge and creating a new sustainable way forward." - Ken West  
MBE**



## Success stories so far:

- New Muslim cemetery serving the Muslim communities in Norfolk
- Reintroduction of shroud burials and the active involvement of the congregation
- New raised plots covered in sedum matting requiring less ongoing maintenance
- Planting of Lavender and Rosemary bushes, increasing pollinator rich plants
- Installation of meadow mat in a unused woodland section of the Rosary cemetery in preparation of the launch of Natural burials in 2021





**Bird Box**



**Bee Box**



**Bat Box**

**B**

**Remembered**



**Bench**

**Supporting charities by purchasing locally made products**



**Next Steps**

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