

# SIC BURIAL GROUNDS GRASS CUTTING

## FAQs

### 1. What is the grass cutting height in burial grounds?

Grass is maintained at a height between 7.5 cm and 15 cm, as per the Council-approved specification.

### 2. Why are grass clippings not collected after mowing?

Since 2012, grass clippings have not been collected. This decision was reviewed and upheld in 2021, due to:

- High operational costs
- Negative impact on the Energy Recovery Plant
- Environmental and sustainability benefits

As a result, cut grass may remain on the surface, especially after wet weather, during high growth periods, or early in the season.



*Figure 1, Recently cut burial ground normal standard by mulching ride on mower*

### 3. Why does grass around memorials sometimes appear longer?

Strimming is carried out less frequently than mowing, typically during every second mowing cycle. This may result in longer grass near memorials and fixed features between visits.



*Figure 2 Longer grass between memorials is normal, at times*

#### 4. How often is the grass cut?

Grass is typically cut 10–14 times from April to November, depending on:

- Seasonal growth
- Ground and weather conditions

#### 5. What equipment is used to maintain burial ground grass?

We use:

- Ride-on mulching mowers (which return fine clippings to the soil)
- Electric handheld trimmers
- Push mowers, where suitable
- Electric leaf blowers (which help clear paths of grass clippings)

Note: The use of ride-on mowers and electric trimmers also helps reduce exposure to hand-arm vibration, which protects the health of our employees and supports compliance with HAVS (Hand and Arm Vibration Syndrome) safety standards.

#### 6. Are robotic mowers being used?

Yes, robotic mowers are being trialled in burial grounds at:

- Tingwall
- Sandwick
- Mid Yell

These continuously cut grass. However, manual strimming still occurs in these areas.



*Figure 3 Robotic mower, trials are being undertaken in Tingwall, then Sandwick and Mid Yell Burial Grounds*

#### 7. What might cause the grass to grow longer than usual?

Several factors may lead to grass temporarily exceeding the specification height:

1. Increased funeral activity
2. Greater geographical spread of interments
3. Staff sickness or annual leave
4. Equipment breakdowns or delays
5. Staffing shortages or contractor delays

6. Rapid summer growth or ideal growing conditions
7. Missed/delayed cuts or restricted access due to weather

### **8. How should visitors provide feedback?**

We welcome feedback but ask for respect and understanding of the agreed maintenance standards. Please avoid comments like “disgraceful” or “they don’t care.” Grounds staff and contractors are following Council policy and working diligently under challenging expectations.

### **9. What is the Council’s commitment?**

We are committed to maintaining these valued spaces to a high standard, while balancing:

- Respectful funeral services
- Operational and staffing challenges
- Changing weather conditions

We thank all visitors for their patience, understanding, and cooperation.