

'They have different ways of doing things'. Cemeteries, diversity and local place attachment'

This paper draws on research from cemeteries in the UK which explores their role in presenting and promoting local identity, and accommodating multifaith and multicultural practices. It draws on interviews with cemetery managers, and researcher taken photographs of gravestones, cemetery landscapes and other memorial practices to present a broad diversity both within and between groups, places and sites. Both the visual material and interview data highlight the strength of (local) place attachment in the expression of identity in both material memorials and practices.

The interview research suggests that there are different understandings of group and individual identities between those seen as 'indigenous' or 'immigrant', with assumptions of homogenous wishes for members of the latter category, which are also substantively different that those of the 'local' population. However, the visual material problematizes the simplicity of this designated difference. This unsettles static assumptions about identity, raising questions for those managing or developing cemetery space. The paper also explores notions of meaning and interpretation in visual vis-à-vis verbal research material.

The paper goes on to suggests that a more nuanced understanding of cultural and religious difference can