

# Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee

24 April 2024

## Quarterly Performance and Operational Report



### Report of Graham Harrison, Bereavement Services Manager & Registrar

#### Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

#### Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members of the Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee with the quarterly update relating to performance and other operational matters.

#### Executive summary

2. This report provides Members of the Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee with a quarterly update of performance and operational matters at the crematorium.

#### Recommendation(s)

3. It is recommended that Members of the Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee:
  - a) Note the current performance of the crematorium.
  - b) Note the update with regards to staffing.
  - c) Note the attendance at the Joint Conference of the Federation of Burial & Cremation Authorities and the Cremation Society of Great Britain.

#### Background

4. This report provides Members of the Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee with an update of performance and operational matters at the crematorium since the last meeting of the Joint Committee.

## Performance Update - Number of Cremations

5. The table below provides details of the number of cremations for the period 1 January to 31 March 2024 inclusive, with comparative data in the same period last year:

	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>Change</b>
January	263 + 1*	237 +4*	- 26 + 3*
February	262 + 2*	226 +0*	- 36 - 2*
March	217 + 3*	214 +0*	- 3-3*
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>742 + 6*</b>	<b>677 + 4*</b>	<b>- 65-2*</b>

\* = Non-Viable Foetus (NVF)    \*\* = Stillborns (STs)    \*\*\* = Body part

6. The full profile of where families came from can be seen in Appendix 2. In summary, 196 came from Durham, 30 came from Spennymoor and 451 from other areas. There have been 4 NVF cremations undertaken for the period covered by this report compared to 6 in the comparable period last year. There were 65 less cremations undertaken in the period January to March 2024 compared to the same period last year.
7. The total number of cremations in 2023/24 was 2,433 compared with 2,513 in 2022/23, a decrease of 80 cremations.
8. The 2023/24 budget was set at a prudent assumption of 2,200 cremations during the year. The actual number of cremations undertaken was therefore 233 more than the budgeted position. This is reflected in an over achievement of cremation fee income of £137,234 in year, which is included in the budgetary control report.
9. The table below shows the comparative figures for the previous eleven financial years:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Cremations</b>
2013/14	2,227
2014/15	2,287
2015/16	2,247
2016/17	2,324
2017/18	2,294
2018/19	2,392
2019/20	2,351
2020/21	2,738
2021/22	2,306
2022/23	2,513
2023/24	2,433
<b>11 Year Average</b>	<b>2,374</b>

10. For Members information, the table below provides details of the number of direct cremations, which are included in the totals above, for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 inclusive, with comparative data in the same period last year:

	2022/23	2023/24	Change
Direct Cremation – Attended	0	0	0
Direct Cremation - Unattended	102	138	+ 36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>+ 36</b>

## Memorials

11. The table below outlines the number and value of the memorials sold in the period January to March 2024 compared to the same period the previous year.

	Jan-March Number	2022/23 £	Jan-March Number	2023/24 £
Vase Blocks	6	3,952	5	3,278
Large Plaques	22	9,494	18	8,196
Small Plaques	5	1,380	0	0
Niche	1	1,335	4	3,890
Renewal	41	8,009	46	7,010
Seat	1	528	0	0
Leaf Plaques	21	2,100	9	900
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>26,798</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>23,274</b>

12. In overall terms, the number and value of memorials sold of 82 / £23,274 compares to 97 / £26,798 in the same period last year. This is a small decrease of 15 memorials sold and £3,524 in terms of income decreased.
13. The table overleaf identifies the total number and value of memorials sold during 2023/24 compared to 2022/23:

	<b>2022/23 Total</b>		<b>2023/24 Total</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Vase Blocks</b>	23	11,220	17	11,294
<b>Large Plaques</b>	62	26,564	65	28,620
<b>Small Plaques</b>	9	2,454	4	1,092
<b>Niche</b>	6	7,884	7	7,742
<b>Renewal</b>	143	27,557	143	24,158
<b>Seat</b>	1	528	0	0
<b>Leaf Plaques</b>	56	5,540	48	4,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>81,747</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>77,706</b>

## Operational Matters

### Staffing

14. As Members were advised at the last meeting, one of our casual relief crematorium attendants has now left the Authority and the remaining relief is now covering a 10-month appointment for one of our crematorium attendants who has been appointed as a bereavement officer. We have now carried out a recruitment process and have employed 2 more casual reliefs. These new staff commenced their duties on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024.

### Cremation & Burial Conference & Exhibition 2024

15. The Joint Conference of the Federation of Burial & Cremation Authorities and the Cremation Society of Great Britain is to be held at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool from Monday 24th to Wednesday 26th June 2024. As in previous years, the necessary arrangements will be made for representation at the conference by the Chair and Bereavement Services Manager.

### Plotbox Software System

16. For members information, we are currently in the process of changing our current software provider for crematoria's and cemeteries which we have used for a number of years to a new provider plotbox, this is following a soft market exercise and demo's of other providers.

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

### **Finance**

As identified in the report with regards to the position of the Income.

### **Consultation**

Officers of Spennymoor Town Council were consulted on the contents of this report.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

There are no Equality and Diversity implications associated with this report.

### **Climate Change**

There are no implications.

### **Human Rights**

There are no Human Rights implications associated with this report.

### **Crime and Disorder**

There are no Crime and Disorder implications associated with this report.

### **Staffing**

As identified in the report.

### **Accommodation**

There are no accommodation implications associated with this report.

### **Risk**

As identified in the report.

### **Procurement**

There are no procurement issues associated with this report.

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## Appendix 2: Breakdown of Figures

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	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total Jan- Mar
DURHAM	72	66	58	196
BARNARD CASTLE	1			1
BISHOP AUCKLAND	3	4	2	9
BISHOP MIDDLEHAM		1	1	2
BLACKHALL	3	4	2	9
BIRTLEY	1	1		2
CHESTER LE STREET	17	17	18	52
CHILTON			1	1
CONSETT	2	1		3
CROOK	3	5	5	13
DARLINGTON	4	1	3	8
EASINGTON	9	6	5	20
ESH WINNING	4	3	1	8
FENCEHOUSES	1		2	3
FERRYHILL	6	3	6	15
FISHBURN	1	1		2
GATESHEAD	1	1		2
GREAT LUMLEY	1	4	2	7
HAMSTERLEY	3			3
HARTLEPOOL		2	4	6
HASWELL		4	1	5
HETTON LE HOLE	5			5
HORDEN	3	7	3	13
HOUGHTON	11	6	2	19
HOWDEN		1		1
KENDAL(CUMBRIA)			1	1
LANCHESTER	1		1	2
LANGLEY PARK	3	1	5	9
MIDDLESBOROUGH			1	1
MURTON	3	1	10	14
NEW BRANCEPETH		1	1	2
NEWCASTLE			1	1
NEWTON AYCLIFFE	1	7	4	12
OUSTON	2	1	2	5
PELTON	1	2		3
PETERLEE	15	11	15	41
SACRISTON	5	4	2	11
SCOTLAND	1			1
SEAHAM	13	8	7	28
SEDFIELD		1		1
SHILDON	1		3	4

SHINEY ROW		1		1
SHOTTON	5	2	4	11
SOUTH HETTON		3		3
SPENNYMOOR	8	10	12	30
STANHOPE		1	2	3
STANLEY	3	5	2	10
STATION TOWN	1	1		2
STOCKTON			1	1
SUNDERLAND	2		3	5
SUNNYBROW	2	1	2	5
SOUTHERN ENGLAND	2		1	3
THORNLEY	1	1	1	3
TOW LAW		1		1
TRIMDON	6	4	3	13
WEST CORNFORTH	3	5	6	14
WHEATLEY HILL	1	3	2	6
WILLINGTON	3	6	2	11
WINGATE	1	2	3	6
WOLSINGHAM		2		2
YORKSHIRE	1	2	1	4
WYNARD	1	1		2
<b>Total0</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>677</b>