

‘There amid all that Nature and Art could offer to elevate the Soul of Man I saw the Happy Resting Place of Countless Loved Ones.’

Evelyn Waugh, The Loved One, 1948

Planning for Death

JULIE GREAVES

Background

Hertfordshire
County
Council

Minerals &
Waste
Planning

MSc Spatial
Planning



44 Hectares



Divisions



Boulevards



1m+

Pere Lachaise Cemetery, Paris

Research

Municipal
interment
space

Land use
implications

Local
planning
authorities

Burial
Authorities

Strategic
Policy
Approach

Supply

Multi -Faith

Choice

The Plan Led System

- ▶ Town & Country Planning Act (land use planning)
- ▶ National Planning Policy Framework
- ▶ Local Plan
- ▶ Objectively assessed needs
- ▶ Every growing population
- ▶ Housing!
- ▶ Planning for the living

Competing land use demands

Housing

Employment

Open space

Infrastructure

Level of awareness

Local Planning Authority

- ▶ Planning system
- ▶ Plan making process
- ▶ Experience of the planning system
- ▶ Long terms planning of burial space

Burial Authority

- ▶ Current lifespan
- ▶ Assessment of long term need
- ▶ Interaction?

More to Death than Dying: Pay death more attention

- ▶ The role of the state
- ▶ Public health
- ▶ National infrastructure
- ▶ Service providers
- ▶ Funerary services
- ▶ Religion
- ▶ Culture
- ▶ Sanitation
- ▶ Individual rights
- ▶ Family rights
- ▶ Global escalation in population
- ▶ Aging population
- ▶ Global Pandemic
- ▶ Choice
- ▶ Interment Space is discretionary
- ▶ Global Climate Crisis!

Literature

Physical geography of a cemetery

Clear delineation

Large space

Formally laid

Near to centre of population

Trends in remembrance

Victorians: Full body burial

Grandiose statements

Cremation – WWI & WWII

Fluctuation 50/50

New choices: woodland burials

Plenty of planning for the living!

Same planning procedures

Green belt policy

Very special circumstances

Government

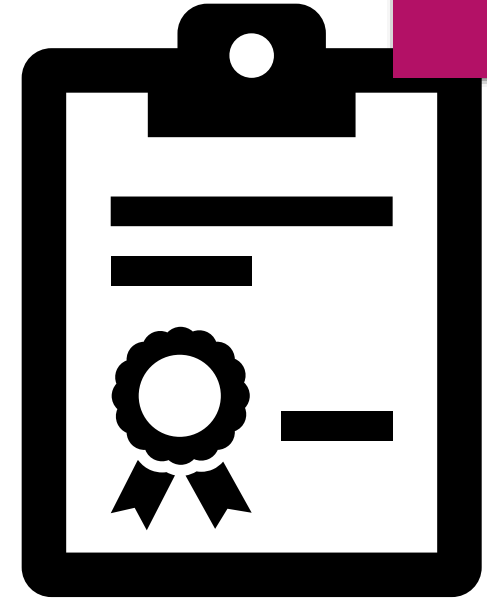
1999 Existing policy was sufficient: PPG12

2001 Select Committee

2004 Home Office: Cemeteries and their Management

2007 Ministry of Justice

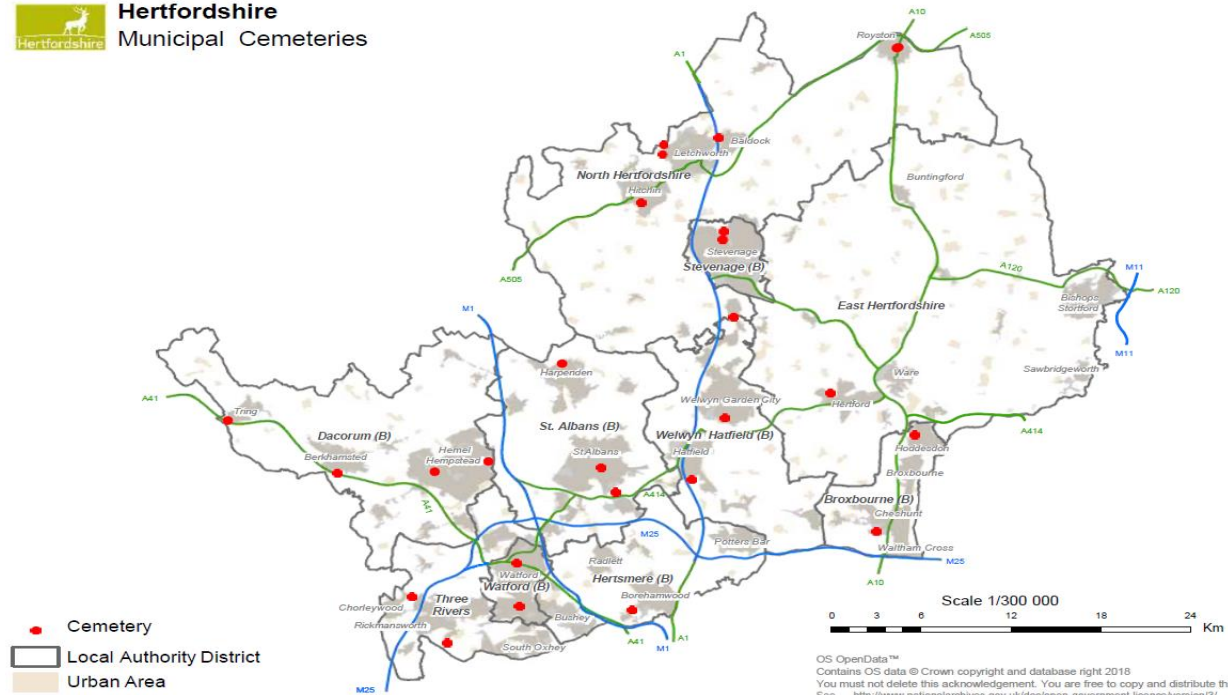
2021 NPPF



2018 Research Results

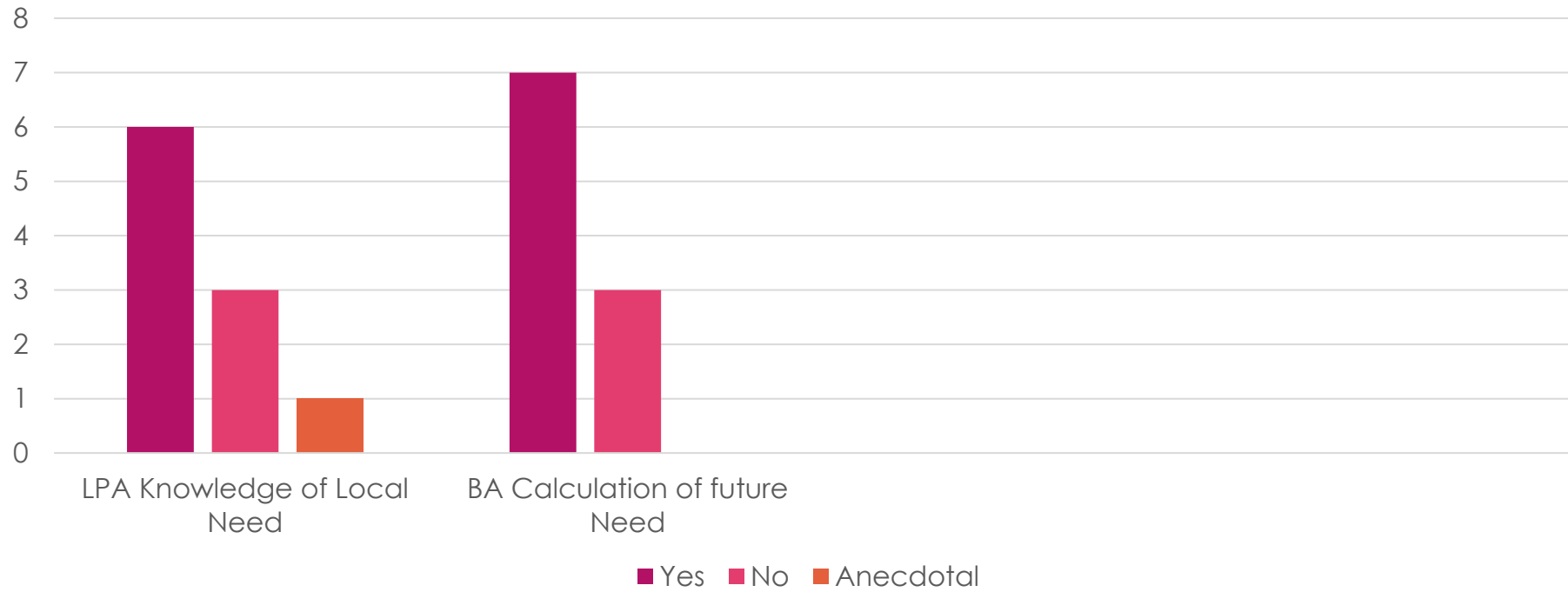


Hertfordshire Municipal Cemeteries

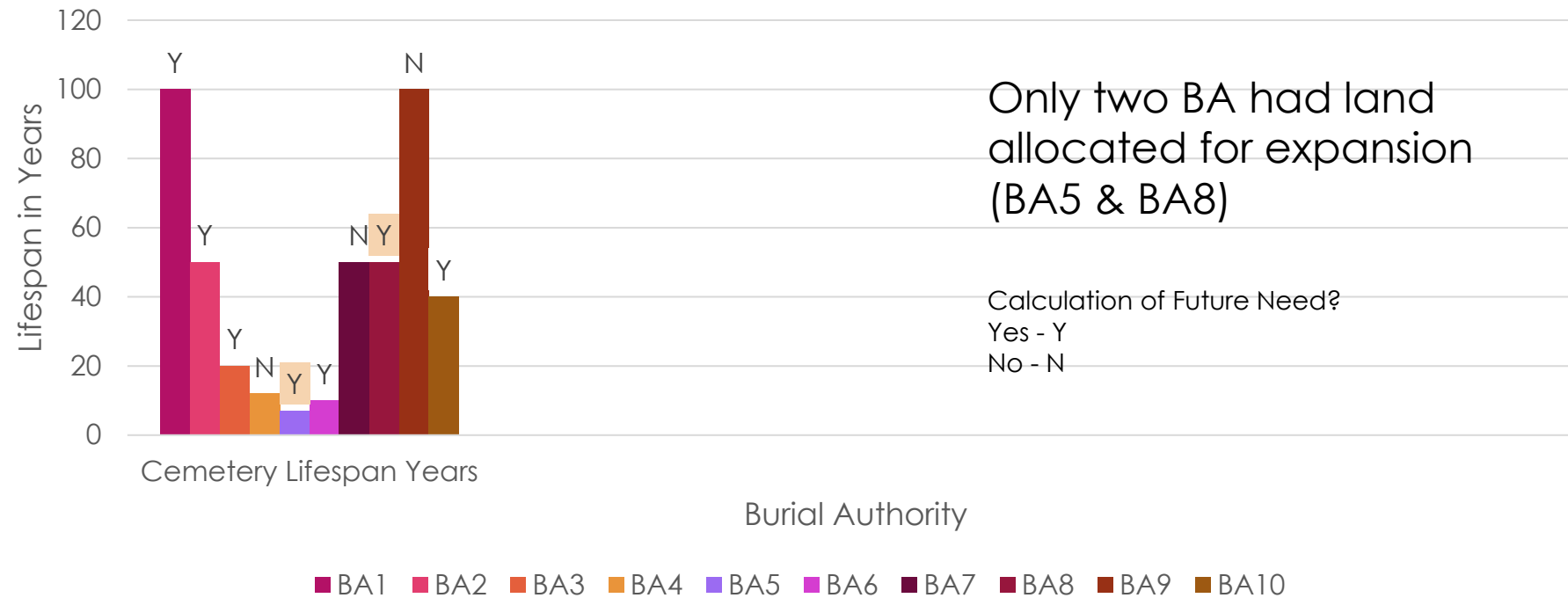


Hertfordshire

LPA Vs BA: NEED



BA Lifespan, Future Demand and Local Plan Allocation

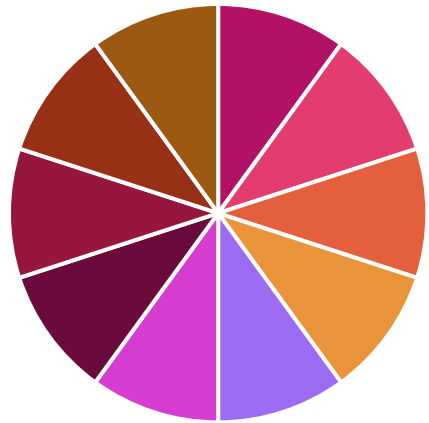


Professional Engagement?

LPA/BA	BA aware of the Local Plan Process?	LPA & BA links made?
01	Y	N
02	Y	Y
03	N	Y
04 (8-12 Years)	N	N
05 (5-7 Years)	N	N
06	Y	Y
07	Y	N
08	Y	Y
09	N	N
10	N	N

Support for a change in Legislation?

Burial Authority



■ BA1 ■ BA2 ■ BA3 ■ BA4 ■ BA5
■ BA6 ■ BA7 ■ BA8 ■ BA9 ■ BA10

Local Planning Authority



■ LPA1 ■ LPA2 ■ LPA3 ■ LPA4 ■ LPA5
■ LPA6 ■ LPA7 ■ LPA8 ■ LPA9 ■ LPA10



Barriers

Opportunities

Local Plan

Government Guidance

Grave Reuse

Allocations

Policy

Delegated Powers

Choice/Options

Change in Practices

Some key quotes:



'If ever there was a case of silo working; this is it'

'Cemeteries should be treated as infrastructure'



'Natural burials are even more land hungry'



'The planners haven't come to us, not even regarding open space'

'Provision should be a legislative requirement'



Digging up graves isn't a vote winner'



'The NPPF isn't balanced at all'
'The NPPF is too housing focused'



Key Messages



Cemeteries are permanent, emotional, commercial, civic spaces with similar pressures, like all other developments, to be sustainable.



Historic, single use, nature of grave space = unsustainable



Closures = demand pressures



Reduced resources = demand pressures



Climate Emergency = Net Zero or Carbon Neutral