

**Central Durham Crematorium Joint
Committee**

29 January 2025



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 Joint Committee:
 - a. Note the current performance of the crematorium.
 - b. Note the current staffing issues.
 - c. Note the continued success with regards to the Green Flag Award.
 - d. Note the updated position with regards to the recycling of metals scheme.
 - e. Agree to St Cuthbert's Hospice providing a Christmas tree again in 2025.

Performance Update - Number of Cremations

- 4 The table below provides details of the number of cremations for the period 1 September 2024 to 31 December 2024 inclusive, with comparative data in the same period last year:

	2023/24	2024/25	Change
September	181 + 1*	145 + 2*	- 36 + 1*
October	187 + 1*	182 + 1*	- 5 + 0*
November	209 + 2*	169 + 1*	- 40 - 1*
December	216 + 4*	198 + 0*	- 18 - 4*
TOTAL	793 + 8*	694 + 4*	- 99 - 4*

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

- 5 The full profile of where families came from can be seen in Appendix 2. In summary 193 came from Durham, 28 came from Spennymoor and 445 from other areas. There have been 4 NVF cremations undertaken for the period covered by this report compared to 8 in the comparable period last year. There were 99 less cremations undertaken in the period September to December 2024 compared to the same period last year.
- 6 Regarding the reduction of cremation numbers, we have consulted with Funeral directors and our Registrars. We have noted a decrease in cremations due to the recent introduction of the medical examiners, leading to delays in information being obtained from GPs following deaths in the community. Another reason for the drop in cremation numbers is the increase in direct cremations which families are not choosing to be carried out at our facilities.
- 7 The number of cremations allowed for in the 2024/25 budget is 2,200, although this will be increased to 2,300 for the 2025/26 budget. The current projected number of cremations for 2024/25 is 2,333, which is 100 less than the 2,433 which were delivered in 2023/24.

Memorials

- 8 The table overleaf outlines the number and value of the memorials sold in the period 1 September to 31 December 2024 compared to the same period the previous year.

	Sept-Dec	2023/24	Sept-Dec	2024/25
	Number	£	Number	£
Vase Blocks	7	4,694	7	4,532
Large Plaques	21	9,084	10	4,290
Small Plaques	1	273	3	819
Niche	2	2,612	3	3,868
Renewal	48	8,651	33	4,388
Leaf plaques	13	1,300	11	1,100
Total	92	26,614	67	18,997

- 9 The number and value of memorials sold 67 / £18,997 compares to 92 / £26,614 in the same period in 2023/24, which is a decrease of 25 memorials sold and a small decrease of £7,617 year on year.

Operational Matters

Staffing

- 10 For members information, one of our casual relief crematorium attendants has now left the Authority, Therefore, we have interviewed and appointed 2 more casual reliefs to cover both crematoriums.

Green Flag Award

- 11 Members will recall from the September 2024 meeting that the Central Durham Crematorium was successful in retaining its Green Flag award for the thirteenth year running.
- 12 An application will be submitted for the 2025 award and progress will be reported back to future meetings. A management plan to maintain the required standards will be updated and any required works will be covered by existing budgets.

Recycling of Metals Scheme

- 13 Collections in the 2nd round of Metals nominations for 2024/25 have resulted in another round of nominations being made available therefore we nominated 2 charities the Bradley Lowery Foundation and the British Heart Foundation. A BACS payment of £5,800 will be made to each charity.
- 14 A second round of nominations has now opened for 2025, therefore we have nominated If You Care Share Foundation and St Cuthbert's Hospice with a closing date of 31st January 2025.

Christmas Tree

- 15 St. Cuthbert's Hospice has requested that they be allowed to continue to provide a Christmas tree again in 2025. The Hospice supplies the tree and decorations at no cost to the Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee.



- 16 No other requests have been received from any organisation to place a Christmas tree at the Crematorium.

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Appendix 1: Implications

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.

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.

Climate Change

There are no climate change issues associated with this report.

Appendix 2: Breakdown of Figures

	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total Sept- Dec
DURHAM	36	54	42	61	193
BARNARD CASTLE		1			1
BIRTLEY	3	1			4
BISHOP AUCKLAND	4	3	2	3	12
BISHOP MIDDLEHAM				1	1
BLACKHALL	2	2	3	1	8
BURNHOPE			1		1
CHESTER LE STREET	11	16	10	15	52
CHILTON	1	3	2	1	7
CONSETT	1	1			2
CROOK	1	2	3	6	12
DARLINGTON	1	1			2
EASINGTON	6	8	5	7	26
EAST RAINTON			1		1
ESH	1		3		4
ESH WINNING	2	1	1		4
FERRYHILL	3	2	2	3	10
FISHBURN		1		1	2
FROSTERLEY			1		1
GATESHEAD	1			1	2
GREAT LUMLEY	3	2		4	9
HARTLEPOOL		2	2	3	7
HASWELL		1	1	1	3
HETTON LE HOLE	5	1	4	3	13
HORDEN	4	6	7	2	19
HOUGHTON	5	5	1	7	18
HOWDEN				1	1
LANCHESTER	1				1
LANGLEY PARK	3	5	5	4	17
LUDWORTH	1			1	2
MIDDLESBOROUGH		1			1
MURTON	5	1	6	6	18
NETTLESWORTH		1			1
NEW BRANCEPETH		3			3
NEWCASTLE		3	1		4
NEWTON AYCLIFFE	2		6	3	11
NORTHUMBRIA		1	1		2
PELTON				3	3
PETERLEE	5	12	6	15	38
SACRISTON	1	2	1	3	7
SEAHAM	6	8	11	7	32
SEDFIELD	2	3	2	2	9
SHILDON	1				1
SHOTTON	4	3	3	3	13

SOUTH HETTON	2	5		1	8
SPENNYMOOR	11	4	8	5	28
STANHOPE		1	2		3
STANLEY	2	2	1	2	7
SUNDERLAND	3				3
SOUTHERN					
ENGLAND				2	2
THORNLEY		1		3	4
TOW LAW			1	1	2
TRIMDON	1	3	4	3	11
WASHINGTON	1	1	2	1	5
WEST AUCKLAND	1		1		2
WEST CORNFORTH		1	4	1	6
WHEATLEY HILL		2	4	2	8
WILLINGTON	1	2	4	4	11
WINGATE	1	2	4	4	11
WOLSINGHAM			1	1	2
YORKSHIRE		1			1
NO FIXED ABODE	1				1
Total	145	182	169	198	694