

# OPTIONS FOR GRAVEYARDS AT RISK OF COASTAL EROSION

Graveyards along the North Norfolk coast are at risk of coastal erosion.

Coastwise is investigating factors that need to be considered when assessing potential future impacts and possible management responses.



Coastwise is focusing on three at-risk graveyards and exploring what can be done to support transition away from risk. There is a need to start discussions around what could happen and what actions could be taken to explore what plans need to be put in place.



Five **options** are available to graveyards at risk of coastal erosion. For some sites, not all options may be feasible and an appropriate transition plan may take elements from each.

**Do-minimum:**  
Keep the site open and continue burials, responding to health and safety risks as they arise. No proactive site management.

**Defend:**  
Protect the site from erosion in line with policy, if feasible, acceptable and justified. Offers a short-term solution.

**Cease Use and Close:**  
Reduce new burials over time and eventually close the site.

**Relocate:**  
Exhume and transfer burials to another site, either existing or new. Locations may vary case by case.

**Long-term Management:**  
Accept gradual loss of burials over time, after steps like closure or relocation. Focuses on managing erosion impacts with clear protocols in place.

For more information about Coastwise visit [www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/coastwise](http://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/coastwise)

To contact the Coastwise team, please email [coastwise@north-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:coastwise@north-norfolk.gov.uk)

**Why graveyards need attention in coastal management:**

- Ethical and religious considerations
- Environmental risks
- Community impact
- Heritage significance



- Next steps**
- Now**
    - Develop information for Parochial Church Councils, Vicars and Funeral Directors
  - Next**
    - Share findings with key local stakeholders;
    - Incorporate options into the Coastwise Community Transition Plan work commencing autumn 2025.
  - Long term**
    - Implement coastal transition plans to ensure a planned approach
    - Make stakeholders aware nationally of pathways and options for at-risk churchyards
    - Options can be implemented locally.