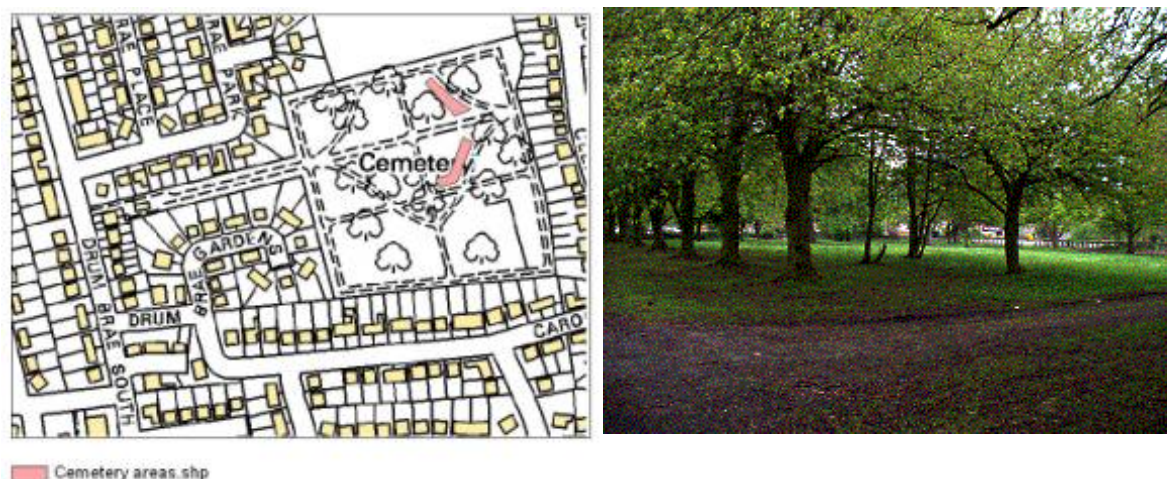


Choice of Burial Ground

The burial section of the steering group has visited the two cemeteries where we have been offered plots. Below we provide a brief description of the two cemeteries and try to assess their respective merits. Neither cemetery has a roofed place for services.

Corstorphine Hill

The cemetery at Corstorphine Hill lies at the western edge of the city. It has been in use since about the 1920s and was taken over by the council a decade or so ago. There is a war-grave section in the south-east corner, with a significant number of Polish graves, and a woodland burial section.



The cemetery is open, tranquil and attractive; it is well-maintained and only very few gravestones have had to be laid flat for safety reasons. It is accessed from Drum Brae along a difficult-to-spot narrow lane between two houses, passing some rather ugly modern garages. However, once past these, the wooded drive opens up to its full width, providing an imposing approach to the low hill on which the cemetery lies. The cemetery is well-wooded and is overlooked by houses to the north and east, some of which are separated from the cemetery only by a knee-high wall. The burial area is subdivided by roads into a number of sections; we have been offered a part of one of two of these subsections (see map). The council is offering to set aside 50 plots, and to separate our area off by a new hedge.

The positive attributes of the cemetery are: it is attractive and well-wooded; there is vehicle access right to the edge of the areas we might be allocated; it is close to the city bypass.

The drawbacks are: there are sporadic outbreaks of vandalism (there is no permanent staff presence and the houses overlooking the cemetery don't help); the cemetery appears to be used as a through route from the housing to Drum Brae; the graves are only 5 feet deep because the water table is very high; the cemetery is further from the city centre and the premises of the Co-op.

The Dean

The Dean Cemetery is a well-run private burial ground, operating since the 1840s. The cemetery is operated by a charitable trust that has sufficient resources to ensure long-term maintenance after the cemetery is full. It is calculated that there is enough space for burial for another 30 years.

The cemetery is in two parts - the old cemetery to the south, which is full, and the northern section, between Queensferry Road and Ravelston Terrace. The northern section is entered by imposing gates on the corner of Dean Path and Queensferry Road. The cemetery is broken up into small areas by mature hedging and trees.

The Trust is willing to allocate 25 plots to us (a plot may contain up to two burials, either inhumation or cremation) in one of two places. The first (more expensive and with more traffic noise) is on the southern side of a path at the northern edge of the cemetery. The other is at the western edge, in the last area not yet used for any burials. It is separated from the adjacent sections by low hedging. The plots would be in a line along the western boundary wall. This area is overlooked by an office block to the west in the grounds of Stuarts Melville school.



The advantages of the Dean are: it is a very beautiful cemetery, even compared to Corstorphine Hill, with a perhaps less-exposed feel; it has a tranquil atmosphere; it is secure, having a high wall and locked gates (and local people alert the cemetery staff to anything suspicious going on) - vandalism is extremely rare; there is a constant staff presence Monday-Friday. It is close to the Co-op premises.

Its drawbacks are that vehicle access is to about 30m from our section; there is some traffic noise from Queensferry Road and Ravelston Terrace; our section is overlooked (although that might be considered a benefit, for security). Twenty-five plots might not be seen as enough, but there is nothing to prevent us seeking the allocation of further plots once we come close to the end of our first allocation.

Conclusion

The burial group has visited both cemeteries. Both are attractive and well-maintained and, if we had no choice, the community would, we are sure, be happy to be allocated land in either. However, we do have to make a choice. There is no particular difference in price. As individuals, the members of the burial group all prefer the 'feel' of the Dean, and are reassured by the better security.