

CHARTER FOR THE BEREAVED THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Caring for the Community

All cremation and burial facilities shall be managed with competence and efficiency, to ensure that the entire bereavement experience occurs without error or insensitivity, and meets the religious, secular, ethnic and cultural needs of the bereaved. The service shall comply with all statutory and Health and Safety requirements.

Service Sensitivity

The burial or cremation of a human body is a highly emotional occasion for those taking part. Each cemetery and crematorium must be managed to create and maintain an atmosphere of solace and respect throughout the entire proceedings. This sensitivity must extend to all staff and contractors working at facilities, through the application of bereavement sensitive specifications. Members will respond sympathetically to individual funeral needs and shall give a justifiable reason for refusing any specific request.

Staff

All staff should possess qualifications and undergo recognised training specific to their duties. At the senior management level, the appointment of staff in possession of the Diploma of the Institute of Burial and Cremation Administration should be seen as a minimum requirement. The appointment of all staff must emphasise the need for proper conduct and demeanour, as well as technical expertise. Staff must act and speak in a manner that recognises the sensitivity of bereavement, both during and outside working hours, and should not accept gratuities. All staff should be identified by name badges.

Environmental Issues

Every Charter member shall minimise the impact of bereavement upon the environment. This should encourage the greater use of earth friendly materials, particularly in coffins and containers used for burial or cremation, a reduction in fossil fuel usage and emissions to air, and the use of suitable ground for burial so that water borne pollution shall not occur. Metal residues found in cremated remains shall not be salvaged for any purpose. They shall not be removed from the crematorium and shall be interred in the grounds.

Individual Disposal

The importance of human beings as individuals and the manner in which they inter-relate with relatives and friends does not diminish in significance following death. It is important for the bereaved to know that the burial or cremation is individually carried out, and the following requirements must, therefore, be met:-

General Conditions

No coffin/container/shroud shall be accepted at a Cemetery unless the name of the deceased therein is clearly shown. The identity shown on the coffin/container/shroud shall be verified at every funeral. If burial is to occur, the body and its coffin/container/shroud shall be placed in the identified grave. If cremation is to occur, the body shall be cremated individually and the correct identity shall be maintained throughout the process.

Requirements relating to Burial

After the coffin/container/shroud and body have been committed into the grave, they shall not be removed or otherwise disturbed except for lawful exhumation, by licence and/or faculty or by the order of a Coroner. Immediately after the mourners have departed the graveside, the grave shall be entirely back filled and made tidy. This work will be completed on the day of the burial and must not extend overnight.

Requirements relating to Cremation

A body shall not be removed from the crematorium after the service of committal, except by order of a Coroner or for some other valid reason. 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. 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. Once a coffin or container has been placed in a cremator, it shall not be disturbed until the process of cremation is complete. On completion, the whole of the cremated remains shall be removed from the cremator and reduced to granular form, except where this is specifically not requested, and shall be disposed of or released according to the instructions of the Applicant for Cremation. Cremated remains placed in the Garden of Remembrance shall be treated with reverence and respect. If strewn, they should be obscured by soil or brushing. Where a local practice of strewing in the form of a cross or other pattern has developed, it is acceptable providing it does not result in the unsightly build-up or prolonged visibility of the cremated remains. Cremated remains must be labelled and released in suitable, unused containers, and where sent by post or carrier, capable of withstanding transit without damage.

Inspection

Everyone has the right to inspect the crematorium or cemetery during normal working hours, upon application to the manager of the facility.