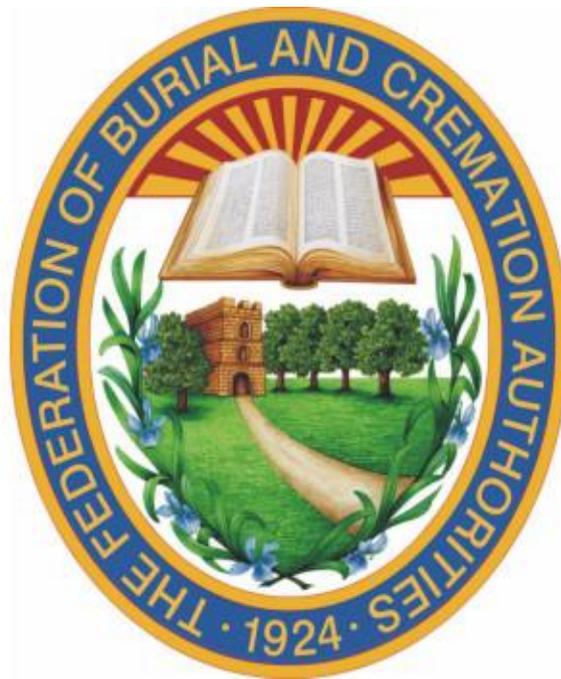


**A GUIDE TO**

# **CREMATION AND CREMATORIA**



**THE FEDERATION OF BURIAL AND CREMATION AUTHORITIES**

# THE FEDERATION OF BURIAL AND CREMATION AUTHORITIES

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## **GLOSSARY**

### **CREMATION**

The practice of disposing of the human body by combustion.

### **CREMATED REMAINS/ASHES**

Cremated remains/ashes are the incombustible remains including materials used in the manufacture of the coffin or casket which are left in the cremator once the last flicker of flame has extinguished.

### **CREMATORIUM**

The buildings in which the Service (the whole of it or committal portion only) is conducted and the cremation carried out.

### **CREMATORY**

The actual building or room in which the cremators are housed.

### **CREMATOR**

The equipment in which the process of cremation of the confined body is carried out. (The terms furnaces, incinerators, ovens, retorts, etc. are deprecated).

### **CREMATORIUM TECHNICIAN**

The qualified member of staff responsible for operating the cremators.

**N.B.** The Secretary of State's Guidance – Crematoria PG5/2(12) requires that "All operating staff should hold certification from a suitable organisation of their proficiency in operating cremators or, in the case of unqualified staff, should be under the direct supervision of an experienced certificated technician".

An appropriate training programme and certification is provided by the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities. Further information on the **Training and Examination Scheme for Crematorium Technicians (TEST)**, as referred to in PG5/2(12), may be obtained through the Secretary of the Federation.

### **STREWN**

In accordance with the request made by the Convocations of Canterbury and York, the word "strewn" is used for the dispersal of cremated remains/ashes in the Gardens of Remembrance in preference to the word "scattered" which by implication suggests widespread broadcast, rather than the reverent and more intimate disposal over a localised area.

# INTRODUCTION

The Federation, originally named the Federation of Cremation Authorities in Great Britain, was formed at a meeting held at the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1924 and rules were adopted. These Rules as amended from time to time were entirely redrafted as the Constitution and adopted at the Fourteenth Annual Meeting held at Edinburgh on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 1938. In 1949 a radical change in the membership of the Executive Committee occurred in consequence of the increasing influence of municipal authorities in the cremation movement.

To improve the benefits of the Federation's members, a Technical Committee was established in the post war era. This Committee meets frequently to consider and advise on the design, construction and operation of crematoria and the development of crematorium equipment and apparatus. The work of the Committee is extended on a personal basis by Technical Officers who assist operating and prospective Cremation Authorities with advice and guidance on local problems.

Standards of performance have been devised and informative publications produced of which this Guide to Cremation and Crematoria is the latest. However, the most important document has been the Code of Cremation Practice. This Code, first published in 1945 and periodically updated and revised, is essential in the maintenance of standards at crematoria and the observance of the Code is an obligation of membership of the Federation.

The Federation's quarterly journal "Resurgam" was first published in 1958 and continues to enjoy a wide circulation within the cremation movement both in the United Kingdom and overseas.

The first Joint Conference of Burial and Cremation Authorities was held in 1932 and, with the exception of the war years, it has been held annually attracting professionals and those concerned with the disposal of the dead and the many allied and sensitive matters associated with that service.

By 1968 it became necessary for an extensive revision of the Federation's Constitution to be considered so as to make it more suitable to the Federation's substantially increased membership and influence and the greater scope of its work in the Cremation Movement. The revised Constitution was adopted at the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting held at Brighton on the 30<sup>th</sup> September of that year.

To reflect the progressively changing requirements of Member Authorities, the Constitution has been modified on a number of occasions to enable it to better respond to the needs of its membership. At the Annual General Meeting in Southport in 2003 it was agreed to introduce affiliate membership for organisations involved in the provision of services to Burial and Cremation Authorities leading, in 2006, to a further extensive review of the Federation's Constitution allowing, amongst other things, full membership of the Federation to Burial Authorities.

Nearly all crematoria in the United Kingdom are represented in the membership of the Federation whose authority on the subject of cremation has long been respected both nationally and internationally. Government Departments consult the Federation on matters affecting the law and practice of cremation which is now recognised as an essential part of public health services.

# **CODE OF CREMATION PRACTICE**

# CODE OF CREMATION PRACTICE

## 1. CONDUCT

The cremation of a human body is a highly emotional occasion for those taking part in the service. This must never be forgotten by the staff of the Crematorium, who must combine to create and maintain an atmosphere of reverence and respect throughout the entire proceedings.

## 2. STAFF

The greatest care must be taken in the appointment of members of the Crematorium staff, any one of whom may, by conduct or demeanour, detract from the atmosphere of reverence which it is endeavoured to create. All staff employed in the operation of cremators must be suitably trained in the technical and ethical procedures and certified as specified in the Secretary of State's Guidance Notes of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 or any subsequent legislation made thereunder.

## 3. AFTER COMMITTAL

- (a) A body shall not be removed from the Crematorium after the Service of Committal except for a lawful purpose.
- (b) Subject to receiving the necessary Authority to Cremate, the coffin and its contents shall be put into the cremator, as soon as practicable, exactly as they have been received on the catafalque. A body not cremated on the same day as the coffin is received at the Crematorium may only be retained on the written consent of the Applicant for cremation and in circumstances deemed necessary by the Cremation Authority, including impacts on the environment. All bodies retained at the crematorium will be accommodated in secure and sanitary conditions within the building.
- (c) Once a coffin with its contents has been placed in the cremator, it shall not be touched or interfered with until the process of cremation is completed. On completion the whole of the Cremated Remains/Ashes shall be collected and shall be disposed of in accordance with the instruction received.

## 4. CORRECT IDENTITY

- (a) No coffin shall be accepted at any Crematorium unless it bears adequate particulars of the identity of the deceased person contained therein. If a coffin is encased, the cover and the coffin must bear adequate identity of the deceased person.
- (b) Every care must be taken to ensure correct identification throughout the whole proceedings from the moment the coffin is received onto the catafalque until the final disposal of the Cremated Remains/Ashes.

## 5. SEPARATELY CREMATED

Each coffin given to the care of the Cremation Authority shall be cremated separately.

## 6. COFFIN COVERS

When a re-useable cover is used to encase a coffin, signed authority must be given by the Applicant for the cremation authorising its use and consenting to its subsequent removal from the Crematorium.

**7. METAL RESIDUES**

Any metal found amongst the Cremated Remains/Ashes shall be disposed of in accordance with the directions of the Cremation Authority or Higher Authority.

**8. CREMATED REMAINS/ASHES – CARE TO BE TAKEN**

The utmost care shall be taken to ensure that the Cremated Remains/Ashes, following their removal from the cremator, shall be kept separate and suitably identified. The Cremated Remains/Ashes shall be placed in a separate container awaiting final disposal. If the Cremated Remains/Ashes are to be disposed of in a Garden of Remembrance, this shall be conducted with reverence and respect. Cremated Remains/Ashes to be conveyed by a carrier service should be placed in a suitably labelled robust container and dealt with according to recommendations laid down by the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities.

**9. CREMATORS AND ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT**

Cremators and all other ancillary equipment used in the Crematorium shall be kept in good repair and maintained in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations, and the requirements of the current guidance Notes issued under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 or subsequent legislation.

**10. STATUTORY REGULATIONS**

All cremations shall be carried out according to the provisions of the Cremations Acts and the Regulations made thereunder, and any subsequent legislation.

Issued October 2014

**GUIDANCE**  
**FOR THE USE OF**  
**COFFIN COVERS**

The Executive Committee of the Federation accepts that the use of an outer cover to encase a coffin is within the ethical standards of the Code of Cremation Practice. The decision to accept the use of the cover is a matter for individual Cremation Authorities whose judgement may be influenced by the layout of the crematorium buildings and the ability to remove a cover from the crematorium without causing offence or concern to visitors to the crematorium.

The following detail is offered as guidance for the controlled use of coffin covers:

1. Prior notice of at least 24hours should be given to the appropriate crematorium officer when a cover is to be used.
2. A signed authority should be given by the Applicant for the cremation authorising use of the cover and consenting to its subsequent removal from the crematorium.
3. Both the cover and the coffin must bear adequate identity of the deceased person contained therein.
4. The Cremation Authority should be satisfied, by prior inspection if necessary, that the cover is designed in such a way that removal of the coffin is easily facilitated and in a way that prevents the possibility of damage being caused to the coffin or accident or injury to staff.
5. Consideration should be given to the cover dimensions, in particular the width including handles, so as to ensure that it can pass through any apertures such as may be encountered with a lowering catafalque or any other restricted opening adjacent to a catafalque.
6. The coffin should have sufficient strength and rigidity not only to contain the body but also to withstand the rigours involved when it is charged into a cremator.
7. To enable easy removal of the coffin from its cover it is advisable to have two biers available, both with roller facility.
8. The Cremation Authority should not accept responsibility for any damage to the cover howsoever caused.
9. There is a need to ensure that there is sufficient space within the crematorium building to house the covers pending their collection by the funeral director.
10. The funeral director should provide sufficient staff for the collection of the covers which should be at a time and in a manner agreed with crematorium management.

**RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE ESTABLISHMENT  
OF CREMATORIA**

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# RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CREMATORIA

## INTRODUCTION

The Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities is approached frequently by persons, companies and local authorities requesting information that will assist them in the task of establishing a crematorium. Many problems have to be addressed and carefully considered when conducting a feasibility study or preparing a scheme for submission to the Planning Authority.

The information summarised in the following pages provides advice on the whole field of policy, siting, planning and operating a crematorium. Further information concerning these and all technical subjects may be obtained by members on application to the Federation's Executive Officer. Adequate advice on problems of a local nature can only be given after consultation has taken place between representatives of the prospective cremation authority and the Federation's Technical Officers.

## PLANNING

It is assumed that before any organisation proceeds with the formulation of plans and the submission of a planning application, the local authority and local residents would have been consulted first to help establish the business case for a new facility.

The length and duration of journey and the availability of service times at existing neighbouring crematoria can influence the strength of local support. In addition, the application of higher non-resident cremation fees at neighbouring crematoria can have an adverse effect on the local community and may support the need for a new local facility.

Broadly speaking, crematoria undertaking 1000 or more cremations per annum are most likely to be viable, although there are a number of crematoria, mainly serving rural or island communities, undertaking fewer than this.

It will be necessary to make an assessment of how many cremations may be expected if a crematorium is to be established, based upon local population size and growth projections from the Office for National Statistics. Plans should take account of the proximity and capacity of neighbouring crematoria and where relevant the future capacity of local cemeteries. It would be helpful, therefore, if information is obtained to establish the number of deaths in the area during the preceding five years which resulted in cremation being undertaken at existing crematoria, including any trends in terms of growth or decline in numbers.

## FINANCE

**Single Authority.** Local authorities with populations of approximately 120,000 or more would be in a position to provide and manage a crematorium with a reasonable expectation of operating on a sound financial basis after the initial years of capital repayment and associated loan charges.

**Combined Authorities.** In a situation where the population is below 120,000, capital funding can be provided and running costs shared by several local authorities forming a joint management committee under the provisions of the appropriate Local Government Acts. Private companies may also decide to invest in these circumstances.

**Joint Crematorium Board.** Individual local authorities are empowered to appoint joint crematorium boards under the Public Health Act 1936 to provide and maintain one or more crematoria for the areas of the respective authorities. The constituent authorities each have representation on the Board, which is deemed a corporate body in its own right, having perpetual succession, a common seal and the power to hold land for the purposes of its constitution.

**Joint Crematorium Committee.** Authorities can combine under the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000 to form a joint crematorium committee. Financial responsibility and member representation needs to be agreed in advance. The Joint Committee will ultimately be deemed to be the Cremation Authority under the appropriate Cremation Acts.

**Private Company.** A private company and/or consortium of companies may provide the necessary capital to enable the establishment and/or the management of a crematorium.

**Joint Venture.** A local authority may wish to consider a joint venture with a private company to establish and operate a crematorium.

## **APPOINTMENT OF ARCHITECT**

The appointed architect should preferably have previous experience in the design and development of crematoria, and should be in consultation with an expert in crematoria management and operation from the outset. It is also advisable that the officer responsible for the eventual management of the crematorium should be involved as early as possible in the planning and development of the facility.

## **SITING OF CREMATORIA**

The process of site selection should be aimed at achieving quietness and seclusion. A woodland or parkland setting, or an area of undulating ground with good natural features and mature trees, would enable the establishment of a good natural setting with a minimum of horticultural treatment. A visual impact assessment will help to identify any attractive views beyond the boundaries of the site that could be usefully preserved as part of the overall landscape design.

A proposed crematorium will require approval under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and current Building Regulations. Therefore the co-operation and sympathetic support of the local Planning Officer in the selection and layout of the site and buildings is highly desirable. Pre-application discussions with local authorities are highly recommended and are encouraged by Government.

Government policy, set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advocates sustainable development by the use of previously developed land, bringing it back into beneficial use. However, previously developed land can often prove unsuitable, due to land contamination which is unacceptable for the interment of ashes, or due to the presence of residential property within 200 yards. There is a growing recognition that new crematoria will be built in a countryside location close to the urban fringe.

Ideal sites are rarely to be located in urban areas and it is emphasised that suitability of setting is of greater importance than its location in close proximity to population centres. Often, this will involve the consideration of sites within the Green Belt, which is the subject of restrictive planning controls. Government guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms a general presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt “except in very special circumstances”.

All proposals in the Green Belt should provide evidence of a comprehensive site search along with demonstration of local need at the planning application stage to support special circumstances.

Community support from funeral directors, amenity societies and the general public will help demonstrate the local need. The bulk and height of buildings within the Green Belt is also a sensitive issue that may require a sympathetic and considered approach to their design.

A careful survey of any proposed site will help identify the presence of any underground services/utilities and other constraints on development such as ground contamination or mine shafts. It is also important to ensure that the presence of protected species or trees covered by tree preservation orders is identified so that provision can be made to avoid their disturbance. The aim should be to enhance wildlife habitats, wherever possible, as a part of any new development.

The site should be reasonably accessible by public transport and should have adequate water, electricity and drainage services. A mains gas supply would be an advantage as the supply, storage and cost of liquid petroleum gas (LPG) may be more expensive.

Where local circumstances indicate that the most convenient site for a crematorium would be within or attached to an existing cemetery, the adequate planting of trees and shrubs is recommended to screen the crematorium building from the roads, car park and the Gardens of Remembrance. Experience has shown that some crematoria have been sited very satisfactorily in conjunction with cemeteries, and the resultant saving of land, capital and reduced administrative costs can be of great benefit.

A minimum of two hectares (approximately five acres) per estimated 1,000 cremations per annum is recommended to provide sufficient space for the crematorium, gardens of remembrance, traffic circulation, parking, and a modest amount of space around the building. The long term needs of the area should be carefully assessed at the initial design stage and sufficient land acquired initially to allow for future expansion to accommodate any increased demand for service provision.

Section 5 of the Cremation Act 1902 states that: “No crematorium shall be constructed nearer to any dwelling house than two hundred yards, except with the consent, in writing, of the owner, lessee, and occupier of such house, nor within fifty yards of any public highway, nor in the consecrated part of the burial ground of any burial authority”.

In the case of crematoria established in Greater London subject to London County Council (General Powers) Act 1935 Section 64, and 1971 Section 7, the 200 yards limit from any dwelling house is reduced to 100 yards.

One of the most intrusive elements of any new crematorium is the chimney stack, which must be designed to comply with the requirements of the Secretary of State's Process Guidance Note 5/2(12) Statutory Guidance for Crematoria issued in support of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

All new crematoria (not existing processes on 1 October 2006) are required to fit abatement plant to remove mercury and dioxins, and the stack height is calculated at a suitable height for the release of abated gases (normally shorter than the optimum height for unabated gases) which require sufficient dispersion and dilution in the atmosphere to ensure that they ground at harmless concentrations.

The methodology for calculating the stack height is contained in HMIP Technical Guidance Note (Dispersion) D1 for Part B Processes “Guidelines on Discharge Stack Heights for Polluting Emissions”.

Prospective cremator manufacturers will normally be able to carry out these calculations on behalf of the client, taking into account building size and shape, location, topography, meteorological data and background pollution levels. Generally, for new crematoria with abatement plant, it is unlikely that the calculated stack height would need to be more than 2 metres higher than the building height.

All UK crematoria must operate under the Secretary of State's Process Guidance for Crematoria 5/2(12) which gives guidance on the Best Available Techniques aimed at providing a strong framework for consistent regulation under the statutory Local Air Pollution Prevention and Control (LAPPC) regime in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. This requires an application to the local authority regulator for a permit to operate, which is then issued under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 or Pollution Prevention and Control (Scotland) Regulations 2000.

It is recommended that as part of the feasibility study to provide a new facility, the appropriate Regulatory Authority is consulted when interpretation of the regulations can be discussed prior to the making of a formal permit application. This consultation is particularly important in Scotland where SEPA may vary the permit conditions recommended in the Process Guidance Note. Applications must be advertised, and will be placed upon a public register. The public and statutory consultees are given the opportunity to comment and have their views taken into account.

## **SITE ACCESS**

Entrances and exits from crematorium grounds must be carefully considered.

Careful consideration should be given to the siting or subsequent development of crematorium facilities in close proximity to any schools, factories, trading estates, sports grounds or other facility which may be deemed incompatible within the vicinity of a crematorium. The immediate approach to a crematorium through a residential road, resulting in the constant passage of funeral processions or traffic congestion, would almost certainly attract objection on road safety grounds and may require the commissioning of a traffic impact survey, and upon completion, a Road Safety Audit.

Entrance and exit gates should be set back from the road and should incorporate a pedestrian gateway and path. Entrances that would require funeral corteges and accompanying private cars to cross the flow of traffic should not be sited on main trunk roads. However, if this is unavoidable, then there may be a need for a roundabout, or space in the central reservation of a dual carriageway, or a central turn right lane on a single carriageway, to allow the hearse and accompanying private cars to wait in a safe and dignified manner.

The successful operation of a crematorium is dependent on the adequate separation of funeral corteges in both time and space, with each funeral party being provided with as much privacy as possible. The flow of traffic to and from the car park and the building should ideally be in one direction only and should be simple, dignified and uninterrupted. Where possible, entrance and exit routes should be screened and separated to avoid funeral corteges passing each other. This discipline also applies to the movement of mourners within the building. Therefore, the positioning of the entrance and exit to the chapel and waiting room, public toilets and floral tribute areas should ensure that funeral groups progress through the building in sequence.

An adequate car park is essential, and should be placed as near to the chapel as possible but having regard to the necessity to avoid disturbance by noise. The size can be estimated by equating it to approximately two thirds of the total seating capacity of the chapel. A proportion of parking spaces should be allocated close to the chapel for use by disabled people to accord with the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations - "Access to and Use of Buildings" and the guidance contained within BS8300:2009 "Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people" or the Department for Transport "Inclusive Mobility - A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure".

Only the hearse and principal mourners' vehicles should be allowed beyond the parking area to the porte-cochere.

A minimum of two hectares (approximately five acres) per estimated 1,000 cremations per annum is recommended. This area includes the space needed for traffic circulation, parking, a modest amount of space around the crematorium building and the gardens of remembrance. The long term needs of the area should be carefully assessed at the outset and sufficient land acquired initially to allow for future expansion due to increased demand for service provision.

## **BUILDINGS**

### **Main Entrance**

Buildings should be designed to allow staff to circulate easily to any part, e.g. taking wreaths from a coffin after committal to the floral tribute viewing area, without disturbing any funeral service that may be in progress. Any part of the establishment that will be used by the public must be designed to allow access for disabled persons and ideal planning will place all floors on one level. The provision of a fire alarm and emergency lighting will be required to enable safe evacuation of the building in an emergency.

In the uncertain climate of this country a porte-cochere is very desirable, enabling the coffin to be removed from the hearse and mourners to pass from the vehicles under cover. The length should be at least 8 metres to enable the end of the hearse and one car to be under cover. Care should be taken that ample width (not less than 4.5 metres) is provided to allow doors on both sides of cars to be opened fully. The minimum height should be at least 3.3 metres to allow room for taller vehicles e.g. the occasional horse drawn carriage.

**Entrance Hall or Vestibule.** A spacious entrance hall between the porte-cochere and the chapel is an asset in many ways, allowing mourners to congregate under cover and in full view of the main drive, conserving the heat in the chapel by providing a buffer from the colder outside atmosphere, and reducing the risk of noise intrusion from outside.

**Waiting Room.** This should be large enough to provide seating for approximately ten per cent of the total seating capacity of the chapel and should have windows or glass doors which allow the arrival of the cortege to be seen by those waiting. It is desirable that mourners do not enter the entrance hall to access the waiting room or toilets, to avoid disturbing a preceding service already in progress, therefore entry to the waiting room should be from outside, possibly from under the porte-cochere.

**Toilet Facilities.** Toilets, which must include facilities for disabled persons in accordance with current building regulations, should be easily accessible before the service, and immediately after the service at the point where mourners disperse after the ceremony. Importantly, toilets that are adjacent to the chapel entrance should be accessible without the need to enter the Entrance Hall which may disturb a preceding or following ceremony, and care must be taken to avoid plumbing noises being audible in the chapel. Separate male and female toilets are normally desirable; however unisex toilets and disabled facilities have become more acceptable, and may be appropriate at smaller crematoria.

**Vestry.** It is desirable for the officiant to meet the cortege at the door of the chapel; therefore the vestry should be located in the front of the building adjacent to the entrance hall. Windows should be sited to allow the officiant to see the cortege arriving, and access to toilet facilities should be provided.

**Chapel.** Chapels should take into account Christian, non-Christian and secular usage and must not be consecrated for the exclusive use of any particular denomination. A system of easily changed religious symbols should be installed, and where a cross is hung on a wall, it should be capable of being easily concealed or removed.

It is estimated that no more than thirty mourners will attend in 50% of cremation services, and only on exceptional occasions does the number exceed eighty. It seems, therefore, that seating accommodation should be provided for some 80-100 people. A chapel of this size will accommodate the majority of services without destroying that intimate atmosphere so desirable with a smaller congregation. Where cremation numbers are likely to exceed 2,000 per annum then the ideal is to provide two chapels, one being for the more intimate service (approximately 20 seats) and the other large enough for at least 80-100 people.

Care should be taken to respect community needs such as, for example, the provision of additional standing room where there is a local tradition for large funerals, as for example, in some areas of London.

The architect would incorporate seating to harmonise with the building. Fixed pews with incorporated kneelers have been widely used, but require particular attention to the comfort of people using them. Upholstered chairs offer greater flexibility in terms of layout, particularly if relatives require a more informal arrangement.

If chairs are used they should have book scoops attached, and be clipped together with links to minimise movement and noise during the service and thus preserving alignment. Whatever system of seating is adopted, provision should be made to accommodate wheelchairs within the main seating area to avoid their undue prominence and prevent obstruction of the aisles.

It should be remembered that the building will have to serve the Authority for many years and therefore all furnishing and fittings should be of the finest quality.

A minister's desk or lectern should be available, and equipped with a lectern light, a microphone connected to the public address and loop system, and controls to operate or signal the closure of catafalque curtains at the committal.

As a general observation on chapel interior design and furnishing it is strongly recommended that eccentric or purely secular features should be avoided. Experience has shown that mourners derive much comfort from a traditionally spiritual atmosphere engendered by the visual arrangements in the chapel. The décor should be simple, using natural materials and muted colours.

Entrance doors through which the bearers pass with the coffin should be at least 1.8 metres wide, with a minimum height of 2.5 metres.

Separate exit doors from the chapel should be provided so as to avoid mourners arriving at the chapel meeting those leaving the previous service. All doors should be free of projections, be able to be held open, and should operate silently. Depending on the layout of the crematorium, it may be appropriate to consider acoustic insulation of the chapel to minimise disturbance from mourners assembling in or departing from other parts of the building.

Windows should be provided where possible, at a number of levels to provide natural daylight and enable mourners to view a restful and attractive external landscape or enclosed garden; the designer should avoid a totally introspective environment. However, the windows should also be positioned in such a way as to ensure the privacy of mourners during the funeral service. Tinted anti-sun glass will help to preserve privacy, and will assist in reducing glare and heat gain from south facing windows.

**Music.** This aspect of the crematorium facilities is of considerable importance and to overlook it in the initial planning of the building can produce bad acoustical conditions and other musical difficulties that may not easily be overcome at a later date.

With the rapid advancement of technology and the internet, there is now an extensive range of facilities that can be incorporated into a crematorium, including realistic digital organs, internet based music systems, and remotely viewed web casting, etc.

An organ is considered to be essential and an organ supplier, as well as an acoustics expert, and a music system provider, should all be consulted at the initial design stage of the chapel. The general public expect new crematoria to have the facility to play recorded music, and be able to provide a catalogue of music to select from. There are numerous companies who provide high quality bespoke systems which enable specific requests to be downloaded over the internet, and who will install all of the necessary equipment, including loop systems, speakers, microphones and web cams, etc. Additional speakers should be installed in the entrance hall, and outside under the porte-cochere, for those occasions when excessive numbers of people attend.

It is essential for the apparatus provided for recorded music should be of very high quality, especially designed for the chapel and expertly installed, as the quality of the musical arrangements can affect the quality and value of the funeral service and, in consequence, the reputation of the crematorium.

**Closed Circuit Television.** The use of closed circuit television, to allow staff to monitor traffic, chapel and crematory arrangements and the security of the facility and grounds, can be of great benefit to the smooth operation of the facilities. Crematoria incorporating two chapels would find such equipment invaluable. Display screens could also be made available in the waiting room, vestry and bearers room, for example, but only displaying the view from the chapel camera.

**Catafalque.** There are three main types of catafalque in use at the present time:

- a. Lowering the coffin into the catafalque during the committal by using a hydraulic or mechanical lift. A canopy may be provided upon which the wreaths may be placed;
- b. Passing the coffin through the end or side wall of the chapel during the committal; and
- c. Where the catafalque and coffin remains stationary and curtains or screens are drawn across the recess.

A system of electrical signalling (in duplicate) should be installed to enable the Minister, person conducting the service or Chapel Attendant to signal that the apparatus is to be set in motion.

**Type a.** There are so many divergences of opinion over the catafalque and method of committal that it would be unwise to be dogmatic over any one method. In the early days of cremation the lowering of the catafalque was considered symbolic of the earth burial and therefore to be avoided, but it was later considered by many to be an association with tradition. Should the building be designed with a basement crematory, then this type will be essential. The lift section of a descending catafalque should not be less than 3.25 metres long by 1.20 metres wide, the top of which should be no more than 1.2 metres above the surrounding floor level.

A basement, however, cannot be recommended owing to the lack of ventilation, difficulties with access to replace equipment, costliness of any future extension and the likelihood of noise rising to the chapel.

**Type b.** Unless movement is to be effected by a built-in manually operated conveyor belt, it has little to recommend its adoption in a new building, and if it is to be used in an adaptation of an existing chapel, care should be taken in its design and maintenance to ensure its silence in operation, and, in the avoidance of uneven movement of the coffin.

**Type c.** This is perhaps the method to be recommended at the present time with the catafalque or bier, on which the coffin rests during the funeral ceremony, being placed in the centre of the chapel or offset from a central position, so that it can be seen by the congregation from all parts of the chapel. This arrangement would also enable an altar table with the cross to be placed in a central recess or small chancel which, when not desired in certain ceremonies, could be removed, screened off, leaving the appearance of the chapel symmetrical and complete. At the committal, curtains may be drawn in front of, or around the catafalque, which will remain closed for the remainder of the ceremony and until the coffin is removed, when the curtains are then re-opened ready for the next service.

A fixed catafalque should be at least 2.6 metres long and 1 metre wide, but the height can vary considerably depending on the local method adopted by funeral directors. Where a coffin is carried in on shoulders, 1 metre to 1.2 metres is advised, but where the coffin is transported on putlogs or a trolley bier, then the height would need to be much lower. Liaison with local funeral directors would be advisable before any design is finalised.

It is highly recommended that there should be no steps of any kind from the chapel entrance to the catafalque.

**Committal Hall and Crematory.** A committal hall is desirable in order to provide soundproofing chamber between the chapel and the various unavoidable noises of the crematory. The hall should measure at least 4 metres between the opening from the catafalque and the doors to the crematory.

When planning finishes for the crematory walls, floors and fronts of cremators, it should be remembered that occasionally committals are witnessed by some of the relatives, so finishes should be impervious and easily maintained. It is essential that initial provision should be made, at the design stage, for the chosen number of cremators with abatement equipment and with additional space allowed for a possible addition should the annual number of cremations exceed original forecasts. Adequate space should be provided in front of the cremators for raking and charging, and normally 4.5 metres is ideal. Space should also be considered for a coffin storage rack to temporarily hold coffins until a cremator becomes available, and possibly a refrigerated unit in case overnight storage becomes necessary. An effective thermostatically controlled ventilation system will be required to ensure satisfactory working conditions for operatives, particularly with the additional heat gain experienced from abatement plant.

**Viewing Room.** Ideally a viewing room should be provided to enable the bereaved to view the coffin being charged into the cremator. This is particularly important to Hindus and Sikhs. Access to the viewing room should be arranged so that witnesses are able to leave without disturbing a following service.

**Cremators.** Careful consideration should be given to the make and type of cremator to be installed and enquiries should be made from a number of other authorities regarding their experiences with the type of units that they are operating. Cremator manufacturers will be able to facilitate visits to other crematoria where their cremation equipment can be seen in use, and will be able to provide a list of reference sites where their cremators are installed. Cremators and other ancillary equipment should conform to the specifications and performance criteria included in the Secretary of State's Process Guidance Note 5/2(12) Statutory Guidance for Crematoria issued in support of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Combustion air fans, gas meters heating systems mercury, abatement plant and other necessary apparatus should be situated adjoining the cremators and as far from the chapel as possible to avoid noise and vibration. Due to the possibility of mains power failure or low voltage, it is advisable to consider the provision of a standby generator.

**The following facilities may be considered for inclusion in the planning of a crematorium depending on the size, situation and projected numbers of cremations per annum.**

#### **ANCILLARY ACCOMMODATION**

- A. *Bearers' Room.*** May be provided for the use of the bearers whilst the service is in progress, and could be equipped with seating, refreshments, and a display screen showing the CCTV view of the chapel.
- B. *Chapel of Rest.*** Where coffined body may repose during the interim period between death and the cremation service, as might occasionally be required. This building should be easily accessed externally by funeral directors bringing coffins to the crematorium and should be out of view of visitors and mourners arriving for funeral services.

- C. **Coffin Storage Facilities.** Necessary accommodation should be provided adjoining the committal hall for coffins to rest after the funeral service to await cremation.
- D. **Treatment Room for Cremated Remains/Ashes.** Absolutely essential and should include equipment for cooling and reduction of cremated remains/ashes for final disposal. Dust extraction and arrestment facilities must be provided where cremated remains/ashes are transferred between containers or equipment. Separate and secure facilities should be provided for the storage of cremated remains/ashes awaiting disposal.
- E. **Staff Room.** Should include mess room and toilet facilities.
- F. **Storage Room.** Should provide adequate cupboard space for stores and equipment.
- G. **Office.** Where the administrative staff are housed will depend entirely on the site and whether a cemetery is incorporated. It is essential that the public should not have to walk a long distance from the entrance to the office, which should also be situated in a position so that mourners are not disturbed during services.
- H. **Chapel of Remembrance.** Used for the storing and display of the Books of Remembrance, in suitable cabinets. Ideally this chapel should be separate from the main building and close to the Garden of Remembrance. Visitors, who wish to view the Books of Remembrance, or quietly meditate in the chapel, should not be disturbed by mourners attending services and vice versa. The display cabinet should be designed to facilitate viewing by disabled visitors.
- I. **Floral Tributes.** Ample provision should be made for the display of floral tributes. The initial reception point for displaying them would best be sited near the exit which the mourners will use from the chapel, but care should be taken to avoid noise from this point being heard in the chapel. A covered area will provide shelter for mourners during inclement weather. Provision should also be made for the accommodation of cut flowers that will be brought by visitors to the crematorium and Chapel of Remembrance at any time.
- J. **Staff Housing.** Where staff housing is to be provided careful consideration should be given to siting, if this is to be within the grounds. Adjacent to the entrance gates is not necessarily the best site and it should be borne in mind that staff who work together each day do not always wish to live in close proximity to each other or directly on their job.

## METHODS OF DISPOSAL

**General.** The increase in the number of cremations taking place annually compels Cremation Authorities to give careful consideration to the whole question of commemoration. The following summary indicates the recent practice in the disposal of cremated remains/ashes:

Strewn in Grounds	20.08%
Interred in Grounds	6.73%
Placed above ground at Crematorium	0.26%
Removed from the Crematorium	71.58%
No collectable cremated remains/ashes obtained	0.16%
Retained Pending Instructions	1.19%
	100.00%

**Interment.** Cremated remains/ashes are often conveyed to cemeteries for interment in an existing family grave.

The desire to save land, which was a primary object of the cremation movement, has discouraged many authorities from developing new grave facilities exclusively to contain cremated remains/ashes. The interment of cremated remains/ashes in various areas of the Crematorium's Garden of Remembrance is often carried out as an alternative to surface strewing although the use of caskets in these circumstances should be precluded.

**Strewing of Cremated Remains/Ashes.** Cremated remains/ashes may be strewn in the Garden of Remembrance either on the surface of formal or informal lawn areas, in the shrubberies or in natural woodland. Where possible, it is desirable for the location of the strewn remains to be recorded within defined periodic strewing areas, situated well beyond the site of any future building developments or extensions. Many authorities have been disappointed with the appearance of lawns following surface strewing of cremated remains/ashes. If this procedure is followed, a range of alternative sites for strewing should be provided to provide time for the turf to recover. A widespread or light covering of fine soil or compost after strewing is also advisable.

### **Commemoration.**

Experience has shown that when cremated remains/ashes are dispersed in the grounds attached to the crematorium, many relatives require some form of memorial. A choice of at least two types should be provided, but for limited periods only. Considerable practical and legal difficulties have been encountered in respect of perpetuity arrangements that were made many years ago and which cannot now be altered. Wherever possible, provision should be made for commemorative floral tributes to be accommodated within the general vicinity of the memorials. Visitors to memorials will appreciate a dedicated car parking area, set apart from that for normal funeral traffic. Informal seating and the provision of one or more shelters should also be considered.

**Recordia.** Methods vary at individual crematoria. The erection of stone or bronze tablets on well-designed cloisters or specially constructed walls became the accepted practice until about 1940. This commemorative facility, with minor variations, has recently been revived and is available at some crematoria.

**Memorial Roses, Trees and Shrubs.** Some crematoria have facilities in their gardens for the planting of memorial roses, trees and shrubs to which may be attached a suitably inscribed plaque. Additionally, many cremation authorities operate schemes that allow for the planting of bulbs (crocus, daffodil, etc.) in certain areas of the Garden of Remembrance.

**Garden Seats, etc.** The provision of garden seats and architectural features offer another form of commemoration in harmony with the garden.

**Bronze Memorial Plates.** Authorities have adopted the method of fixing bronze memorial plates to specially constructed, chamfered terra-cotta brick or stone edging to the walks in the Garden of Remembrance, or a similar edging of stone or green slate directly inscribed on the chamfer. Relatives appreciate this form of commemoration when it allows the inscription to be placed in close proximity to where the cremated remains/ashes were strewn. This method enables many thousands of memorials to be provided without detracting from the beauty of the garden.

**Books of Remembrance.** These are regarded as being the ideal form of commemoration because of their unlimited capacity, the simplicity of the inscription, and comparative inexpensiveness.

The Book of Remembrance provides a lasting form of memorial to those cremated. It may be in four quarterly volumes, handmade, covered in natural calf vellum and richly tooled in gold. Lettering executed by hand by modern craftsmen provides a permanent record comparable with the carrying on of the tradition of the best-illuminated manuscripts of mediaeval times. An opening is provided for each day of the year and the Book, housed in a protective case, remains open each day at the appropriate page, so that entries may be seen on each anniversary of the date of death and at other times by arrangement.

Digital Books of Remembrance are also available where visitors can select the inscription they wish to see via a touch screen display facility at the Crematorium or which may be accessed on-line via the world-wide-web.

**Columbaria.** This type of commemoration is probably one of the oldest recorded, however, it has not been provided for in most post-war crematoria. Niches can be leased in columbaria for a period of time and ornate and well-crafted urns can be supplied by the cremation authority to hold the cremated remains/ashes. There are 2 main types of Columbaria. The 'Open or Closed' style, the 'Open style usually located indoors and the Urn remains on view, however with the 'Closed style' a memorial plate with a suitable inscription is used to enclose the niche.

## **GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE**

An essential part of any scheme will be the Garden of Remembrance and landscape architects of experience should be retained to make it a place of quietness and beauty.

When the site chosen for the crematorium has an attractive, natural landscape, as recommended previously, this should be disturbed as little as possible and any necessary development should only be complementary to the existing natural features. A formal layout is not desirable, excepting as might be necessary adjacent to the buildings to harmonise with the style of architecture. Wherever possible, the grounds should be accessible by wheelchair and the layout of the grounds should incorporate a minimum number of steps.

The main purpose of the Garden must not be overlooked and most of the area should be available for the strewing or burial of cremated remains/ashes.

On a flat bare site it is important to get quick-growing trees and shrubs planted at once with a long term planting scheme for forest trees for the ultimate screening and maturing of the site. Memorial areas should be screened and separated from those parts of the grounds used by mourners attending funerals or viewing floral tributes. The main avenues of traffic should be screened as much as possible to retain areas for quiet thought and meditation.

## **ADAPTATION OF CEMETERY CHAPELS**

It is reasonable to suppose that small urban and rural areas with populations of say 20,000 to 50,000 and isolated from other centres of population could be provided with cremation facilities by the adaptation of an existing chapel on the unconsecrated portion of a cemetery. This has been achieved satisfactorily on a number of occasions. Also, under certain conditions, chapels and other buildings surrounded by, and situated on, consecrated ground can be deconsecrated in order to make a conversion possible.

The observations made in the preceding pages under various headings would, in the main, apply to adaptation schemes, but possibly on a less ambitious scale and modifications would have to be made accordingly within existing limitations.

## **REQUIREMENTS BEFORE OPENING**

Prior to the opening of a crematorium, the cremation authority is required to certify to the Secretary of State that the crematorium has been completed and is properly equipped for the disposal of human remains by burning (Cremation Act 1952, s.1(1), as amended by the Local Authority Planning and Land Act 1980. Furthermore, no cremations may take place unless and until the Secretary of State has been notified of the opening of the crematorium (Cremation Regulations, 1930, r.3)

The requirements for the opening of a crematorium in Scotland are contained in the Cremation Act 1952, s.1(3), as amended by the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and the Cremation (Scotland) Regulations 1935, r. 3.

**CREMATORIA**  
**RECOMMENDED PRACTICES AND**  
**PROCEDURES**

# **CREMATORIA**

## **RECOMMENDED PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES**

Each Cremation Authority and members of the Staff will be conversant with the Code of Cremation Practice, which forms the basis on which this important service is undertaken.

Those engaged in this service must be clear as to the correct procedure to be followed. There are indications that a newly established Cremation Authority may accept the standards set at other Crematoria in the area, therefore it is essential in every respect that the standard set should be the highest possible.

The Federation's "Code of Cremation Practice" clearly lays down the standard to be attained. In practice the interpretation and implementation of the Code have varied considerably as between one Crematorium and another, particularly with regard to some aspects of operational practice. In order to obtain a clear picture of what is required it is necessary to consider certain factors.

### **THE CREMATION PROCESS**

This is the reduction by oxidisation of the human body and the coffin in which it is enclosed to an irreducible minimum. The primary function of the process is to exhaust all moisture from the body (which is normally in excess of 60% water) and from the coffin and other coverings. Then to consume all remaining combustible material, leaving only the calcium residue of the bone structure, incombustible material from the coffin, casket or container and any non-combustible metals, e.g. metal used in the construction of the coffin, medical implants etc. This material is known collectively as the Cremated Remains or Ashes of the deceased person.

### **THE BASIC PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE CREMATION PROCESS**

In order to obtain as far as practicable the complete combustion of the coffin and body without smoke it will require:

- (1) that gases should be held at 850<sup>0</sup>C or 800<sup>0</sup>C in the case of abated cremators, for a minimum of 2 seconds, in the secondary chamber and that combustion conditions are those detailed in the Secretary of State's Guidance – Crematoria PG5/2(12).
- (2) air in sufficient quantities in the right place at the right time to provide the oxygen required.
- (3) sufficient space within the cremator chamber to allow the large volume of combustion gases to be intermixed with the oxygen contained in the air introduced under pressure by the use of fans.
- (4) flue-ways large enough to allow the combustion gases to be withdrawn from the cremating chambers into the main chimney stack, but not too large to allow undue cooling down. The Secretary of State's Guidance - Crematoria sets out requirements for each cremator to have a separate flue-way and a specific stack height in relation to other parts of the crematorium.

## RECOMMENDED PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

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- (5) maintenance of negative pressure within the cremating chambers at all times (i.e. always under suction).
- (6) best available techniques are to be used to control the process in order to meet the emission limits through good combustion by the correct operation of all fuel, air and suction controls throughout the cremation process and for this purpose monitoring and safety devices are provided governing each cremator.
- (7) no disturbance of human remains until final calcination i.e. the last flicker of flames has ceased. Then and only then, should the remains be raked down, allowed to cool and withdrawn from the cremator.

The "Secretary of State's Guidance – Crematoria, (Process Guidance Note 5/2(12)", gives the combustion and emission parameters which apply to all cremation equipment. It is strongly recommended that all crematoria possess a current copy of these guidelines.

### **STAFF**

All cremators are now computer controlled and generally their operation requires a cremator operator to start the process and to make a decision when the remains can be removed from the cremator. However, there have been a number of cases where the micro processor has been unable to control the process and substantial damage has been caused to equipment, flues, chimneys and chapels. It is, therefore, recommended that when a cremator is in operation a qualified member of staff should always be in attendance within the Crematory. From the 1st April 1998 any person operating a cremator must, by law, be qualified to do so.

Special attention is drawn to paragraph 2 of the Code of Cremation Practice regarding the appointment of crematorium staff.

### **NO INTERFERENCE WITH THE COFFIN**

The Code of Cremation Practice in Paragraph 3 refers to the non interference with the coffin or its contents following the Committal Service, until the process of cremation is completed. This means:

- (a) No interference whatsoever with the coffin, such as removal of the lid screws, lid, furniture or name plate. The coffin should be inserted in the cremator exactly as received.
- (b) No interference whatsoever with the coffin or body during the whole process of cremation.

Under no circumstances should partially consumed remains be disturbed. Only when final calcination is complete (that is when there is no combustible material left and the last flicker of flame has died out) should the remains be raked down and, when cool, moved from the cremator.

### **CORRECT IDENTITY OF CREMATED REMAINS/ASHES**

The utmost care should be taken to ensure that the Cremated Remains/Ashes resulting from each cremation shall be kept separate, as emphasised in Paragraph 8 of the Code of Cremation Practice. To adhere to this it is essential:

- (a) that each coffin is provided with sufficient marking to identify the body contained within it.
- (b) to provide for the correct identification of the Remains by supplying a card, similar to the one set out below, which should accompany the coffin and the Remains throughout all stages of the cremation process until final disposal.

### **INSTRUCTIONS TO CREMATE**

Name of Deceased.....  
Cremation No..... Date.....  
Funeral Director.....  
Remarks.....  
.....  
Authorised by.....

This "Instruction Card", signed by the Registrar or other delegated member of staff, serves as the written directions for the cremation to proceed. As soon as the coffin is moved after committal from the chapel, the Instruction Card should be checked against the name on the coffin. The Instruction Card must remain with the coffin until cremation is to take place when the card is placed in the card holder attached to the cremator and then transferred stage by stage throughout the various processes of collecting the remains from the cremator, their reduction to a condition suitable for strewing, (depending on instructions received) attached to the container pending their disposal and finally returned to the crematorium office in order that the statutory entry in the Cremation Register regarding disposal may be completed.

- (c) the remains should be kept separate. If the cremation process has been carried out efficiently, there should be nothing left except the calcinated remains of bone material of the deceased person, incombustible material resulting from the coffin, casket or container and any non-combustible metals. Everything else will have been reduced to its constituent gases.

When any residual metals have been removed, the whole of the remains then left must be treated as cremated human remains. The sifting out of the finer particles is both unnecessary and undesirable.

### **REDUCTION OF CREMATED REMAINS/ASHES**

Unless the relatives instruct otherwise, the remains should always be reduced whether they are to be strewn, taken away or otherwise disposed of. They should be reduced to a condition which will allow for their speedy absorption into the turf or soil if strewing is to take place in the Garden of Remembrance.

### **RESIDUAL METALS**

Where the authority's chosen method of disposal of the metal residue arising from cremation is by burial, then this should be at a depth exceeding 4ft (1.2 metres) in the Garden of Remembrance (Woodland areas if available) under the supervision of the Crematorium Manager and a record should be kept of the location. Cremation Authorities may, with the applicant's written authority, recycle metals recovered following cremation if they so wish.

### **THE BURIAL OR STREWING OF CREMATED REMAINS/ASHES**

The burial or strewing of Cremated Remains/Ashes must always be carried out with reverence and decorum and an attendant, suitably dressed, should be appointed for this task when the disposal of the remains is witnessed by the family. When no special arrangements have been made by the family, it is desirable to bury or strew cremated remains/ashes at a fixed period after the cremation. This arrangement gives the near relatives an opportunity to meditate at home at that particular hour of the day when this simple ceremony is being carried out. If it is desired to effect a change of mind regarding the method of disposal, the applicant for the cremation, who would be the Executor or nearest surviving relative, then has an opportunity of informing the Crematorium Manager in order to make alternative arrangements.

When strewn the Cremated Remains/Ashes should be dispersed from a low level over the area selected, covering a space of at least three square metres, in order that the ground may not become compacted. In every case, the Cremated Remains/Ashes should be covered with composted soil, for two reasons; firstly, so that the Cremated Remains/Ashes are not visible to passers-by, and secondly, to effect a balancing control of the fertility of the soil and turf. This method is in accordance with the expressed wish of the Joint Convocations of Canterbury and York, and is worthy of adoption at every Crematorium.

The Federation of British Cremation Authorities considers that every crematorium should provide a strewing area of at least 2.0234 hectares (five acres) of fertile land for each 1,000 cremations per annum which are likely to be carried out at the crematorium in question.

### **ALL PLANT AND EQUIPMENT TO BE KEPT IN GOOD WORKING ORDER**

The maintenance of all plant and equipment is most essential and now required under the Environmental Protection Act but in the past all too often neglected in one respect or another.

### **CREMATOR**

To ensure that the cremator is maintained to the highest level it is imperative that the cremators are maintained under contract with the supplier or other competent company knowledgeable in this area of work.

The Process Guidance Note PG5/2(12) states in 5.55 Maintenance that; “Effective preventative maintenance plays a key part in achieving compliance with emission limits and other provisions. All aspects of the process including all plant, buildings and the equipment concerned with the control of emissions to air should be properly maintained.

In addition:

- A written maintenance programme should be provided to the Regulator with respect to pollution control equipment, including control instrumentation and the cremator secondary chamber and ducts and flues;
- A record of such maintenance should be made available for inspection.
- Cleaning schedules should be available on site to the Regulator.
- Spares and consumables – in particular, those subject to continual wear – should be held on site, or should be available at short notice so that plant breakdowns can be rectified rapidly

The Process Guidance Note PG5/2(12) states in 5.19 that: “Waste materials collected from inside the abatement plant will need to be disposed of in accordance with waste legislation. Dusty materials, dusty wastes and wastes containing mercury should be kept tightly contained”. All other flue residues should be buried within the crematorium grounds as they may contain small particles of human remains.

During the cremation process all visible and odorous emissions should be limited and monitored with assessments of emissions being made frequently and at least once per day whilst the process is in operation. The time, location (to be agreed with the Regulator) and result of these assessments should be recorded and retained on site for at least two years.

### **FANS**

These must be kept free from dust and occasionally oiled or greased according to requirements. On no account should the machine used for reducing the remains be housed in the same room.

### **REDUCING MACHINE**

It is necessary to keep this machine regularly cleared of all accumulating dust, particularly the gears and other moving parts; oiling and greasing should be attended to at regular intervals. All dust collected from the cremator and from the reducing machine should be buried decently within the precincts of the Garden of Remembrance.

## RECOMMENDED PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

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This equipment should be designed so that any dust produced cannot enter the cremated remains/ashes treatment room. The maximum amount of particulate matter permitted in the atmosphere is specified in the Secretary of State's Guidance Notes for Crematoria.

### **GENERAL**

All mechanical and moving parts on the Catafalque, conveyor Biers and other machinery, need periodical cleaning, oiling and greasing. The Crematory and all rooms connected therewith must be kept in a clean and orderly condition. The floors will need constant attention and the walls should be cleaned down periodically

Inspection of the plant, equipment, and the actual process of cremation should be undertaken regularly by the Officer in charge, in order to ensure that the high standard of maintenance and of operation is being employed.

### **FLORAL TRIBUTES**

Every Cremation Authority must, at some time or other, become aware of the problem which confronts them concerning the correct placing of floral tributes. Attention is drawn to the advisability of setting aside a special area of the gardens which is out of view when looking from the chapel, large enough to allow the display of all floral tributes for a minimum period of three days following the funeral service.

Attention should be given to the handling of floral tributes. The moving of these tributes bundled in armfuls is strongly deprecated. Where practicable, some form of wheeled or hand flower carrier should be provided in order that all floral tributes may be placed carefully thereon and moved to the display areas.

**RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE  
PROCEDURE  
FOR THE PACKING AND DESPATCH OF  
CREMATED REMAINS/ASHES**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE PROCEDURE FOR THE PACKING AND DESPATCH OF CREMATED REMAINS/ASHES**

Cremation Authorities should be concerned that cremated remains/ashes which they despatch arrive at their destination safely and in a condition which will not cause distress or embarrassment to the recipient. The following recommendations have been formulated as a guide to Cremation Authorities.

### **CREMATED REMAINS/ASHES**

The whole of the cremated remains/ashes must be removed from the cremator and, after cooling, and treatment, placed in a polythene bag which should be sealed and placed in a suitable outer container which is engraved or labelled with the name of the deceased, cremation number and the name of the Crematorium.

### **CONTAINER**

The container should be strong enough to resist breakage in transit and yet be simple in design and of sufficient volume to contain all remains extracted from the cremator. The recommended capacity for a container is a minimum of 200 cubic inches (3280 cubic cms). The lid must fit tightly, and the fastening should be strong enough to prevent the lid being forced open by distortion of the container through maltreatment in transit.

### **PACKING**

The container itself should be sealed by the Cremation Authority in such a way that the seal cannot be broken, unfastened, resealed or otherwise interfered with after it has left the Crematorium, without the disturbance of the seal being apparent to the recipient. It should be suitably wrapped, protected and placed within a double-strength cardboard box of the correct size. The whole should then be wrapped in a sheet of strong brown wrapping paper, secured with and/or sealed with adhesive tape. The parcel should be clearly addressed in block letters to the recipient with the name and address of the sender also indicated in block letters on the label.

### **DESPATCH**

Cremated remains/ashes not personally collected should be sent by a secure courier service. A letter should be sent to the recipient on the same day as the despatch of the cremated remains/ashes notifying of their impending arrival. When cremated remains/ashes are to be interred or strewn in a Churchyard, Burial Ground, Cemetery or Garden of Remembrance, an appropriate certificate should be issued by the Cremation Authority and forwarded with the letter.

### **RECEIPT**

A receipt should always be obtained by the Cremation Authority whenever cremated remains/ashes are removed from the Crematorium. When cremated remains/ashes are forwarded by the courier, the certificate of collection or other acknowledgement should be affixed to the appropriate cremation documents.

The receipt of cremated remains/ashes should always be acknowledged and it is advisable for Cremation Authorities to issue a form for this purpose for completion and return by the recipient.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

**FOR**

**FUNERAL DIRECTORS**

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR FUNERAL DIRECTORS

## 1. RESPONSIBILITY

The Funeral Director shall observe the regulations of the Cremation Authority. The Funeral Director is responsible for the provision of sufficient bearers to convey the coffin from the hearse to the catafalque. When the coffin is in position on the catafalque or deposited in the rest room or Chapel of Rest at the Crematorium the responsibility of the Funeral Director towards it ceases and that of the Cremation Authority begins.

## 2. NOTICE OF CREMATION

The length of notice to be given for a cremation and the time of the cremation, as agreed, must be strictly adhered to. All statutory and non-statutory forms and certificates, as required by the Cremation Authority, must reach the crematorium office by the specified time. For administrative reasons these times may vary according to local requirements.

## 3. CONSTRUCTION OF THE COFFIN

The coffin must be made of a suitable material which, when placed in a cremator and subjected to the cremation process, is easily combustible and which does not emit smoke, give off toxic gas or leave any retardant smears or drips after final combustion. No metal of any kind shall be used in the manufacture of such coffin except as necessary for its safe construction and then only metal of a high ferrous content. Cross pieces must not be attached to the bottom of the coffin. If it is desired to strengthen the bottom of the coffin, wooden strips may be placed lengthways for this purpose.

Cardboard coffins should not contain chlorine in the wet strength agent. (e.g. not using polyamidoamine-epichlorhydrin based resin (PAA-E). Contact should be made with the Crematorium Administration to ensure that the coffin selected is fit for the purpose of cremation.

## 4. COFFIN FURNITURE AND FITTINGS

No metal furniture or fittings whatever shall be used on a coffin for cremation. Coffin handles should be free from unnecessary metal components. External coatings to a coffin must allow for smokeless combustion and the use of nitro-cellulose varnish, polyurethane, melamine and any products containing polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or melamine must not be used in coffin construction or furnishings. Water based lacquer free from additives containing heavy metals may be used for coating a coffin or a suitable cloth may be used for covering a coffin. The exception to the foregoing is the use of polystyrene which is restricted to the coffin nameplate only and this must not exceed 90 grams in weight.

## 5. LINING OF THE COFFIN

The use of saw dust, cotton wool or shredded paper within a coffin must be avoided. If lining of a coffin is necessary, this should be manufactured from polythene not exceeding 75 microns in thickness. Lead or zinc linings must not be used. The use of shredded paper within a coffin is not permitted.

**6. SIZE OF THE COFFIN**

Where the external dimensions of a coffin are likely to exceed length 81 inches (206cms); width 28 inches (71cms); depth 22 inches (56cms) the proper officer of the crematorium must be consulted as soon as practicable.

**7. CLOTHING AND COFFIN CONTENT**

In order to minimise the release of pollutants to air, it is recommended that clothing should be of natural fibres and that shoes or any material manufactured from PVC should not be included. Body adornments manufactured from copper should be removed as should any easily removable prostheses or casts of plaster or other material. Additional items, particularly of glass or plastic, should not be placed within the coffin.

**8. CREMATION OF INFANTS and FOETAL REMAINS**

Mothers of non-viable babies and families of stillborn babies and very young deceased babies considering cremation should be advised that comprehensive guidance is available for use within UK crematoria to ensure that the operational practices in place maximise the opportunity to recover ashes at the end of the cremation process. However, as highlighted within the Report of the Infant Cremation Commission as led by Lord Bony, it should be made clear that there is a possibility that ashes will not be recovered and families should be reminded of the availability of the option of burial.

**9. BODY PARTS**

Body parts presented at the crematorium for cremation normally consists of soft tissue which in the absence of any bone structure will not produce any cremated remains.

**10. CREMATED REMAINS/ASHES**

The utmost care should be taken when dealing with cremated remains/ashes. If the Funeral Director supplies an urn or casket for cremated remains/ashes it should be of sufficient internal dimension to provide a minimum of 200 cubic inches (3,280 cubic cms.) and securely labelled. The container should be strong enough to resist breakage in transit.

The lid must fit tightly and the fastening should be strong enough to prevent the lid being forced open by distortion of the container through maltreatment in transit.

# **QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK ABOUT CREMATION**

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## QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK ABOUT CREMATION

- I. Q How many of the deaths which occur in Great Britain each year result in cremation?**
- A Cremation has become the preferred method of disposal in Great Britain. Approximately 75% of all recorded deaths are now followed by cremation.
- 2. Q Are there any religious groups which forbid cremation to their members?**
- A All Christian denominations, including the Roman Catholic Church, allow cremation. Cremation is also acceptable to Sikhs, Hindus, Parsees and Buddhists but it is forbidden by Orthodox Religions, Jews and Moslems.
- 3. Q Is cremation more expensive than burial?**
- A Generally the cost of burial is much higher than the fee charged for cremation. In addition to the charges for the interment, a number of other fees for grave purchase, memorials and grave maintenance may be incurred. Cremation usually necessitates the production of medical certificates for which fees are payable to doctors concerned. These certificates are not required when the death has been referred to and investigated by a Coroner (Procurator Fiscal in Scotland)
- 4. Q What service arrangements are available at the crematorium?**
- A A full religious ceremony may be conducted at the crematorium within the time allowed for each funeral. Alternatively, a service may take place in any separate place of worship followed by a brief committal ceremony at the crematorium. Families can arrange for their particular Minister to conduct the service or, when required Funeral Directors may secure the services of a suitable Minister on behalf of the family.
- 5. Q Is it necessary for the cremation to be associated with a religious ceremony?**
- A The deceased's family can make any ceremony arrangements which they consider to be appropriate. Secular ceremonies can be conducted at the crematorium or, if required, no ceremony need take place. Memorial services can be conducted separately from the cremation ceremony in local places of worship by arrangement with the Minister concerned.
- 6. Q How is a cremation arranged?**
- A A number of arrangements need to be made following a death. The responsibility normally falls on the Executor or the nearest surviving relative who may wish to approach a professional Funeral Director who will undertake some of the various tasks on their behalf. The Funeral Director will need to discuss with the family their requirements concerning the service arrangements and will assist in completing the necessary statutory and non-statutory forms.  
The Funeral Director will make the practical arrangements for the collection of the body and will obtain the necessary medical certificates. It will be necessary to register the death and information will be provided by the Funeral Director to assist in completing that duty.

**7. Q Do relatives need to decide at this stage about the disposal of cremated Remains/ashes?**

A The Funeral Director will discuss with relatives the alternative arrangements which may be adopted for the disposal of cremated remains/ashes. It is likely that a form of authority will be required to be signed advising the Cremation Authority of the wishes of the family.

If they are undecided it will be possible for the cremated remains/ashes to be retained, either at the crematorium or at the Funeral Director's premises, pending a decision.

**8. Q What are the normal options for disposal of cremated remains/ashes?**

A All crematoria provide a Garden of Remembrance where cremated remains/ashes can be dispersed. Some crematoria provide niches where urns or caskets containing cremated remains/ashes may be placed for limited periods. Cremated remains/ashes can be removed from the crematorium in a suitable container for disposal elsewhere. This may include interment in a grave in a cemetery or churchyard, dispersal at another crematorium or dispersal privately in a particular area selected by the family. Suitable permission should be obtained from the appropriate Authority or land owner in these cases.

**9. Q What is a Garden of Remembrance and what facilities may be provided there?**

A The Gardens of Remembrance consist of special areas, often adjacent to the crematorium, set aside for the disposal of cremated remains/ashes. They are used continually for this purpose and as a result it may not be possible or appropriate to mark or identify the exact location of individual cremated remains/ashes. The Gardens are normally arranged to provide a focal point for visitors and may include a variety of memorial facilities.

**10. Q What memorial facilities are available at crematoria?**

A All crematoria have some form of memorial facility. The most usual form of permanent memorial is the Book of Remembrance. The Book is usually displayed in a special memorial chapel and entries are available for viewing either automatically on the anniversary of the date of death or on request. Some crematoria provide wall or kerb mounted plaques in stone or metal although these are normally purchased for a limited period only. Roses, trees and shrubs may be dedicated at some crematoria for periods which may be extended by agreement. Donations are often accepted for the provision of items to be used at the crematorium or for the embellishment of the buildings or grounds. The Funeral Director should be aware of the memorial options available but direct enquiries to the Manager of the Crematorium will ensure that full details are provided together with a scale of charges.

**11. Q What is the procedure followed at the crematorium on the day of the funeral?**

A The mourners will normally gather at the crematorium in the waiting room or close to the entrance of the chapel a few minutes before the appointed time of the funeral service. It is not usual for the ceremony to commence before the publicised time. When the principal mourners are ready to proceed, the coffin will be conveyed into the chapel by the Funeral Director unless family bearers are used by request. The coffin will be placed on the catafalque and mourners will be directed to their seats after which the service will proceed. At the moment during the service when the committal of the body takes place the coffin may be obscured from view by curtains or withdrawn from the chapel. At the end of the service the mourners leave the chapel and may then inspect the floral tributes.

**12. Q What happens to the coffin after the committal?**

A The coffin is withdrawn into the committal room where the nameplate is carefully checked by crematorium staff to ensure the correct identity. An identity card will then accompany the coffin and the resultant remains until their final disposal or removal from the crematorium.

**13. Q Can relatives witness the committal of the coffin to the cremator?**

A The reception of the coffin in the committal room and its introduction into a cremator can be witnessed by arrangement with the Manager of the Crematorium. It is preferable to advise the Funeral Director of these requirements as early as possible when making the funeral arrangements.

**14. Q Is the cremation of a body governed by a code of ethics and working practices?**

A Cremation Authorities who are members of the Federation of British Cremation Authorities are required to operate strictly in accordance with a Code of Cremation Practice. This Code, which provides the ethical standard for cremation practice as adopted by the majority of crematoria in Great Britain, is often displayed in the public areas of the crematorium building. A copy can be downloaded from the Federation website [www.fbca.org.uk](http://www.fbca.org.uk)

**15. Q How soon after the service will the cremation take place?**

A The cremation will usually be commenced shortly after the service. A body not cremated on the same day as the coffin is received at the crematorium may only be retained at the crematorium with the written consent of the Applicant for Cremation or in circumstances deemed necessary by the Cremation Authority, including impacts upon the environment. All bodies retained at the crematorium will be accommodated in secure and sanitary conditions within the building.

## QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK ABOUT CREMATION

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**16. Q Is the coffin cremated with the body?**

A The Code requires that the coffin be placed in the cremator in exactly the same condition as that in which it was received at the crematorium. Crematorium regulations require that the coffin and all its fittings and furnishings be made from materials suitable for cremation. The Environmental Protection Act 1990 has placed a responsibility on Cremation Authorities to ensure that the process is completed under controlled conditions which will minimise the impact on the environment. In these circumstances it will be necessary for any items included in the coffin for presentation or viewing purposes to be removed by the Funeral Director before the coffin is conveyed to the crematorium. It will not be possible for any floral tributes to be included with the coffin for cremation.

**17. Q Should items of jewellery be left on a body for cremation?**

A It is preferable that all items of jewellery be removed from the body before the coffin is conveyed to the crematorium. The Funeral Director should ascertain your wishes in respect of this matter when the funeral arrangements are being discussed. It will not be possible to recover any items of jewellery after the coffin has been received at the crematorium.

**18. Q Can more than one body be cremated in a cremator at the same time?**

A The Code insists that each cremation is carried out separately. Exceptions may be made for instance in the case of mother and baby or twin children providing that the next of kin has made a specific request in this regard.

**19. Q What happens to the cremated remains/ashes after the cremation?**

A At the conclusion of a cremation the cremated remains/ashes are removed from the cremator in their entirety and conveyed to a treatment area in a special container. Ferrous metals used in the construction of the coffin or metal used in medical implants and non-ferrous metals which may include an unrecognisable element of precious material will be disposed of in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Cremation Practice, which states “Any metal found amongst the cremated remains/ashes shall be disposed of in accordance with the directions of the Cremation Authority or Higher Authority”. The utmost care is taken to ensure that cremated remains/ashes, following their removal from the cremator, shall be kept separate from any other remains and suitably identified. The cremated remains/ashes will be placed into separate containers awaiting final disposal.

- 20. Q What procedures are followed to ensure that cremated remains/ashes are kept separate?**
- A A cremator can physically accept only one coffin at a time and all remains are removed before the cremator can be used again. Following the cremation process, all Cremated Remains/Ashes are retained awaiting final disposal in separate containers which are suitably identified at all times. The identity card referred to previously accompanies the coffin and cremated remains/ashes throughout the process until final disposal, whether that is by dispersal in the Gardens of Remembrance or collection from the crematorium for final disposal elsewhere. The code of ethics and practical necessity are complementary and combine to ensure that the separation of cremated remains/ashes is achieved.
- 21. Q How are cremated remains/ashes treated at the crematorium?**
- A Cremated remains/ashes are removed from the cremator only when no further reduction is possible. The remains are withdrawn into a cooling area where any metals are removed and then placed in a suitable and carefully identified container to await dispersal or collection in accordance with the applicant's instructions.
- 22. Q What quantity of remains will there be following a cremation?**
- A The cremation of an adult will normally result in the presentation of cremated remains/ashes weighing between 2 and 4 kg. In the case of very early gestation non-viable babies, it may not be possible to guarantee that any remains will be available for collection following the cremation process (please see below).
- 23. Q Will there be ashes/cremated remains following a cremation of non-viable babies, stillborn babies and very young deceased babies.**
- A Mothers of non-viable babies and families of stillborn babies and very young deceased babies considering cremation should be advised that comprehensive guidance is available for use within UK crematoria to ensure that the operational practices in place maximise the opportunity to recover ashes at the end of the cremation process. However, as highlighted within the Report of the Infant Cremation Commission as led by Lord Bony, it should be made clear that there is a possibility that ashes will not be recovered and families should be reminded of the availability of the option of burial.
- 24. Q Do you get any cremated remains/ashes from the cremation of body parts**
- A Body parts presented at the crematorium for cremation normally consists of soft tissue and in the absence of any bone structure will not produce any cremated remains/ashes.
- 25. Q What happens to the metal removed from the cremated remains/ashes?**
- A Depending on the practice carried out at a crematorium the metals may be interred within the crematorium grounds where records are kept of where the metal is interred or alternatively they can be recycled and the applicant for cremation will be asked to give authority for this to be done.

## QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK ABOUT CREMATION

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**26. Q What happens to the cremated remains/ashes when they are strewn in the crematorium grounds?**

A The cremated remains/ashes, which have assumed a granular form following their reduction, are normally distributed over a wide area of ground. Chemical reactions resulting from exposure to the elements quickly break down the remains so that within a few days little trace of them can be observed. Some crematoria follow the practice of dressing the area where the cremated remains/ashes have been dispersed, with a suitable mixture of loam and sand.

**27. Q Can cremated remains/ashes be interred and their position marked with a memorial?**

A The Gardens of Remembrance attached to a crematorium do not provide for the erection of permanent memorials. Cremated remains/ashes interred in Gardens of Remembrance are not normally contained in a casket or container of any kind. If it is the choice of the Applicant for Cremation to inter cremated remains/ashes in a grave with traditional facilities for memorialisation, then enquiries should be made to the person responsible for the respective cemetery.

**28. Q Can cremated remains/ashes be retained by the family pending final disposal?**

A The Applicant for cremation may collect and retain the cremated remains/ashes if required. Cremated remains/ashes can be retained at the crematorium awaiting final disposal for a limited period although a charge is often made for this facility.

**29. Q What arrangements can be made to ensure that cremation is the selected method of disposal following death?**

A Clear instructions in writing should be given to the person who will be responsible for making the funeral arrangements. Such instructions are not binding in law and it will therefore be necessary to ensure that the person instructed is someone who is likely to carry out the wishes of the deceased. The final decision will rest on the executors.

**30. Q Can more information be obtained concerning cremation and if required can a crematorium be visited by members of the public?**

A The matters referred to previously may be discussed in more detail with the Manager of the local crematorium. The Crematorium Manager will be pleased to answer further questions and make arrangements for any member of the public to be accompanied on a visit to the crematorium.