

## QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

### CREMATION

#### How many people use cremation today in Great Britain?

Since 1968 when the number of cremations exceeded burials for the first time, cremation has increased considerably. Current figures suggest that around 70% of all funerals are cremations.

#### Does any religious group forbid cremation?

All current Christian denominations, including the Roman Catholic Church, allow cremation, as do Sikhs, Hindus, Parsees and Buddhists. It is however forbidden by Orthodox Jews and Muslims.

#### Is cremation more expensive than burial?

No. Generally the cost of a grave is much higher than the fee charged for cremation although the funeral charges are similar for both services. The only additional charge for cremation arises when the death has not been referred to a coroner and two doctors need to be paid for the necessary certificates. This does not apply to burial.

#### What religious ceremony can I have with cremation?

The service for burial and cremation is the same apart from the form of committal sentences. The service may take place at your own place of worship with a short committal service in the crematorium chapel, or you may have the whole service at the crematorium chapel. Alternatively, you may prefer a civil ceremony be conducted, or even no service at all.

#### How is a cremation arranged?

The Cremation Regulations are complex and many people approach a funeral director immediately death occurs, and advise him that they wish to arrange a cremation. The funeral director will ensure that all the necessary statutory forms for cremation are obtained and presented to the Crematorium.

#### Can a cremation be arranged without the services of a funeral director?

Yes. The Executor or nearest surviving relative may arrange the cremation service themselves.

#### Can relatives witness the committal of the coffin to the cremator?

Yes. There is a viewing room that overlooks our crematory, where you may witness the committal taking place. The Crematorium must be informed that you wish to use our viewing facilities when the cremation is booked, so that we may ensure that the viewing facility is available on the day.

#### Is the coffin cremated with the body?

Yes. The ICCM Guiding Principles state that the container and the body shall be placed in a cremator and cremation commenced. The coffin or container with the body inside shall not be opened or otherwise disturbed, other than in exceptional circumstances, and then only with the express permission and in the presence of the Applicant for Cremation (usually the executor or next of kin).

#### How soon after the service will cremation take place?

The ICCM Guiding Principles state that the container and the body shall be placed in a cremator and cremation commenced no later than 24 hours after the service of committal. Where cremation may not be carried out on the same day, the Applicant for Cremation shall be notified.

This means that under normal circumstances the cremation is usually carried out shortly after the service and certainly on the same day. However, when a service takes place later in the day, the cremation can take place the next morning.

#### How are the cremated remains kept separate?

A cremator can only accept one coffin at a time and all the remains are removed from the cremator before the next cremation. An identity card is used throughout the whole process until the final disposal, thereby ensuring correct identification.

**Can more than one body be cremated at a time?**

No, each cremation is carried out separately. However, exceptions can be made in the case of a mother and baby or small twin children, so long as the next of kin or executor has made this specific request.

**Are coffins sold back to the funeral directors for re-use?**

No. The coffin and the body inside are cremated together. There are occasions where the deceased or the family of the deceased have opted for using a cardboard coffin in which their loved one will be cremated. When this happens families often want to have a more aesthetically pleasing coffin or container on the catafalque during the service. Families therefore will opt for either a pall (a cloth covering the cardboard coffin), or a 'cocoon coffin' (an outer shell that covers the cardboard coffin). Neither the pall nor the cocoon is cremated. It is important to understand that the pall and cocoon do NOT contain the body of the deceased, they are simply superficial coverings for a cardboard coffin.

If you require any further assistance then please contact the crematorium staff on 01452 396902 between 9.00am and 4.30pm (Monday to Friday) email: [heretohelp@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:heretohelp@gloucester.gov.uk)