

Appendix 1 - Inspection Report - Aberdeen Crematorium (October 2022)

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Inspection of Crematoria

Name and Address of Crematorium: Aberdeen Crematorium Skene Road Aberdeen AB15 8PT	
Name of Cremation Authority: Aberdeen City Council	Date of Inspection: Tuesday 11 th October 2022
Undertaken by: Robert Swanson QPM Senior Inspector of Burial, Cremation and Funeral Directors. Observer: Professor Gordon Findlater Inspector of Burial, Cremation and Funeral Directors.	In the presence of: Graham Keith Performance and Development Manager Angus Beacom Crematorium Manager

1. Cremation Fees (as advertised)	
Adult Cremation Fee (with chapel service)	£704
Cremation (no chapel service)	£595
Cremation (no chapel service – early morning slot)	£420
Children (up to the age of 18 years)	No Charge

2. Staffing levels

Staff certificated to carry out cremations:

5 members of staff on-site qualified to carry out cremations with 3 others undergoing training.

3. Office Management

Administration Procedure:

Since the date of the last inspection the most notable change is that all application forms and associated documentation is now stored electronically, this being one of the provisions of the Cremation (Scotland) Regulations 2019.

The crematorium are one of very few crematoria who have now moved away from retaining all documentation in hard copy.

All funeral directors have access to an on-line booking service and whilst bookings are made this way, a few continue to make bookings by telephone.

Documentation is either received electronically, or if in hard copy is then scanned onto computer.

This system works well for all.

The administration procedure was examined from point of first intimation to dispersal of the ashes with checks carried out on a random selection of documentation.

All was found to be of a high standard with a number of safeguards in place to ensure total compliance with the instructions of the applicant.

It is with great credit to the administration staff that they were able to remain operational throughout the period of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Computer System:

BACAS

4. Total Number of Cremations Carried Out (2021)

Breakdown by category	
Adult:	2090
Child – aged under 1 yr	10
Child – aged 1-17 yrs	4
Stillbirth:	6
Pregnancy Loss:	
Individual:	175
Shared:	567
Body Parts:	9
Total:	2861

5. Cremation / Identity Card Process

There has been no change to policy since the date of the last inspection.

All restricted measures which had been put in place during the pandemic have now been removed.

The process and all related documentation was examined from point of arrival of the coffin throughout all stages including cremation, cooling, cremulation, storage and dispersal of the ashes, subsequent updating and storage of computer records.

All were found to be of a high standard with noted safeguards in place to minimise the risk of human error resulting in the mislabelling of ashes, and to ensure continuity of identification throughout the different stages.

Strict procedures are in place to ensure total compliance with the instructions of the applicant at all stages.

6. Recovery of Ashes

Ashes have been recovered from all cremations

7. Ashes Policy

Details of process:

Ashes are dispersed in accordance with the instructions of the applicant.

There has been no change to policy since the date of the last inspection.

Ashes can be retained for a period pending an instruction from the applicant, collected by the applicant, a nominated representative or the funeral director, scattered in the Gardens of Remembrance or interred in the cemetery

There is provision for a change of instruction by the applicant prior to dispersal.

A check of the disposal instructions on a random selection of application forms was found to accurately reflect the disposal outcome.

Ashes awaiting dispersal are stored in a secure room with clear identification and instructions affixed.

8. Cremators

Number of cremators: 4

Make (s): All FT3

Size (s): All Large

9. Sample of Cremation Register

<p>Category: Adult</p> <p>Cremation number: 158380</p> <p>Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 11th May 2022 with the ashes scattered in the Gardens of Remembrance on 18th May 2022.</p>	<p>Category: Pregnancy Loss (Individual)</p> <p>Cremation number: 8345</p> <p>Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 25th May 2022 with the ashes retained pending collection by the applicant. (ashes confirmed to be present)</p>
<p>Category: Adult</p> <p>Cremation number: 158525</p> <p>Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 10th June 2022 with the ashes collected by the funeral director on same date.</p>	<p>Category: Pregnancy Loss (Individual)</p> <p>Cremation number: 8344</p> <p>Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 25th May 2022 with the ashes collected by the applicant on 28th June 2022.</p>
<p>Category: Adult</p> <p>Cremation number: 158651</p> <p>Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 7th July 2022 with ashes collected by the funeral director on 11th July 2022.</p>	

10. Use of Baby Tray

Number / Source:

5 x FT

11. Pregnancy Loss Policy / Procedure

NHS / Shared:

There has been no change to policy or procedure since the date of the last inspection.

The Cremation Authority have a Service Level Agreement with NHS Grampian for the cremation of shared and individual pregnancy loss.

Pregnancy Loss is transported to the crematorium by NHS staff and the cremation is carried out the same day.

Ashes from cremation of shared pregnancy loss are scattered within the Garden of Remembrance 1 week after cremation.

Ashes from cremation of individual pregnancy loss are dispersed in accordance with the instructions of the applicant.

Individual:

The policy and procedure for cremation of individual pregnancy loss does not differ from that of an infant.

A Baby Tray is used for all cremation of pregnancy loss.

12. Metal Extraction

Policy:

Metal extracts are dispersed in accordance with the instructions of the applicant.

Unless otherwise instructed by the applicant, metal extracts are sensitively recycled by Orthometals, as part of the ICCM scheme.

The monies accrued from the recycling programme are donated to local charities.

13. Crematorium Management Plan

Implementation of the Cremation (Scotland) Regulations 2019 on 4th April 2019 required Cremation Authorities to prepare and maintain a Crematorium Management Plan to be made available for inspection by Inspectors of Cremation and members of the public.

The Regulations list a number of matters to be included within the Plan.

These are, as follows:

a) Name, address, and business hours of crematorium

b) Procedures for:

1. The carrying out of cremations
2. Dealing with any unexpected increase in number of cremations
3. The operation and servicing of all equipment used in cremation process
4. The disposal of cremation residue
5. The disposal of ashes
6. Contingency arrangements for unexpected disruption or loss of services

c) Review of the Plan

These are the minimum, allowing Cremation Authorities to also include other matters they consider worthy of inclusion.

The Aberdeen Crematorium Management Plan was examined during the course of the inspection and, as stated in the previous inspection report, was found to be of a very high standard, and one of the most detailed of all crematorium plans seen by the inspector.

The Plan is held in hard copy within the crematorium and can also be accessed electronically.

14. General Observations / Recent Changes

The only notable change observed since the date of the last inspection is completion of the installation and upgrading of audio / visual / streaming facilities referred to in the last report.

It is however understood that work is scheduled to refurbish parts of the Garden of Remembrance.

All private and public areas seen during the course of the inspection were found to be clean, tidy and in a state of good repair.

The grounds and Gardens of Remembrance were seen to be well maintained with an excellent array of flowers.

The crematorium has a defibrillator on-site.

15. Overall Assessment

The Inspection found there to be no shortcomings to any aspect of the cremation process, with good practice observed throughout the different stages.

Staff are to be commended for their handling of issues relating to the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly during the early stages when the country was operating at different tier levels and attendance numbers were severely restricted.

Whilst cremations were restricted for a short period of time at the beginning, strict working practices ensured that the crematorium remained fully operational throughout the remainder of what was a very difficult and demanding period.

With the impact of the pandemic having eased, staff have resumed the training of crematorium operatives as part of the FBCA training programme.

Their commitment to the training programme, over and above normal duties is recognised, appreciated and praised by crematoria staff throughout Scotland.

The Cremation Authority are very fortunate in having such an experienced, loyal and enthusiastic team, collectively providing a first class service to the local community and beyond.

Signed: Robert Swanson QPM
Senior Inspector of Burial, Cremation and Funeral Directors (Scotland)

Date: 17th October 2022.