

Mountsett Crematorium

Service Asset Management Plan 2023/24+

*To provide a sensitive, respectful service, fitting for the bereaved.
Our plan for maintaining and developing the site and its facilities.*



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Foreword

Welcome to our twelfth Service Asset Management Plan (SAMP) for Mountsett Crematorium. The property and land that is our Crematorium is one of our key assets and we need to ensure that our approach to the management of it enables us to deliver our service in the best possible way, meeting the needs and expectations of customers and staff.

The publication of our property plan represents a significant moment in the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committees approach to its property management. We need to view our premises, not simply as a building from which we deliver our service, but as an asset in the widest sense driving forward continual service improvement and investment.

We also increasingly need to see our property as a resource to deliver against the priorities set out in our service vision and as a way of helping us to deliver a professional and dignified service for the residents of County Durham.

I am confident that this new Service Asset Management Plan provides an important part of our service delivery approach.



Alan Patrickson
Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Climate Change



Mountsett Crematorium

1. Introduction

Our overall vision for all our cemeteries and crematoria, including Mountsett Crematorium is set out in our Service Development Plan and is:

- To provide a sensitive, respectful service fitting for the bereaved.
- To ensure the sympathetic, supportive, and confidential advice is given to the recently bereaved on funeral service arrangements and give assistance in co-ordinating the funeral process if required.
- To provide consistent high-quality standards of maintenance in cemeteries and crematoria across County Durham, working to maximise value for money.
- To ensure the proper respect of all Council cemeteries and crematoria with fair Rules and Regulations, which are explained to all visitors.
- To work in partnership with our colleagues at Gateshead Council through the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee.

Our vision reflects our overall Neighbourhoods & Climate Change Directorate aim which is to improve services and make a real difference to our communities. The Mountsett Crematoria SAMP is a document which can enable us to deliver our vision by: -

- Identifying the property needs of the service to enable it to deliver its vision.
- Assessing the condition, sufficiency, suitability, accessibility, and energy performance of our crematoria and looking at their appropriateness to deliver the future service.
- Identifying the portfolio gaps and appraising the options and priorities to close the gaps between future needs and current provision.
- Mapping a way forward to deliver the changes needed which takes in consideration available funding streams and opportunities.

Our Crematorium 'stand alone' SAMP will inform the Neighbourhoods & Climate Change Service SAMP.

The Neighbourhoods & Climate Change Services SAMP links to other Service Grouping SAMPs and the Corporate Asset Management Plan to ensure the Council and its partners obtains best value for property assets they occupy and gets maximum return from these assets in terms of meeting its objectives.

1.1 How we fit in with Durham County Council and Gateshead Council Corporate Priorities

Under the terms of the MCJC Constitution, the Crematorium is legally vested in Durham County Council and operated by a Joint Committee on behalf of Durham County Council and Gateshead Council. All employees engaged in the service are employed by Durham County Council. The Committee operates within a strict Code of Corporate Governance which comprises systems, processes, culture, and values by which the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee directs and controls its activities (Section 1.2 below sets this out in further detail.).

Durham County Council's Bereavement Services team (part of Environmental Services within Neighbourhoods & Climate Change Services) manage the Crematorium on behalf of Joint Committee. Bereavement Services align to the constituent authorities' corporate priorities through the Durham County Council, Council Plan 2023-27 and the Gateshead Council 2030 Vision which is explored further below.

Council Plan 2023 to 2027

In 2019, public, private and voluntary sector bodies that make up the [County Durham Partnership](#) jointly agreed a long-term [Vision 2035](#). This vision is based on a strategic assessment of need using our intelligence platform [Durham Insight](#) and was developed following extensive consultation with the public. Our Council Plan sets out our contribution to achieving this vision for County Durham as well as our own improvement agenda and major programmes of work that we will be undertaking over the medium term to recover from Covid-19.

The Plan aligns to both our [Medium-Term Financial Plan](#) and the County Durham Plan. It sets out:

- how we will consider our corporate priorities for improvement.
- the key actions we will take to achieve the longer-term ambitions in the [Vision 2035](#).
- our own improvement agenda.

The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2023-24 to 2026-27 sets out how our priorities will be resourced, and the County Durham Plan is a spatial representation of our ambitions contained within the Council Plan around housing, jobs and the environment until 2035, as well as the transport, schools and healthcare to support it.

Our Council Plan for 2023-2027 was discussed at Cabinet on 8 February 2023 and at the meeting of our full council on 22 February 2023.

- [Cabinet agenda and minutes 8 February 2023](#)
- [County Council agenda and minutes 22 February 2023](#)

Our ambitions within the Plan are structured around five themes for the county council:

- Our economy
- Our environment
- Our people
- Our communities
- Our council

The Gateshead 2030 Vision

The Vision for Gateshead in 2030 is 'local people realising their full potential enjoying the best quality of life in a healthy, equal, prosperous and sustainable Gateshead'.

The Vision promotes 6 big ideas which form the basis for all Gateshead Council plans and priorities for the next 20 years.

The six big ideas are:

- City of Gateshead
- Gateshead goes Global.
- Creative Gateshead
- Sustainable Gateshead
- Active and Health Gateshead
- Gateshead Volunteers

Gateshead Council's key priorities which provide the basis for the Council's contribution to the delivery of

- Building Stronger Communities
- Empowering Children and Young People
- Empowering Older People and Ensuring Healthier Communities
- Improving Accessibility, connectivity, and Economic Prosperity
- Serving our customers
- Ensuring a Sustainable Gateshead

Our vision for our Crematorium cuts across several key priorities and is most closely aligned to 'serving our customers' in the same way as Durham County Councils priorities. It does so by.

- Improving efficiency and value for money
- Working to satisfy customer needs and expectations.

1.2 Governance - The Mountsett Joint Crematorium Committee

Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee comprises of 9 Durham County Councillors and 7 Gateshead Councillors. The key elements that comprise the Joint Committee's governance arrangements include:

- Defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee member and officer functions, with clear delegation arrangements and protocols for effective communication
- Developing, communicating, and embedding codes of conduct, defining the standards of behaviour for members and officers

Reviewing and updating financial instructions and supporting procedure notes/manuals, which clearly define how decisions are taken and the processes and controls required in managing risks.

Durham County Council and Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee Constitutions set out how they operate, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are effective, transparent, and accountable to service users.

A risk management approach is in operation that aids the achievement of strategic objectives, supports

STAGE 1: The purpose of our Service and how it may be changing in the future.



An introduction to our Service; our roles and responsibilities, our links to Corporate Priorities, the scope of this Plan, and the anticipated changes to our Service over the next 10 years



STAGE 2: The future needs of our Service alongside our existing portfolio

Consideration of what our 'ideal' assets should look like in the future, an assessment of our existing portfolio and how it is performing, and an analysis of how our 'ideals' differ from our existing asset base.



STAGE 3: The key areas of change for our Service

Develop priorities for our assets over the next 10 years, evaluating how we intend to deliver these (within available financial resources), and the impact that priorities will have upon our existing portfolio.

decision making processes, protects the reputation and other assets of the Crematorium and is compliant with statutory and regulatory obligations. This involves regular reports by internal audit, to standards defined in the CIPFA code of practice, and in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. These include the Head of Internal Audit's independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal control at the crematorium, together with recommendations for improvement.

The annual report and accounts include a governance statement which is approved by the Joint Committee.

1.3 The scope of our Service Asset Management Plan

The Mountsett Crematoria SAMP is intended to show how our property assets should be developed to meet our continuing service delivery obligations and aspirations and is also a means by which we can map how our current property assets match the future needs of our Service. It is a strategic document which will provide us with a clear direction of travel for the future.

The main stages in the development of the SAMP are outlined in the left column and are covered in more detail throughout the document.

The SAMP provides the framework by which our existing property assets are aligned to our service delivery priorities. Overall, it ensures that our buildings and land can support service needs and provide the opportunity to lead and enable change.

The SAMP will also be an important tool which, alongside those documents from other Service areas, will inform the Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan, and the Mountsett Crematorium Maintenance Programme. This will enable us to.

- formulate a planned maintenance and repair programme,
- Consider property alterations, refurbishment works and new build projects.

The SAMP provides an effective link between the management of Crematorium utilised assets to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of service need. To achieve this, it is essential that we analyse our existing property performance and carry out a comprehensive review of our Crematorium. Asset information, including building condition data and the outcomes of access audits will be detailed in the SAMP and reflected within the performance data detailed in Section 4. This baseline information enables

us to view the performance of Mountsett Crematorium and provides a high-level overview of investment need.

2. Our Service

Bereavement Services provides professional, sympathetic, supportive, and confidential advice on funeral service arrangements and can give assistance in co-ordinating the funeral process if required. Overall, the service provided is a valued one that has achieved a gold standard through the ICCM (Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management). There are also three green flags awarded to Council cemeteries and crematoriums including Mountsett, in recognition of their maintenance and community involvement. In August 2023, Bereavement Services was rated by ICCM as a gold performer in the country.

There are several areas of change that have affected delivery of our service. The main challenge to the Service was the requirement (from 1st January 2013) for 50% of all cremations to be mercury abated.

According to estimates from Public Health England, two thirds of adults and a quarter of children between two and 10 years old are overweight or obese. Obese children are more likely to become overweight adults and to suffer premature ill health and mortality, and by 2034, 70 per cent of adults are expected to be overweight or obese. Should this trend continue as indicated, we will have to adapt to dealing with larger clients for the foreseeable future. We need to monitor this trend and in the long term, consider adaptations to our existing crematoria facilities and equipment.

Since Local Government Review, we have carried out significant investment within Mountsett crematorium, some of this work has included.

Project	Cost
Repair paths and external pedestrian paved areas	£ 6,836
Renew hot water heaters	£ 8,764
Improvement to flagged area	£ 490
Internal decoration	£ 7,500
Replacement of carpets to chapel	£ 13,191
Replacement of curtains in chapel	£ 2,741



View from Mountsett Crematorium

Provide tribute screens for service	£	11,242
Replacement of seating within chapel area	£	8,493
Carry out cremator hearth re-line	£	4,950
Upgrade and paint handrails	£	1,980
Renew South perimeter (main road) fence	£	6,300
Road widening	£	24,973
Carry out Re-lining of cremators x1	£	27,950
Re-placement of hearth	£	2,800
Re-placement of grass cutter	£	13,995
Carry out improvement to catafalque doors	£	3,881
Install Shower to changing room	£	10,000
Provide order of service screen.	£	1,482
Re-placement of Sound system within Chapel	£	8,344
Installation of Memorial Tower	£	4,920
Tarmac access roads	£	62,200
Re-decoration works	£	6,173
Replacement of CCTV system within Crematorium	£	1,584
Car Park extension	£	88,398
Installation of Memorial Tower	£	6,000
Installation of Memorial Tower	£	4,610
Re vamp of remaining existing shrub beds	£	8,000
Improvement works to uneven nonslip pathway	£	8,460
Re vamp of remaining existing shrub beds	£	8,160
Replacement of lectern	£	1,800
Carry out extension to crematorium + cremators	£	1,564,515
Re-Decoration Works	£	8,759
Installation of Memorial Tower	£	6,000
Replace exterior gates	£	380
Purchase of pressure washer	£	526
Purchase of vac sweeper	£	2,100

Repairs to book of remembrance	£	5,511
Re-Decoration Works	£	12,740
Carry out plot extension work	£	4,455
Carry out replacement of service books	£	899
Carry out Re-lining of 1 hearth	£	3,476
To purchase and install 2 memorial trees	£	3,667
To replace crematorium bins	£	1,502
Carry out energy improvement works	£	111,824
Re-Decoration works	£	15,837
To replace pathway	£	4,884
Carry out topping up with decorative shale	£	411
Installation of temporary cremator	£	334,929
Install 2 replacement cremators	£	1,593,884
Carry out the installation of vehicle charging points	£	16,680
Carry out replacement of burnt fencing	£	7,000
Carry out remaining energy improvement works		Ongoing
Replace chapel curtains	£	3,792
Replace machinery container	£	5,336
Replace main chapel doors		Ongoing
Installation of second memorial tower	£	5,520
Installation of 3 small memorial towers	£	4,320
To replace remaining damaged fencing	£	9,000
Office improvements		Ongoing
Total	£	4,094,164

2.1 The Vision for our Crematorium

The building and land utilised for our crematoria, needs to work towards delivering the overall vision for both Durham County Council and Gateshead Council, and our Service Vision described in Section 1. Bereavement Services works towards delivering our environment strand of the Council Plan. In addition, there are many external factors that have driven changes across our Service i.e., the cremator

replacement programme and Mercury Abatement issues, and the requirements to replace cremators able to accommodate the anticipated increase in adult obesity. To enable us to deliver our vision we require buildings that are legislatively compliant and provide an appropriate and sympathetic environment for the bereaved.

We will also need to ensure that a process of continual maintenance and periodic upgrade is established so that we can sustain an effective and efficient portfolio.

When considering future investment in our property portfolio we must therefore seek to ensure that we.

- V1** Provide buildings which provide a sensitive, respectful service fitting for the bereaved.
- V2** Provide cremators and abatement equipment which are fit for purpose and comply with the requirements set out in Environmental Protection Legislation and complies with Environment Protection Act 1990 and Statutory Guidance notes issued by DEFRA.
- V3** Maintain and develop the grounds and buildings of our crematoria to give comfort and consolation in a landscape setting.

3. The anticipated changes to the delivery of our Crematorium Services over the next ten years

As a service we also recognise that other challenges may lie ahead in the delivery of our service vision and aspirations and that it is important that we respond to any anticipated changes that may impact upon our Service delivery over the coming years, whether this be brought about by a shift in Government policy, changes in delivery methods, social or demographic changes etc.

As such, this section of our SAMP outlines the anticipated changes which we expect to appear on the horizon over the short term (up to 2 years), medium term (3 to 5 years) and longer term (6 to 10 years). In establishing these changes, we will then be able to map out how our existing property portfolio meets required needs and the changes we may need to make in the future.

Short-term changes (up to 2 years)

- To continue to respond to property and other service changes brought about through the implementation of the new changes with regards to the death certification process.
- To respond to the changes with regards to service delivery and the changes identified in the feasibility study for the crematorium improvements.
- To respond to any maintenance back logs during the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Medium-term changes (up to 3 to 5 years)

- As corporate priorities are reviewed in line with future Council Plans, we will need to revisit and adapt our own Service priorities so that these continue to align with any changing local needs.
- Further to the Cemetery Policy we will continue to seek to have a sustainable crematoria and cemetery portfolio which is fit for purpose.

Long-term changes (up to 6 to 10 years)

- It is anticipated that the death rate is expected to increase from 2020 naturally placing greater pressures upon the service that we will need to provide. We will need to monitor changes and adapt/improve/replace our Crematoria and Cemeteries as necessary.
- The anticipated lifespan of our Cremators is normally 20 years. Annual contributions will continue to be made to allow a substantial reserve fund to be created. This will enable the installation of replacement cremators and mercury abatement equipment, if necessary, without the need to source capital funding. We will need to monitor any increase in costs and source additional or alternative funding where required.
- It is anticipated that adult obesity levels will increase substantially in the long term. We will need to monitor this trend and adapt our crematoria to accommodate our larger clients.

**THE FUTURE NEEDS OF OUR SERVICE
ALONGSIDE OUR EXISTING PROPERTY
PORTFOLIO**

4. Asset Supply Profile

If we are to achieve our ambition to provide a sensitive, respectful service fitting for the bereaved, we must have a land and property portfolio which assists us. This means we must provide buildings and grounds that give comfort and consolation.

Whilst major steps have been taken over recent years to improve our existing Crematoria there are still significant steps that we need to take to realise our vision, and as such it is essential that we have up to date knowledge of our existing asset base and how it is performing.

4.1 Our existing property assets

4.1.1 Mountsett Crematorium

The Crematorium is operated by a Joint Committee on behalf of Durham County Council and Gateshead Council.

The Crematorium is nestled on the outskirts of Dipton on the (A692) and serves the residents of the whole of County Durham and Gateshead. It is 'T shaped', giving panoramic views over the meadowland surrounding the building and of the distant woodland surrounding the site.

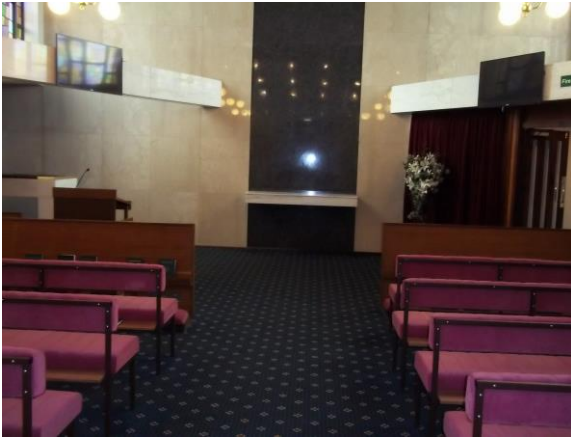
There are two buildings that the public have access to within the crematorium. The Chapel, which incorporates two sets of ladies and gents' washrooms and the Chapel of Remembrance which holds the Book of Remembrance.

Areas are set aside for the interring of ashes remains throughout the crematorium land and an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity prevails in the surroundings of the Crematorium.

More recently Mountsett Crematorium was granted Green Flag status for the twelfth year running,

In excess of 1,300 cremations are carried out each year.

4.1.2 Crematorium Chapel



Crematorium Chapel

The Crematorium Chapel provides seating for up to 120 people with standing room for over 100. Adjoining the chapel is a waiting room. The covered floral display area is situated to the exit area of the chapel, in which relatives and friends can view floral tributes following the service. All areas of the crematorium are accessible to people in wheelchairs.

For the hard of hearing, induction loops are installed in the Chapel. Specially adapted toilet facilities suitable for disabled persons are provided adjoining the waiting room, opposite the Chapel entrance. Guide dogs and assistance dogs are permitted to enter all parts of the buildings and grounds.

Service times are every 45 minutes, allowing some 20 minutes for each service and giving time for the Chapel to be tidied between each funeral service.

The style, character and condition of the building are in keeping with the crematorium.

4.1.3 Chapel of Remembrance



Chapel of Remembrance

The Chapel of Remembrance is situated to the right-hand side of the crematorium in an area designed for floral tribute.

It is a hexagonal building which incorporates the book of Remembrance along with a book view system which is touch screen to enable the whole book of remembrance to be viewed. There is also a facility available to place flowers within the building and vases are supplied.

4.2 How our Existing Crematoria are Performing.

As part of the Authority's Corporate Property Database, details where available, are held on all assets utilised by Bereavement Services including Mountsett Crematorium, with regards to their condition, sufficiency, suitability accessibility and energy performance.

4.2.1 Condition/outstanding repairs

A condition survey was carried out in respect of Mountsett Crematorium in 2019 and shows that the premises are in good condition, only requiring internal / external decoration in 2024/25. There are however several works identified which will improve the service offered to the bereaved. This has a

conditional estimated survey need of £1,479,645, £93,345 considered as works which are urgent / essential and are included in the 2024/25 budget. £9,900 is desirable works which are required in 2025/26; £815,600 for 2026/27 and £560,800 is longer term works.

Premises Condition Summary (as at last survey in January 2019)

PROPERTY	TOTAL MAINTENANCE NEED BY PRIORITY (£)			
	PRIORITY 1 URGENT, ESSENTIAL (24/25)	PRIORITY 2 LONGER TERM DESIRABLE (25/26)	PRIORITY 3 LONGER TERM DESIRABLE (26/27)	PRIORITY 4 LONGER TERM WORKS (27/28 onwards)
Mountsett Crematorium	£93,345	£9,900	£215,600	£1,160,800
TOTAL				£1,479,645

The table above does include any requirements or costs in relation to the future replacement of the Cremators.

In seeking to address the condition needs of our crematorium, we routinely prioritise and address maintenance issues where possible through our Repairs and Maintenance Budget and Repairs Reserve. Investment has been made in recent years to address the maintenance backlog and other repairs identified by the premise’s manager through a premise’s suitability assessment.

4.2.2. Sufficiency

Unfortunately, sufficiency surveys are not planned to be undertaken across the Councils Portfolio as the resources are not available to do so.

Mountsett Crematorium is optimally used by residents of Durham County Council and Gateshead Council providing sufficient needs for the bereaved; however, this may only become an issue for Mountsett where

death rates do increase considerably. Sufficiency will where resources allow, be looked at as one part of the Councils Property Review Programme although the property review programme covers whole portfolio areas rather than one individual property such as Mountsett.

4.2.3 Suitability

Unfortunately, suitability surveys are not planned to be undertaken across the Councils Portfolio as the resources are not available to do so.

The manager of Mountsett Crematorium has carried out a basic suitability audit, the results of which are set out below at Section 6 (Gap analysis)

However, providing investment into the current building will provide suitability in terms of service delivery and the right location.

Suitability is about whether the property users/customers consider that the premises meet requirements in terms of use. A series of questions are asked around whether staff/customers find the heating/lighting/ventilation/decoration/staff facilities and general aesthetics etc in their opinion as good/fair/poor. This detail helps to inform future investment requirements. In this instance, the premises manager advised in his opinion what the issues were in terms of suitability, and this enabled the gaps to be drawn out. Although we usually find that the premises manager is the best source of knowledge, there may be other suitability issues that staff/customers may be able to highlight which could, subject to service approval and of course resources are included in the premises Investment Plan.



Crematorium front entrance

4.2.4 Accessibility

As part of the Council's recognised duty to plan for improved access to facilities for disabled or impaired service users, staff and visitors, Mountsett Crematoria was subject of an accessibility audit carried out in 2011. A feasibility report to deliver these works had been carried out by our in-house Design Team and necessary works were undertaken.

4.2.5 Energy performance



Bookcase within Chapel

Annual energy performances details are collated on all assets utilised by Bereavement Services and include information around energy consumption (electricity and gas) and water consumption. These figures are reported as part of the Corporate Asset Management Plan. The latest figures available for 2022/23 show that the energy consumption for Mountsett Crematorium was 1,598,888 kilowatt-hours (kWh) (based on a gross internal area of 753 sqm). In monetary terms, this consumption cost the Council £112,123 during 2022/23.

The total water consumption in 2022/23 was -5 m³; again, in monetary terms this consumption cost £1,273 last year.

The tables below provide a summary of the energy performance of Mountsett Crematorium during 2022/23. In future SAMPs we will seek to report the trends in these figures, with a view to making improvements year on year. Any such trend analysis will be calculated on upon the consumption figures (rather than the monetary value attached to energy) due to the ever-fluctuating costs associated with electricity and gas. Considering our commitment to support the Council's sustainability and climate change agendas we recognise the need to improve these energy performance statistics over the coming years, particularly in respect of carbon emissions from our buildings.

Energy Performance Summary

PROPERTY	TOTAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION (kWh)	TOTAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION (£)	TOTAL WATER CONSUMPTION (m ³)	TOTAL WATER CONSUMPTION PER SQM (£)
Mountsett Crematorium	1,598,888	112,123	-5	-572

The data collated shows us that

- For obvious reasons the Crematorium consumes a far greater amount of gas and electricity (based on kWh usage) than the Council average. This is considered to have a consequent

knock-on effect on CO² emissions.

- Water consumption is below the Council average.



Crematorium general view

Energy Improvements

Proposals have include fully exploring the possibilities that may allow use of the waste heat generated by the installation of a heat exchanger system to both new cremators to heat the building, this has now been implemented. The installation of solar energy panels to the building has been undertaken during 2022/23. The installation of electric vehicle charging points has also been undertaken during 2023, along with other energy improvements remaining works.

Resomation

Water cremation is the new alternative to flame cremation and burial. Giving people a new choice, environmentally friendly option that offers a natural process using water instead of flames. Natural water cremation is the new, greener alternative to flame cremation and burial. This natural approach to cremation uses water instead of flame to reduce the body to ashes and offers people the choice of a gentler, more environmentally friendly end of life solution. Families across North America are already choosing this natural process for their departed loved ones. With a growing global population that is becoming increasingly aware of their environmental footprint more and more people are seeking greener alternatives, both in life and death. With no harmful emissions and wider environmental benefits, water cremation is a natural alternative to existing end of life solutions, giving people a new, modern option to consider when planning a funeral.

What are the benefits?

By offering water cremation to families in your community, you can:

- Provide a greener alternative to people at the end of life so they have an environmentally friendly choice
- Be one of the first in the country to introduce this as a service
- Be part of something that is modernising the funeral industry and changing the way people make a choice at the end of life

Work is currently underway regarding making applications for water consents in the first instance, we do however have initial drawing for location of installation if we were to progress.



Resomation

5. Asset Demand Profile



Chapel of remembrance

Being mindful of the anticipated changes that our Service is likely to face over the next 10 years, it is important that we consider what our 'ideal' property portfolio should look like to reflect our future needs. In this section of our SAMP, we therefore take a 'blank piece of paper' to set out what our real asset needs are, without being restricted by our existing portfolio.

These 'ideals' are however tempered by a realistic appreciation that we do not have infinite resources.

5.1 Our ideal property assets for the future

In assessing what our ideal Crematorium should look like we have analysed the needs of our Service. In doing so we have recognised that our assets need to be fit for purpose and provide for changes in legislation and government guidance whilst delivering improvements and maximising the opportunity to achieve value for money.

The table below sets out the considerations for our Crematorium:

Location

- A woodland or parkland setting in an area of undulating ground with good natural features and mature trees.
- Accessible by public transport
- Section 5 of the Crematoria Act 1902 stipulates that no crematorium shall be within:
 - 200 yards of any dwelling house
 - 100 yards with consent
 - 50 yards of any public highway nor in any consecrated part of a burial ground

Size

- A minimum of two hectares (approximately five acres) per estimated 1000 cremations per annum

Layout and image

- Entrances and exits should not be near incompatible establishments.
- Entrances and exits should not be located on main trunk roads.
- The flow of traffic to the building should be simple, dignified, uninterrupted and screened.
- Shared vehicular entrance and exit roads should be at least five metres wide.
- Entrances and exits to ancillary rooms should flow through the building in sequence.
- Adequate car parking facilities which are DDA compliant.
- Undercover entrances

- The entrance hall or vestibule should be spacious and provide for toilet facilities.
- The waiting room should have adequate seating capacity, toilet facilities and be set out to allow the arrival of the cortege to be seen by those waiting.
- The vestry should be located at the front of the building.
- The chapel should provide for 80/100 mourners and should be flexible enough to allow for funerals of different denominations. It should be set out in such a way that provides for the comfort and use of all mourners and is DDA compliant.
- The provision of a cremator that is compliant with Environmental legislation and Secretary of State guidance particularly in relation to mercury abatement.
- The provision of an adequate and suitable music system including an organ
- CCTV to allow for traffic monitoring, chapel and crematory arrangements and security.
- A suitably designed and appropriate for use catafalque.
- The provision of a Committal Hall and viewing room
- Provision of adequate and suitable ancillary accommodation including a Bearers Room Chapel of Rest, Coffin Storage Facilities, Treatment Room for Cremated Remains and staff facilities.

Customer needs

- Provision for commemorative floral tributes to be accommodated within the general vicinity of memorials.
- Provision of chamfered terra-cotta brick or stone edging to the walks of the Garden of Remembrance to allow for the fixing of memorial plates.
- Provision of a Book of Remembrance
- Provision of a Columbaria

Other Requirements

- The provision of a Chapel of Remembrance, hexagonal shaped 8' sides, situated to the right-hand side of the crematorium in an area designed for the floral tribute. The building should be designed so that it can be 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 mediate in the chapel, should not be disturbed by mourners attending services and vice versa.

6. Supply and Demand Comparison (Gap Analysis)

The aim of the gap analysis is to review our existing Crematorium against our anticipated future requirements. We need to provide the right environments, and particularly the right buildings, which project the right image to our service users and the wider community. By examining our existing crematoria (Section 4) against our 'ideal' property portfolio (Section 5) we can see what improvements and modifications this will need to entail, which in turn allow us to target available resources towards our areas of greatest need and importance over the coming years.

6.1 How our 'ideal' property portfolio differs from our 'existing' asset base.

Investment has been made to reduce our overarching maintenance need and to improve facilities in line with our changing service delivery need requirements. Since LGR a total investment of over £4 million has been carried out on the creation of disabled toilets, fire alarm and emergency lighting systems, along with chapel improvements. Despite this investment however, there are gaps between our current asset portfolio and our 'ideals' for the future.

6.1.1 Cremator Replacement and Mercury Abatement

The anticipated lifespan of the Cremators at Mountsett Crematorium is normally 20 years. In 2003/04 prior to LGR, Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee established a Cremator Replacement Reserve Fund with an annual contribution of £20k factored into the revenue budget. Following LGR, the Committee updated its reserve policy approving all additional surplus generated (over and above budget) to be transferred to the Cremator Replacement reserve.

To ensure sufficient funding for the future replacement of cremators the Committee approved an increased budgeted contribution along with the continued policy to transfer all additional surpluses to the Cremator Reserve.

It is estimated that, based on today's prices, the funding required for the future cremator replacement is £800k per cremator.

In 2004 DEFRA issued guidelines in the cremation industry advising that at least 50% of all cremations should be mercury abated by the end of 2012. Should this not be achievable, legislation would be introduced whereby all crematoria undertaking excess of 1970 cremations during 2003 would be required to install abatement equipment.

The Federation of Cremation Authorities felt that rather than the cost of Mercury Abatement being met by the busiest crematoria the cost should be shared around the industry and introduced the CAMEO scheme (a burden sharing scheme where those who with abatement equipment would receive payment from those without, based on the number of cremations undertaken).

In 2003 Mountsett Crematorium carried out significantly less cremations than the threshold set out in the 2003 legislation (1,326) and was therefore not compelled to install equipment in line with legislation. In consideration of this Members of the Joint Committee agreed that the Mountsett Crematorium should join the CAMEO scheme rather than install abatement equipment.

Whilst it was envisaged that the number of projected cremations would continue to be lower than the legislative threshold, there were strong environmental reasons why, when we replaced the cremators, they were replaced with Mercury Abatement equipment. The new cremators, which when installed in 2020/21 will therefore be fully compliant with the DEFRA guidelines.

Our Cremator Reserve fund as of the 1st of April 2023 is £328,303 (2022/23 Joint Committee Accounts), with a forecasted transfer from the reserve of £104,071 during 2023/24 thus resulting in an estimated year end reserve balance of £224,232.

6.1.2 Outstanding Repairs

Mountsett Crematoria is well located in terms of the service required and provides an ideal atmosphere for customers and users. We consider that both are suitable for use and matches most of the criteria set out as our 'ideals'. There are, however, improvements that can be made to portfolio which are identified below:

Repairs and maintenance investment from 2024/25 onwards are currently estimated at £1,479,645 through the implementation of a robust repairs and maintenance strategy. There are also other works in the long-term categories in the condition survey that will need to be considered going forward. The investment includes the future Cremator Replacement requirements.

In addition to those works identified in the Condition Survey, several works which are outside the scope of this survey type have been identified. As detailed below an identified portfolio gap is the need to have a maintenance plan which will address repair and improvement need going forward. The Plan has been developed and is set out at Section 8.2 below and includes work identified outside the condition survey remit.

6.1.3 Suitability

As highlighted in Section 4 Suitability Surveys are not planned to be undertaken across the Councils Portfolio as resources are not unfortunately available to do so.

The Mountsett Crematorium property manager has carried out a suitability audit which has shown generally the suitability of the building to deliver the service is good.

Health and Safety requirements are being satisfactorily met and the premises are considered suitable in terms of internal layouts. The location of the Chapel of Remembrance is considered suitable in terms of image location and environment being situated away from the main chapel in a secluded and peaceful area setting the right tone for the service it provides.

The main areas of weakness in terms of suitability are: -

Redecoration

The Mountsett Condition Survey includes redecoration requirements and indicative costs (25k) with most of the work required in 2024/25. Therefore, it is proposed that this is placed on a two-year cycle and that funding be secured to carry out this work. It is however appreciated that redecoration works may need to be aligned to the delivery of other maintenance and improvement works.

GAP 1	Secure a budget, and develop a 2-year schedule for internal and external redecoration	Target: April 2024
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Memorial tree

The original memorial tree is nearly full and requires an additional tree installed.

GAP 2	Source budget provision and carry out installation of additional tree.	Target: April 2024
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Small Memorial towers

The small original memorial towers are nearly full and require 3 more additional towers.

GAP 3	Source budget provision and carry out installation of memorial towers	Target: April 2024
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Hearth replacement

The cremators will need a new hearth installed.

GAP 4	Source budget provision and carry out Re-lining of hearth.	Target: April 2024
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Carpets

Supply and install new carpets to chapel area.

GAP 5	Source budget provision and carry out installation of new carpets.	Target: April 2024
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Installation of resin pathway to around pathway to main entrance

Carry out improvements to provide nonslip pathways using a resin.

GAP 6	Secure a suitable budget and carry out the installation of resin pathway.	Target: April 2024
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Yew hedging

Further to the previous winter, the salt has killed off most of the yew hedging. This looks unsightly and requires removing. This budget will allow the removal of the dead yew hedging to be replaced with bird's mouth fencing.

GAP 7	Secure a budget and carry out replacement of yew hedging with bird's mouth fencing.	Target: April 2024
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Hearth replacement

The cremators will need new hearth installed.

GAP 8	Source budget provision and carry out Re-lining of hearth.	Target: April 2025
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Small Memorial towers

The small original memorial towers are nearly full and require 3 more additional towers.

GAP 9	Source budget provision and carry out installation of 3 small memorial towers	Target: April 2025
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Redecoration

The Mountsett Condition Survey includes redecoration requirements and indicative costs (30k) with most of the work required in 2026/27. Therefore, it is proposed that this is placed on a two-year cycle and that funding be secured to carry out this work. It is however appreciated that redecoration works may need to be aligned to the delivery of other maintenance and improvement works.

GAP 10	Secure a budget, and develop a 2-year schedule for internal and external redecoration	Target: April 2026
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Resomation

Carry out the installation of a water based resomator and associated plant.

GAP 11	Secure a budget and carry out installation of resomator.	Target: April 2027
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Hearth replacement

The cremators will need new hearths installed.

GAP 12	Source budget provision and carry out Re-lining of hearths.	Target: April 2026
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Small Memorial towers

The small original memorial towers are nearly full and require 3 more additional towers.

GAP 13	Source budget provision and carry out installation of memorial towers	Target: April 2026
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Re lining of cremators

The cremators will need re lined.

GAP 14	Source budget provision and carry out Re-lining.	Target: 2026
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Hearth replacement

The cremators will need new hearths installed.

GAP 15	Source budget provision and carry out Re-lining of hearths.	Target: April 2027
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Redecoration

The Mountsett Condition Survey includes redecoration requirements and indicative costs (30k) with most of the work required in 2028/29. Therefore, it is proposed that this is placed on a two-year cycle and that funding be secured to carry out this work. It is however appreciated that redecoration works may need to be aligned to the delivery of other maintenance and improvement works.

GAP 16	Secure a budget, and develop a 2-year schedule for internal and external redecoration	Target: April 2028
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Cooler cassettes

The original cooler cassettes will need replacing.

GAP 17	Source budget provision and carry out replacement of cooler cassettes	Target: April 2029
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Re lining of cremators

The cremators will need re lined.

GAP 18	Source budget provision and carry out Re-lining.	Target: 2037
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6.1.4 Accessibility

Equality colleagues will develop an Access Strategy the purpose of which, is to identify accessibility works through Audits and to agree, working alongside services, and through the priorities identified in SAMPs accessibility works that will be carried out.

We are committed to ensuring that all our premises are DDA compliant.

6.1.5 Energy

As identified in Section 4.2.5 our energy costs are high, for obvious reasons, when compared to the rest of the Council portfolio. Notwithstanding that comparable data are not presently available; we remain committed to reducing our energy costs and CO² emissions.

The installation of solar photovoltaics (PV) panels on our Crematorium as a means by which we could possibly heat out premises, save energy costs and reduce our carbon dioxide emissions has been undertaken. Further energy works that were not undertaken during 2022 are still outstanding due to increase cost associations, these are hoped to be completed by the end of 2023.

7. Closing the gaps in our Provision

As determined by our Gap analysis there is specific areas that require investment so that we can achieve our 'ideal' property, and thus allow us to deliver our service vision. In order for the SAMP to be an effective planning tool in mapping our progress, it will be reviewed annually to take account of future emerging needs, whilst also re-visiting our stated priorities (Section 8)

7.1 How we intend to close the 'gap'.

We recognise the need to use asset management planning as a strategic tool to tackle our property related issues and problems, and to steer investment in line with our priorities. The key projects and targets which we believe will enable us to close some of the 'gaps' are set out in section 8, and the platforms which can enable us to reach our property 'ideals' for the future described below.

7.1.1 Reserve Fund

In 2003/04 (pre-Local Government Re-organisation) a ring-fenced reserve fund, met from surpluses generated by the crematorium, was established for the purpose of which was to accommodate the future capital investment requirements regarding cremator replacement and any risk / Asset management issues as they might arise. These reserves were developed in the context of a financial strategy aimed at providing sufficient funding within the Mountsett Crematorium accounts.

The Reserve Fund presently comprises:

Reserve	Balance @ 1 st April 2023 £	Transfer to Reserve £	Transfer from Reserve £	Balance @ 31 st March 2024 £
Cremator Replacement	(328,303)	0	104,071	(224,232)
Repairs	(114,370)	(15,000)	0	(129,370)
General	(318,975)	(366,905)	350,000	(335,880)
Total	(761,648)	(381,905)	454,071	(689,482)

In addition, the following Revenue Budgets are available for Repairs and Maintenance:

General repairs and maintenance	Equipment Repairs and Servicing	Total R&M Budget
£8,000	£45,336	£53,336

7.2 How we intend to monitor the ‘gaps’ in our provision.

The Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee meets Quarterly to discuss all issues relating to Mountsett Crematorium which are highlighted through the Bereavement Services Manager’s reports. In addition to their remit as set out in Section 2, the Committee will also be used to refine the recognised gaps in our portfolio, direct funds, and monitor delivery of our SAMP.

7.3 How we intend to determine future investment priorities and mitigate risk.

Mountsett Crematorium is providing the required service to the residents of County Durham and other users of our service however, as with any property changes and improvements are continually required to keep up to date with 21st century service delivery needs, with routine investment also required in respect of repairs and maintenance issues to prevent premises from further deterioration.

In developing priorities for investment, and to ensure that required Service delivery improvements are made, we have adopted a robust options appraisal process to consider needs fully, whilst also following the Council’s corporate risk assessment protocols when assessing any project or investment opportunity.

7.3.1 Options Appraisals and Criteria for Determining Priorities

As a Service, we always ensure that full options appraisals are undertaken by a team of multi-disciplined officers when considering investment, including representatives from Bereavement Services and colleagues in Asset Management. Advice and support are also taken from other appropriate Council Services where required. The aim of any options appraisal is to provide value for money solutions that meet our strategic objectives and which also:

- Consider all delivery avenues for projects, including changes in the way we provide our service.

- Undertake feasibility options for projects which involve maintenance and refurbishment works and,
- Prepare fully costed project appraisals, whilst also identifying project benefits and risks

In future months/years, we will need to undertake full and robust options appraisals in respect of the ‘gaps’ that have been identified (as set out in Section 6) and how we will deliver value for money solutions in respect of these issues.

A high-level options appraisal on each gap identified is shown below. This details potential high-level considerations for taking forward work to minimise our identified gaps.

High level options to minimise the ‘gaps’ in our portfolio.

	GAP IDENTIFIED	OPTION 1	OPTION 2
GAP 1	Secure a budget, and develop a 2-year schedule for internal and external redecoration	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 2	Carry out the installation of additional memorial tree	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 3	Carry out the installation of 3 small towers	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 4	Carry out the relining of hearth	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 5	Carry out the replacement of carpets	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 6	Carry out the installation of resin pathway to chapel entrance	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 7	Carry out removal of yew hedging and replace with bird’s mouth fencing	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 8	Carry out the relining of hearth	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 9	Carry out the installation of 3 small towers	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 10	Secure a budget, and develop a 2-year schedule for internal and external redecoration	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 11	Secure a budget, and carry out installation of resomator	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 12	Carry out the relining of hearth	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 13	Carry out the installation of 3 small towers	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 14	Carry out the relining of cremators	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 15	Carry out the relining of hearth	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 16	Secure a budget, and develop a 2-year schedule for internal and external redecoration	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 17	Carry out the replacement of cooler cassettes	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan
GAP 18	Carry out the relining of cremators	Do Nothing	Maintenance Plan

7.3.2 Risk Assessments

The Council has a formal adopted Risk Management Policy and Strategy which sets out the approach to risk management. It ensures consistency of approach and an understanding of the management of business risks across the Council, with each Service having a designated Risk Manager to mitigate risks associated with Bereavement Services strategic business objectives.

Through this SAMP we therefore hope to consider the areas of greatest risk to our assets over the short to medium term, and particularly for those ‘gaps’ which have been identified. In turn this will also help us to determine whether additional finances, which cannot be presently met from our Reserve Fund, are required, and avoid longer-term service delivery problems. The approach to risk assessment through the SAMPs is approached by reviewing each identified gap in turn and highlighting potential risks.

Property Risk Assessment (for’ gaps in existing portfolio)

	GAP IDENTIFIED	RISK IDENTIFIED	MITIGATION
GAP 1	Secure a budget, and develop a 2-year schedule for internal and external redecoration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Reserve fund resources available to carry out repairs outside the urgent and essential Category. 2. Re-decoration on a 2-year cycle will not align with maintenance plan. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund. 2 Develop a suitable re-decoration investment plan and align this with urgent and essential category works
GAP 2	Secure a budget and carry out the installation of a memorial tree	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Reserve fund resources available to carry out repairs outside the urgent and essential Category. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out installation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund. 2 Develop a suitable investment plan and align this with urgent and essential category works
GAP 3	Secure a budget and carry out the installation of 3 additional small memorial towers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Reserve fund resources available to carry out repairs outside the urgent and essential Category. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out replacement. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund. 2 Develop a suitable investment plan and align this with urgent and essential category works
GAP 4	Carry out Re-lining of hearths	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cremators require new hearths. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out these works. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a suitable investment plan for replacement work 2.Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund

	GAP IDENTIFIED	RISK IDENTIFIED	MITIGATION
GAP 5	Secure a budget and carry out replacement of carpets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Reserve fund resources available to carry out repairs outside the urgent and essential Category. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out works. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund. 2 Develop a suitable investment plan and align this with urgent and essential category works
GAP 6	Secure a budget and carry out the installation of resin pathway leading up to chapel entrance.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Reserve fund resources available to carry out repairs outside the urgent and essential Category. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out replacement. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund. 2 Develop a suitable investment plan and align this with urgent and essential category works
GAP 7	Secure a budget and carry out the replacement of yew hedging with bird's mouth fencing.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Reserve fund resources available to carry out repairs outside the urgent and essential Category. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out replacement. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund. 2 Develop a suitable investment plan and align this with urgent and essential category works
GAP 8	Carry out Re-lining of hearths	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cremators require new hearths. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out these works. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a suitable investment plan for replacement work 2. Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund
GAP 9	Secure a budget and carry out the installation of 3 additional small memorial towers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Reserve fund resources available to carry out repairs outside the urgent and essential Category. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out replacement. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund. 2 Develop a suitable investment plan and align this with urgent and essential category works
GAP 10	Secure a budget, and develop a 2-year schedule for internal and external redecoration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Reserve fund resources available to carry out repairs outside the urgent and essential Category. 2. Re-decoration on a 2-year cycle will not align with maintenance plan. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund. 2 Develop a suitable re-decoration investment plan and align this with urgent and essential category works
GAP 11	Secure a budget and carry out the installation of a resomator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Reserve fund resources available to carry out repairs outside the urgent and essential Category. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out installation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund. 2 Develop a suitable investment plan and align this with urgent and essential category works
GAP 12	Carry out Re-lining of hearths	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cremators require new hearths. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a suitable investment plan for re-

	GAP IDENTIFIED	RISK IDENTIFIED	MITIGATION
		2. Resources may not be available to carry out these works.	placement work 2.Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund
GAP 13	Secure a budget and carry out the installation of 3 additional small memorial towers	1. The Reserve fund resources available to carry out repairs outside the urgent and essential Category. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out replacement.	1 Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund. 2 Develop a suitable investment plan and align this with urgent and essential category works
GAP 14	Carry out Re-lining of cremators	1. Existing cremators requires re lining. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out these works.	1. Develop a suitable investment plan for re-line work 2.Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund
GAP 15	Carry out Re-lining of hearths	1. Cremators require new hearths. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out these works.	1. Develop a suitable investment plan for replacement work 2.Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund
GAP 16	Secure a budget, and develop a 2-year schedule for internal and external redecoration	1. The Reserve fund resources available to carry out repairs outside the urgent and essential Category. 2. Re-decoration on a 2-year cycle will not align with maintenance plan.	1 Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund. 2 Develop a suitable re-decoration investment plan and align this with urgent and essential category works
GAP 17	Secure a budget and carry out the replacement of cooler cassettes.	1. The Reserve fund resources available to carry out repairs outside the urgent and essential Category. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out replacement.	1 Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund. 2 Develop a suitable investment plan and align this with urgent and essential category works
GAP 18	Carry out Re-lining of cremators	1. Existing cremators requires re lining. 2. Resources may not be available to carry out these works.	1. Develop a suitable investment plan for re-line work 2.Explore the potential for increasing the amount of surplus that can be placed in the Repair Reserve Fund

8. Our Priorities for Delivery

In terms of our priorities over the short, medium, and long term, we have already established our property gaps, this section of the SAMP summarises our key projects required to close these gaps. These projects are detailed at Appendix A and show how these projects are aligned to the identified gaps. The Appendix also demonstrates how these projects align themselves with our Vision as set out in Section 1. These will be subject to updates as the SAMP moves forward.



Chapel

8.1 Cremator Replacement and Relining

In the long term (20 years) our priority will be to ensure our that our cremators continue to control mercury emissions from the Crematorium – The Environmental Protection (England) (Crematoria Mercury Emissions) Direction 2008, advising that at least 50% of all cremations should be mercury abated by 1st January 2013 and 100% by 2020. The cremators that have been installed in 2021 ensure that both cremators at Mountsett are mercury abated. However, the temporary cremator remains unabated.

Notwithstanding the legislative imperative above, there also exists the issue of operational costs and CO² emissions (Section 4 above) and potential rising maintenance and repair costs. The new cremators lifespan is estimated to be approximately 20 years and as the cremators get older costs associated with maintenance and repair will rise, and parts will be obsolete. A 5-year service contract will be in place with I.F.Z.W. to cover the period of 2024-2028 inclusive to ensure optimum levels of maintenance.

In the short to medium and long term we will continue to maintain our crematorium and reline our cremators. Cremator relining will be carried out:

- No1 Cremator 2029, 2037,
- No2 Cremator 2029, 2037,

Cremator Hearth Replacement:

- No1 Cremator 2024, 2026,2028,2030,2032,2034,2036,2038,2040
- No2 Cremator 2023, 2025,2027,2029,2031,2033,2035,2037,2039

8.2 Outstanding Repairs (Identified in the Condition Survey)

In the short (2024/25) to medium term (2025/26) our aim is to address those urgent repair and maintenance works, identified in our Condition Survey and those repairs identified by the Bereavement Services Manager.

Previously we had carried out a Feasibility study, which in turn led to the redevelopment work in creating additional disabled toilet facilities.

There will also be the requirement for us to commission an up-to-date Condition Survey. This will ensure appropriate investment is made across our crematorium including the development of a maintenance and investment plan. This will form part of an overall 5-year investment plan for the improvement of our crematorium.

8.2.1 Maintenance Plan

Our crematorium will be subject to an annual maintenance regime to ensure that is maintained to an appropriate standard with, financial and other risks also controlled. As part of this we regime, we recognise that the maintenance of our assets will fall into two distinct categories:

- **Reactive Maintenance** – i.e., the repair of components upon failure. Repair may have to take place immediately (emergency repairs) or almost immediately (urgent repairs) in order that the premises may continue to function effectively or safely, and
- **Planned Maintenance** – i.e., carried out to reduce the level of reactive maintenance, by replacing component and elements of repair before they have deteriorated to a critical level. This will comprise of both regular servicing of equipment and inspection/testing in accordance with the requirements of regulations (routine maintenance) and planned repair or replacement of deteriorated components, such as maintenance carried out according to planned recurrent cycles

Crematorium



(for example, redecoration) or according to the lifecycle of the component/element (for example re-roofing)

Over the next year we will continue to address any reactive needs in the estate, as and when they may arise, and we will also seek to undertake planned maintenance works. Those works which need to be considered for investment are listed below, with any works not addressed during 2022/23-23/24, rolled forward.

The works and costs listed below are estimated and as such are indicative costs only. A Feasibility Study will be required before final budget costs can be established.

Planned Maintenance 2024/25 Priority 1

Project	Budget	Estimated Cost
Re-Decoration Works	Premises	£ 25,000*
Installation of memorial tree	Premises	£ 3,240
Installation of 3 small memorial towers	Premises	£ 4,320
Carry out Re-lining of 1 hearth	Premises	£ 5,400
Replace carpets	Premises	£ 25,000*
Install resin pathway to chapel entrance	Premises	£ 22,140
To replace remaining damaged yew hedging with bird's mouth.	Premises	£ 8,245
ESTIMATED TOTAL SPEND		£ 93,345

Planned Maintenance 2025/26 Priority 2

Project	Budget	Estimated Cost
Carry out Re-lining of 1 hearth	Premises	£ 5,400
Installation of 3 small memorial towers	Premises	£ 4,500
ESTIMATED TOTAL SPEND		£ 9,900

Planned Maintenance 2026/27 Priority 3

Project	Budget	Estimated Cost
Re-Decoration Works	Premises	£ 30,000*

Carry out Re-lining of 1 hearth	Premises	£	5,400
Installation of 3 small memorial towers	Premises	£	5,000
Carry out Re-lining of 2 cremators x 1 times (every 7 years)	Premises	£	175,200
ESTIMATED TOTAL SPEND		£	215,600

Planned Maintenance 2027 onwards Priority 4

Project	Budget	Estimated Cost	
Re-Decoration Works x 7 times (every 2 years)	Premises	£	210,000*
Installation of resomator	Premises	£	600,000
Carry out Re-lining of 2 cremators x 1 times (every 7 years)	Premises	£	175,200
Carry out Re-lining of 2 hearths x 7 times (every 2 years)	Premises	£	75,600
Carry out replacement of cooler cassettes	Premises	£	100,000
ESTIMATED TOTAL SPEND		£	1,160,800

*Estimate

8.3 Suitability

In the short term (2024/25), our aim is to address those issues works which have potential health and safety implications. Our priority will also be to ensure that our crematorium continues to meet the expectations of all our service users and demonstrates a professional and dignified service. In the medium term (2025-26) our aim is therefore, to address those issues identified in the feasibility report.

8.4 Accessibility

Our aim is to ensure that are premises are DDA compliant.

9 Financial Resources Available to Deliver our Priorities.

Investment in our Crematorium is supported through our Crematorium Repair Reserves. This is reviewed annually by the Mountsett Crematoria Joint Committee and is aligned to its budget setting processes.

In order to ensure that the repairs identified within this Service Asset Management Plan can be carried, funding is to be allocated from several sources including: -

- Repairs and Maintenance Revenue Budget
- Contributions from the Repairs Reserve
- Reduced contributions to the Repairs Reserve in future years
- Prudential Borrowing

