



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Review of Crematoria Provision and Facilities

Discussion Paper



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Scope of the Consultation

Topic of this consultation:	Crematoria provision and facilities.
Scope of this consultation:	<p>We are keen to hear the views of users and providers on whether the capacity and facilities of crematoria are suitable to meet the demand and cultural requirements of all communities.</p> <p>The review does not cover burial policy or other aspects of the burial or cremation process.</p>
Geographical scope:	The review relates to England only. We will share any outcomes with Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
Impact Assessment:	At this stage, we are seeking to gather the views and evidence from crematoria users and providers. We will publish an impact assessment and equality impact assessment as required if specific policy changes are proposed in the future.

Basic Information

To:	The review will be of interest to crematoria providers, local authorities, faith groups and other members of the community.
Body/bodies responsible for the consultation:	Integration and Faith Division within the Department for Communities and Local Government.
Duration:	This consultation will last for 10 weeks from 16 March to 26 May 2016.
Enquiries:	<p>For enquiries, please e-mail: crematoriareview@communities.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>This discussion paper is available on the Department for Communities and Local Government website at www.gov.uk/dclg</p>
How to respond:	<p>Wherever possible we ask that evidence is entered on the online survey at https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/FQPKTRB</p> <p>Alternatively, by email to: crematoriareview@communities.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>When responding, please ensure you have the words “Review of Crematoria Provision and Facilities” in the email subject line. If emailing a pdf attachment, please ensure it is in a format which allows highlighting and copying of sentences or</p>

	<p>paragraphs, so that your comments can be more easily studied.</p> <p>You can also write to: Crematoria Review Integration and Faith Division Department for Communities and Local Government 2nd floor, SE Quarter Fry Building 2 Marsham Street LONDON SW1P 4DF</p> <p>When responding, please state whether you are responding as an individual, an organisation or a local authority. If responding on behalf of an organisation, please give a summary of the people and organisations it represents and, where relevant, who else you have consulted in reaching your conclusions.</p>
<p>Additional ways to become involved:</p>	<p>We will be holding discussion groups with users and providers during the consultation period. If you would like to be involved in one of these sessions, please contact us at the email or address in the “How to respond” section above.</p>
<p>After the consultation:</p>	<p>The Government will publish a summary of responses in due course and consider whether any policy changes are needed as a result of the review.</p>
<p>Confidentiality and data protection:</p>	<p>Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).</p> <p>If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, there is a statutory code of practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, in itself, be regarded as binding on the department.</p> <p>DCLG will process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and in the majority of circumstances</p>

	<p>this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.</p>
Help with queries:	<p>Questions about the policy issues raised in the document can be sent to the address given in the “How to respond” section above.</p> <p>A copy of the consultation criteria from the Code of Practice on Consultation is at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/consultation-principles-guidance. Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed these criteria? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please email: consultationcoordinator@communities.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>or write to:</p> <p>DCLG Consultation Co-ordinator Fry Building 2 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DF</p>

Introduction

Why is the Government carrying out this review?

1. In the July 2015 Budget, the Chancellor announced a review of the size and provision of crematoria facilities to make sure they are fit for purpose and sensitive to the needs of all users and faiths. The review was announced in response to concerns about the capacity of crematoria, in particular to accommodate Hindu and Sikh cremations, at which traditionally larger numbers of mourners wish to attend. In addition, there have been concerns that crematoria do not always pay sufficient regard to the cultural sensitivities of different faiths.
2. Cremations have become increasingly popular and in 2014 over 390,000 cremations took place which represented 77.35% of all deaths in that year¹. Cremation is the normal method of funeral for Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Zoroastrian faiths, and is also widely used by Christian denominations and those with no faith. The Jewish, Islamic and Bahá'í faiths forbid cremation, in the majority of cases. The Government believes it is important that there are good quality crematoria that respect cultural and religious traditions and that provide tailored services, meeting the needs of families at such a difficult point in their lives.

What do we hope to achieve from the review?

3. We want to use this review to establish whether the concerns that have been raised are widespread. We are therefore seeking the views of all faith communities and users of crematoria, whether they are of a faith or none. We are also seeking views from the providers of crematoria, including local authorities and the private sector, as well as the Local Government Association and industry representative bodies. The Government will publish a summary of responses in due course and consider whether any policy changes are needed in light of the evidence received.

The legislative and policy background

4. Crematoria are owned and operated by both local government and private providers, with provision based on local demand and subject to planning permission. Local authority responsibilities for the management and protection of cemeteries and crematoria are set out in the Local Government Act 1972 (Section 214 and Schedule 26) and the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977. Regulations for all providers

¹ Directory of Crematoria 2015 Edition, the Cremation Society of Great Britain. (Note that the figures are provisional)

which cover crematoria relate to public safety and environmental efficiency². Currently there are no specific legal requirements related to the provision of facilities for faith groups. Cremation industry organisations such as the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities, the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management, the Cremation Society for Great Britain, and the Association of Private Crematoria and Cemeteries issue information and guidance for members on a variety of issues.

5. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is responsible for local government policy and finance, the planning system and integration and faith policy. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has responsibility for burial and cremation policy and legislation (though operational responsibility is for individual providers). The MoJ has recently conducted a separate consultation into cremation legislation and practice following the June 2015 report by David Jenkins into infant cremations at Emstrey Crematorium in Shropshire, and Lord Bonyon's June 2014 Infant Cremation Commission report in Scotland. The MoJ's consultation closed on 9 March and can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-cremation-following-infant-cremation-inquiries>.
6. This review does not cover burial policy or other aspects of the burial or cremation process.

Question 1: Contact details

Question 2: Is your response on behalf of an organisation or a personal response?

Question 3: If applicable, which organisation are you responding on behalf of?

Question 4: Are you responding from a particular faith or belief group?

Question 5: If so, which faith or belief group?

² Cremation (England and Wales) Regulations 2008 and Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2007

Crematoria Provision in England

7. There are 232 crematoria in England. Of these, 77 are private businesses with the rest being owned and run by local authorities³.
8. There is some evidence that crematoria provision varies across England. Table 1 shows that in London, there are 0.32 crematoria per 100,000 people; in the West Midlands, there are 0.46 crematoria per 100,000 people; and in the North East, there are 0.58 crematoria per 100,000 people. This is perhaps not surprising given land constraints in London and the South-East. However, when the number of deaths in each region is taken into account, crematoria provision is more balanced. London has 54.64 crematoria per 100,000 deaths; in the West Midlands, there are 49.75 crematoria per 100,000 deaths; and in the North-East, there are 56.68 crematoria per 100,000 deaths. This difference is likely to arise because of the younger average population in London with older average populations in other regions. It should be noted, however, that this only provides an indicative analysis of provision because the data comprises the location of crematoria and not the capacity of each site.

Table 1: Number of Crematoria in England

Region	Municipal /Private Crematoria			Population ¹	No. of crematoria per 100,000 people	Number of deaths ²	No. of crematoria per 100,000 deaths
	M	P	Total				
London	16	10	26	8,173,941	0.32	47,580	54.64
East of England	12	11	23	5,846,965	0.39	53,269	43.18
South East	17	17	34	8,634,750	0.39	77,778	43.71
East Midlands	9	9	18	4,533,222	0.40	42,277	42.58
West Midlands	20	6	26	5,601,847	0.46	52,260	49.75
Yorkshire and The Humber	22	4	26	5,283,733	0.49	50,342	51.65
South West	16	11	27	5,288,935	0.51	54,536	49.51
North West	30	7	37	7,052,177	0.52	69,045	53.59
North East	13	2	15	2,596,886	0.58	26,465	56.68
England	155	77	232	53,012,456	0.44	473,552	48.99

¹ Based on 2011 Census

² Based on Mortality Statistics - death numbers for all ages - <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/vsob1/deaths-registered-area-usual-residence/index.html>

³ Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management

9. Faith communities are often concentrated in particular cities and areas. For example, there are 537,425 Hindus and Sikhs living in London, 205,928 in the West Midlands, and 13,736 in the North-East. It may be that concerns about the capacity of crematoria from particular faiths relate to lower provision in areas where those communities are more predominant. We have not been able to establish whether there are problems with provision in individual towns and cities, or across regions more broadly.
10. Provision of new or expanded crematoria is based on local demand. Over the last ten years there has been a rise of over 10%⁴ in the number of new crematoria in England which is consistent with both an aging population and increased popularity of cremation over burial. We understand that there are currently 14 new crematorium projects in England, of which 3 are in the construction stage⁵. The 3 new crematoria currently under construction are in Gravesham, Wellingborough and West Lancashire. The remaining 11 with planning consent are in North Norfolk, Test Valley, Broxbourne, two in Aylesbury Vale, Ribble Valley, South Derbyshire, Breckland, Leicester, Sevenoaks and North Hertfordshire. 12 of the 14 new crematorium projects are being privately funded.
11. We are interested in whether there is demand for new crematoria in other areas, and if so, whether there have been problems in developing new or expanded crematoria. This may be because of the availability of land or funding, or securing planning permission. The Local Government Association has told us that several local authorities had identified the need for new crematoria, and had found suitable sites. However, funding comes largely from the income generated through crematoria fees and local authorities are mindful of the need to keep such fees affordable for users.

As a user of crematoria:

Question 6: Have you experienced any problems with accessing crematoria in your local area to meet the needs of your faith or community?

Question 7: If yes, please describe what problems you encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

As a provider of cremation services:

Question 8: Do you consider there is a need for new crematoria in your area?

Question 9: If yes, please state which geographical area this relates to.

⁴ Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management

⁵ Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management

Question 10: Have you experienced any problems in developing new crematoria?

Question 11: If yes, please describe what problems you encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

Size and Capacity of Crematoria

12. Concerns about the provision of crematoria may also relate to the size of individual sites and the availability of suitable time slots for funeral services. Most crematoria chapels hold around 100 mourners, whereas Hindu and Sikh funerals can involve 300 or more friends and family.
13. The Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management told us that a number of local authorities have upgraded or replaced old crematoria which had limited capacity. They also told us that planning applications for crematoria often include contingency to expand the facilities if needed in the future. We are aware of several examples of chapels which have additional space, such as side rooms, galleries or covered areas that provide flexibility to accommodate a further 200 to 300 mourners. Some include a public address system so that people can listen to the service even if they cannot witness the cremation.
14. The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Funerals and Bereavement⁶ reported evidence from the Association of Private Crematoria and Cemeteries (APCC) that in 2007, 51.6% of cremation services were in excess of 30 minutes but in 2014, this had risen to 74%. The APPG welcomed evidence that ceremonies were becoming increasingly personalised, less rushed and less formulaic. However, it could also mean that demand for longer services is reducing the capacity of crematoria for other users.
15. People of Hindu faith prefer cremation to take place as soon as possible following death, ideally by the following dawn or dusk, whichever occurs first. Many crematoria are able to expedite funerals where there are requirements to carry out the cremation within a set time period. Some also allow on-line booking of time slots to speed up the process. However, some faith groups told us that they struggled to access suitable time slots for funerals, with the time taken to allocate slots a particular difficulty.
16. The APPG also cited evidence from the APCC and Institute of Cemetery and Cremation Management (ICCM) that whilst there is increasing pressure on core slots at crematoria (between 10.30am and 5.30pm), there is frequent availability for less popular slots, such as early morning and late evenings. In a survey of 11 crematoria across England and Wales, the ICCM found that during January 2015, on average only 60 to 70% of available service times were used. There did not appear to be particular pressure in parts of the country, with good availability across London, for example. The ICCM survey also found that all 11 crematoria had policies in place to

⁶ All-Party Parliamentary Group for Funerals and Bereavement. Inquiry into delays between death and burial or cremation. December 2015

extend the number of slots they have available if required, for example, through weekend and late midweek service times. In January 2015, none of the crematoria surveyed had needed to implement these plans.

17. The ICCM told the APPG that they had no evidence that funeral delays are being caused by either local authority or private cemetery and crematorium providers. We are also not aware of any restrictions on access to individual crematoria. However, though the bereaved may not wish to travel further to access larger crematoria or those with greater availability.

As a user of crematoria:

Question 12: Have you experienced any problems with the size of crematoria to meet the needs of your faith or community?

Question 13: If yes, please describe what problems you encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

Question 14: Have you experienced any problems with booking the time or length of cremation services to meet the needs of your faith or community?

Question 15: If yes, please describe what problems you encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

As a provider of cremation services:

Question 16: Have you experienced any problems in accommodating larger groups of mourners?

Question 17: If yes, please describe what problems you encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

Question 18: Have you experienced any problems in booking the time or length of cremation services to meet the needs of mourners?

Question 19: If yes, please describe what problems you encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

Question 20: If you have adapted your facilities or services to meet the needs of larger groups of mourners, how did you do this and why?

Crematoria Facilities

Accommodation and Amenities

18. Faith and other community groups may have particular cultural or religious traditions that they wish to be accommodated within crematoria facilities or services.

Representatives from faith groups told us that this included:

- Private space to pay respects before the cremation service – the Hindu and Sikh faiths carry out various religious rituals before cremation, such as bathing, wrapping or decorating the body, and carrying out specific forms of worship in front of the coffin. This may be carried out in the family home or funeral home, but we understand that members of these faith groups would welcome provision of a private room within the crematorium.
- Washing of hands and face – representatives from the Hindu and Jain faiths told us that washing after the cremation service is an important ritual, and that crematoria do not have adequate washing facilities.
- Committal of the coffin – the Hindu, Sikh and Jain faiths believe that it is important to be able to witness the coffin entering the cremator to enable those gathered to remain with the body until it passes into the next stage of existence. Some crematoria have the ability for small groups of mourners to be able to witness the committal of the coffin, but not all crematoria are able to offer this because of space constraints. Some authorities have introduced filming services so that larger groups of mourners can witness the committal of the coffin.
- Outside space and water to scatter the ashes – many crematoria have a memorial garden, enabling all mourners to be able to spend time outside paying their respects and laying flowers. However, representatives from Hindu, Sikh and Jain faiths told us that having to wait for the ashes deterred mourners from being able to witness the scattering of the ashes outside. In addition, these faith groups place a particular emphasis on water and many crematorium lack a pond or stream in which to scatter ashes.

As a user of crematoria:

Question 21: Have you experienced any problems with crematoria accommodation or amenities to meet the needs of your faith or community?

Question 22: If yes, please describe what problems you encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

As a provider of cremation services:

Question 23: Do you provide specific accommodation or amenities that meet the needs of faith or community groups, such as a private room to mourn with the coffin, washing facilities, or an ability to witness the coffin entering the cremator?

Question 24: If yes, please describe what accommodation or amenities you provide, how often they are used and which geographical area they relate to.

Question 25: If you have increased your provision of accommodation or amenities to meet the needs of faith or community groups, how did you do this and why?

Iconography

19. Crematoria need to balance the needs of all users to provide a sensitive and respectful environment for funerals. Some faith groups have raised concerns that the symbols and iconography in crematoria remain overwhelmingly Christian with, for example, images of the cross in the chapel. The Local Government Association and industry providers told us that many crematoria have made religious iconography removable within chapels so that, with sufficient notice, appropriate imagery can be displayed.

As a user of crematoria:

Question 26: Have you experienced any problems with crematoria iconography to meet the needs of your faith or community?

Question 27: If yes, please describe what problems you encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

As a provider of cremation services:

Question 28: Do you provide removable iconography to meet the needs of faith or community groups?

Question 29: If yes, please describe what iconography you provide, how often it is used and which geographical area they relate to.

Question 30: If you have increased your provision of iconography to meet the needs of faith or community groups, how did you do this and why?

Car Parking

20. Concerns about the capacity of crematoria and pressure for longer services or larger groups of mourners may also be creating difficulties with car parking. Representatives from several faith groups told us that due to the number of people attending cremation services, it is often impossible to find car parking at the crematorium for all of the mourners. Many crematoria are on the edge of towns or cities and therefore access by public transport can be difficult.
21. The Local Government Association told us that they are aware of difficulties with car parking. Some local authorities have put in place measures to ease the pressure, for example, by extending funeral times, building new car parking spaces or reducing pavements outside the site to allow extra parking availability.

As a user of crematoria:

Question 31: Have you experienced any problems with car parking at a crematorium to meet the needs of your faith or community?

Question 32: If yes, please describe what problems you encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

As a provider of cremation services:

Question 33: Have you experienced any problems with car parking at crematoria to meet the needs of mourners?

Question 34: If yes, please describe what problems you encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

Question 35: If you have increased your car parking availability, how did you do this and why?

Staff Training

22. Some faith groups have said that crematoria staff need better training to ensure that they are culturally aware and sensitive to different faiths at a difficult time for mourners.
23. The Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) and Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities (FBCA) both provide staff training programmes for their members, but these predominantly focus on technical matters and we are not aware of any specific training in relation to faith issues. Local authorities have their own individual training requirements and they are expected to follow the best practice guidance produced by the ICCM. Complaints in relation to any aspect of crematoria provision can be made to the individual provider, local authority or industry representative body.
24. The Ministry of Justice consultation on crematoria has sought views on training and qualifications for crematoria staff, particularly on practice regarding infant cremations. The MoJ consultation also asked for views on whether there should be an independent inspector of crematoria in England and Wales with a proposed role to investigate and adjudicate on any complaints regarding working practices and standards.

As a user of crematoria:

Question 36: Have you experienced any problems with crematoria staff's awareness and sensitivity to different faith and community groups?

Question 37: If yes, please describe the problems you encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

Question 38: What more do you think needs to be done to improve the awareness and sensitivity of crematoria staff to different faith and community groups? Who should do this?

As a provider of cremation services:

Question 39: Does your staff training policy include cultural awareness and sensitivity to all faiths, community groups and users?

Question 40: If yes, please provide details of the training and which geographical area they relate to.

Question 41: Have you received any complaints regarding the awareness and sensitivity of crematoria staff to different faith and community groups?

Question 42: If yes, please describe any changes to staff training policies or practice implemented as a result.

Summary of Consultation Questions

1. Contact details
2. Is your response on behalf of an organisation or a personal response?
3. If applicable, which organisation are you responding on behalf of?
4. Are you responding from a particular faith or belief group?
5. If so, which faith or belief group?

Crematoria Provision in England

As a user of crematoria:

6. Have you experienced any problems with accessing crematoria in your local area to meet the needs of your faith or community?
7. If yes, please describe what problems you have encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

As a provider of crematoria:

8. Do you consider there is a need for new crematoria in your area?
9. If yes, please state which geographical area this relates to.
10. Have you experienced any problems in developing new crematoria?
11. If yes, please describe what problems you have encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

Size and Capacity of Crematoria

As a user of crematoria:

12. Have you experienced any problems with the size of crematoria to meet the needs of your faith or community?
13. If yes, please describe what problems you have encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.
14. Have you experienced any problems with booking the time or length of cremation services to meet the needs of your faith or community?
15. If yes, please describe what problems you have encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

As a provider of crematoria:

16. Have you experienced any problems with accommodating larger groups of mourners?
17. If yes, please describe what problems you have encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.
18. Have you experienced any problems with booking the time or length of cremation services to meet the needs of mourners?

19. If yes, please describe what problems you have encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.
20. If you have adapted your facilities or services to meet the needs of larger groups of mourners, how did you do this and why?

Crematoria Facilities

Accommodation and Amenities

As a user of crematoria:

21. Have you experienced any problems with crematoria accommodations or amenities to meet the needs of your faith or community?
22. If yes, please describe what problems you have encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

As a provider of crematoria:

23. Do you provide specific accommodation or amenities that meet the needs of faith or community groups, such as a private room to mourn with the coffin, washing facilities, or an ability to witness the coffin entering the cremator?
24. If yes, please describe what accommodation or amenities you provide, how often they are used and which geographical area they relate to.
25. If you have increased your provision of accommodation or amenities to meet the needs of faith or community groups, how did you do this and why?

Iconography

As a user of crematoria:

26. Have you experienced any problems with crematoria iconography to meet the needs of your faith or community?
27. If yes, please describe what problems you have encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

As a provider of crematoria:

28. Do you provide removable iconography to meet the needs of faith and community groups?
29. If yes, please describe what iconography you provide, how often it used and which geographical area they relate to.
30. If you have increased your provision of iconography to meet the needs of faith or community groups, how did you do this and why?

Car Parking

As a user of crematoria:

31. Have you experienced any problems with car parking at a crematorium to meet the needs of your faith or community?
32. If yes, please describe what problems you have encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.

As a provider of crematoria:

33. Have you experienced any problems with car parking at crematoria to meet the needs of mourners?
34. If yes, please describe what problems you have encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.
35. If you have increased your car parking availability, how did you do this and why?

Staff Training

As a user of crematoria:

36. Have you experienced any problems with crematoria staff's awareness and sensitivity to different faith and community groups?
37. If yes, please describe what problems you have encountered, how often they occurred and which geographical area they relate to.
38. What more do you think needs to be done to improve the awareness and sensitivity of crematoria staff to different faith and community groups? Who should do this?

As a provider of crematoria:

39. Does your staff training policy include cultural awareness and sensitivity to all faith, community groups and users?
40. If yes, please describe details of the training, and which geographical area they relate to.
41. As a provider of crematoria, have you received any complaints regarding the awareness and sensitivity of crematoria staff to different faith and community groups?
42. If yes, please describe any changes to staff training policies or practice implemented as a result?

We invite you to provide responses to these questions no later than 26 May 2016 preferably through the online survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/FQPKTRB>

Alternatively, please email your response to crematoriareview@communities.gsi.gov.uk