

Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee

23 April 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 Crematorium Joint Committee:
 - a) Note the current performance of the crematorium.
 - b) Note the update with regards to operational matters.
 - c) Note the attendance at the Joint Conference of the Federation of Burial & Cremation Authorities and the Cremation Society of Great Britain.
 - d) Note the distribution of recycling income to the respective charities.

Background

- 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

- The table below provides details of the number of cremations for the period 1 January to 31 March 2025 inclusive, with comparative data in the same period last year:

	2023/24	2024/25	Change
January	237 +4*	225 +1*	-12 - 3*
February	226 +0*	212 +1*	-14 + 1*
March	214 +0*	207 +0*	- 7-3*
TOTAL	677 + 4*	644 + 2*	-33-2*

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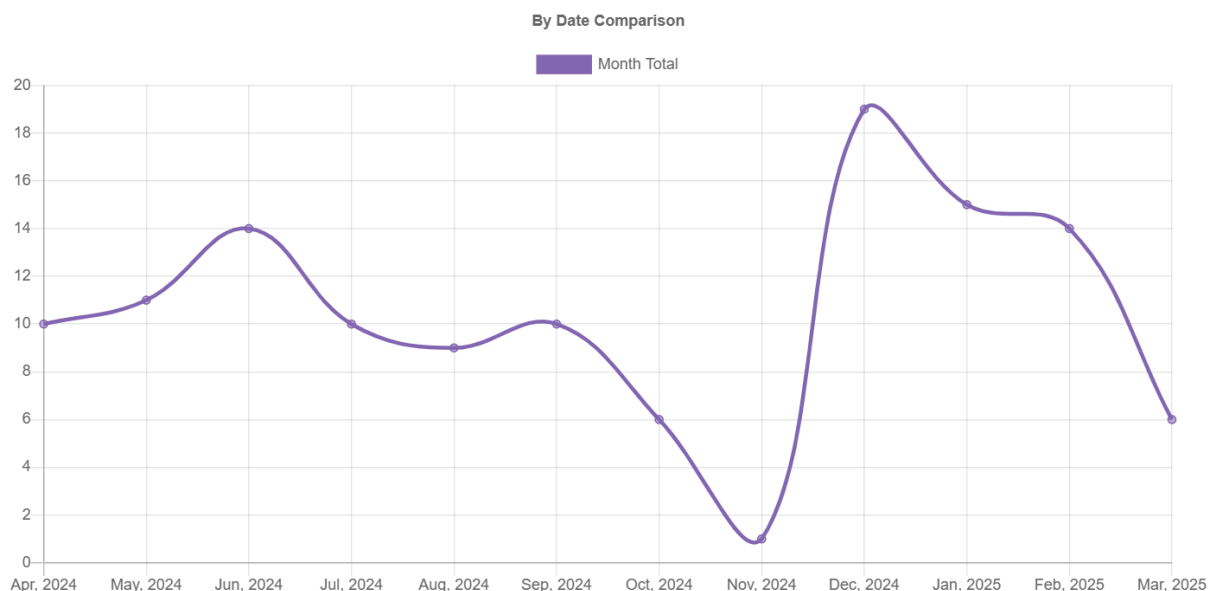
* = Non-Viable Foetus (NVF) ** = Stillborns (STs)

- The full profile of where families came from can be seen in Appendix 2. In summary 213 came from Durham, 31 came from Spennymoor and 402 from other areas. There have been 2 NVF cremations undertaken for the period covered by this report compared to 4 in the comparable period last year. There were 33 less cremations undertaken in the period January to March 2025 compared to the same period last year.
- The total number of cremations in 2024/25 was 2,282 compared with 2,433 in 2023/24, a decrease of 151 cremations.
- The 2024/25 budget was set at a prudent assumption of 2,200 cremations during the year. The actual number of cremations undertaken was therefore 82 more than the budgeted position. This is reflected in an over achievement of cremation fee income of £15,591 in year, which is included in the budgetary control report. As mentioned in paragraph 10, there were 124 unattended direct cremations in 2024/25 and these generate lower fee income than other cremations.

9. The table below shows the comparative figures for the previous eleven financial years:

Year	Cremations
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
2024/25	2,282
12 Year Average	2,366

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 2024 to 31 March 2025 inclusive, with comparative data in the same period last year:



	2023/24	2024/25	Change
Direct Cremation – Attended	0	0	0
Direct Cremation - Unattended	138	124	- 14
TOTAL	138	124	- 14

Memorials

11. The table below outlines the number and value of the memorials sold in the period January to March 2025 compared to the same period the previous year.

	Jan-March	2023/24	Jan-March	2024/25
	Number	£	Number	£
Vase Blocks	5	3,278	2	1,296
Large Plaques	18	8,196	10	4,980
Small Plaques	0	0	2	576
Niche	4	3,890	4	5,233
Renewal	46	7,010	38	5,348
Seat	0	0	0	0
Leaf Plaques	9	900	8	800
Total	82	23,274	64	18,233

12. In overall terms, the number and value of memorials sold of 64 / £18,233 compares to 82 / £23,274 in the same period last year. This is a small decrease of 18 memorials sold and £5,041 in terms of income decreased.
13. The table below identifies the total number and value of memorials sold during 2024/25 compared to 2023/24:

	2023/24 Total		2024/25 Total	
	Number	£	Number	£
Vase Blocks	17	11,294	28	18,440
Large Plaques	65	28,620	96	42,684
Small Plaques	4	1,092	9	2,487
Niche	7	7,742	16	19,355
Renewal	143	24,158	252	39,908
Seat	0	0	0	0
Leaf Plaques	48	4,800	84	8,400
Total	284	77,706	485	131,274

Operational Matters

14. For Members information we are currently starting to experience some issues with the current cremators which require remedial works to continue operations. These repairs will be funded from the cremator repairs budget.

Cremation & Burial Conference & Exhibition 2025

15. The Joint Conference of the Federation of Burial & Cremation Authorities and the Cremation Society of Great Britain is to be held at the Hilton,

Utilita Bowl, Southampton from Monday 23rd to Wednesday 25th June 2025. As in previous years, the necessary arrangements will be made for representation at the conference by the Chair and Bereavement Services Manager & Registrar.

Recycling of Metals Scheme

16. Members were advised at the previous meeting that we had nominated St Cuthbert's Hospice and If U Care Share Foundation, (Appendix 3 shows the Cheque presentation for £6,250 to each charity made by the Chair/Vice Chair of the Joint Committee).

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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.

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.

Appendix 2: Breakdown of Figures

	Jan	Feb	March	Total Jan-Mar
DURHAM	72	76	65	213
BARNARD CASTLE			1	1
BIRTLEY	1			1
BISHOP AUCKLAND	5	8	2	15
BLACKHALL	2		6	8
CHESTER LE STREET	20	13	12	45
CHILTON	2		2	4
CONSETT	6	3		9
CROOK	2	6	2	10
DARLINGTON		2	1	3
EASINGTON	6	4	3	13
EAST RAINTON		1		1
ESH WINNING		1	3	4
FERRYHILL	5	2	7	14
FENCEHOUSES	2	1		3
FISHBURN		1	2	3
FROSTERLEY		1		1
GATESHEAD			1	1
GREAT LUMLEY	1	4	1	6
HARTLEPOOL	1			1
HASWELL	2		1	3
HETTON LE HOLE	3	6	6	15
HORDEN	5	2	4	11
HOUGHTON	7	9	9	25
HOWDEN		1	1	2
LANCHESTER			1	1
LANGLEY PARK	1	5	3	9
MIDDLESBOROUGH	1			1
MURTON	4	5	3	12
NEW BRANCEPETH			1	1
NEWTON AYCLIFFE	5		9	14
NORTHUMBERLAND	1			1
PELTON			1	1
PETERLEE	16	7	8	31
SACRISTON	2	5	6	13
SCOTLAND	1			1
SEAHAM	11	10	6	27
SEDFIELD	3		2	5
SHILDON	1	2		3

SHINEY ROW			1	1
SHOTTON	2			2
SOUTH HETTON		1	1	2
SPENNYMOOR	8	15	8	31
STANLEY	2	2		4
STANHOPE			3	3
STOCKTON		2		2
SUNDERLAND	2	2	5	9
SOUTHERN ENGLAND		1	2	3
THORNLEY	3	1	3	7
TOW LAW	1		2	3
TRIMDON	4	3	2	9
WASHINGTON	2	1		3
WEST AUCKLAND	1		1	2
WEST CORNFORTH	4	3	1	8
WHEATLEY HILL	2	3	1	6
WILLINGTON	1	2	3	6
WINGATE	2	1	3	6
WOLSINGHAM	1			1
WYNARD	1		1	2
YORKSHIRE	1		1	2
Total	225	212	207	644

Appendix 3: Cheque presentation



Cheque presentation by Vice Chair to Helen Clarke from St Cuthbert's Hospice.



Cheque presentation by Chair Bethany Yuill from If U Care Share Foundation