

East Lothian Council

FOI Ref: 2018/523675

Regarding each cemetery your council manages and/or owns, could you provide the following information

1) Do you have any rules or regulations regarding maximum coffin size for burial (width and length) and if so what are they?

2) Do you have any rules or regulations regarding maximum burial plot size (width and length) and if so what are they?

This is not a matter of regulation but one of practicality and governed in East Lothian by an ethos of always trying to accommodate customer need where possible and safely practicable.

Taking point 2 first, East Lothian Council's (ELC) standard Plot or Grave or Lair (all the same thing but we tend to refer to Lairs in East Lothian) size is in line with common practice across Scotland and has been generally standardised for many decades. Most of ELC's existing and newly developing cemeteries work to Lair sizes of 1.2m wide and 2.25m long (4' x 7'6"). Some older sites have narrower lairs set at 0.9m wide but these really are not suited to modern working practices and customer need by the time you account for the installation of shoring in an open lair.

In terms of Point 1, this again isn't governed by any regulations, simply what is practical in terms of safe handling and what will fit into the identified burial lair on each occasion. Once again our newer cemeteries have available length that will accommodate longer than normal coffins as long as the foot of the lair is bordered by a grass path that can be dug into. If though the foot of the lair is bordered by a Tar path then the length we can accommodate is governed by the space available. In general terms a maximum coffin length of 2.1m (7') would be accommodated in our standard lair pattern, allowing for the inclusion of shoring in the grave and utilisation of the longest shoring that we have available. Maximum overall width would be similarly governed by availability of shoring that can accommodate the required width of coffin.