

Robert Swanson QPM
Senior Inspector of Burial, Cremation and Funeral Directors

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Inspection of Crematoria

Name and Address of Crematorium: Greenock Crematorium 1 South Street, Greenock PA16 8UG	
Name of Cremation Authority: Inverclyde Council	Date of Inspection: Wednesday 14 th June 2023
Undertaken by: Robert Swanson QPM Senior Inspector of Burial, Cremation and Funeral Directors (Scotland)	In the presence of: Ian Kearns Team Leader Gordon Findlater, (Observer) Inspector of B, C and FD

1. Cremation Fees (as advertised)

Adult Full Service	£839.05
Adult Committal Service Only (no attendance)	£446.55
Child (17 years and under)	No Charge

2. Staffing levels

Staff certificated to carry out cremations:

4 members of staff qualified to carry out all cremations

3. Office Management

Administration Procedure:

There have been no notable changes to the administration procedures since the date of the last inspection.

There has been a slight increase in electronic submission of application forms, currently estimated to be about 60% of all submissions.

At present hard copies of documentation are being digitalised to facilitate storage along with material from other Local Authority Departments.

There are no immediate plans to only retain documentation electronically.

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

All were found to be of a high standard, with great credit to staff for their attention to detail and recording of actions, showing total compliance with the instructions of the applicant at all stages.

Computer System:

BACAS

4. Total Number of Cremations Carried Out (2021)

Breakdown by category	
Adult:	985
Child:	0
Stillbirth:	2
Pregnancy Loss:	
Individual:	74
Body Parts:	0
Anatomical Body Parts:	0

5. Cremation / Identity Card Process

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

The procedure and process is currently being reviewed in light of the ongoing building work with both cremators being replaced.

The process and all related documentation was examined from point of arrival of the coffin prior to it entering the chapel, cremation, cooling, cremulation, storage and dispersal of the ashes, and updating of records.

All were found to be of a very good standard with a number of in-built safeguards to ensure continuity of identification throughout the different stages, measures to minimise the risk of human error resulting in the mislabelling of ashes, and total compliance with the instructions of the applicant at all times.

6. Recovery of Ashes

Ashes have been recovered from all cremations

7. Ashes Policy

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

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

The options available at Greenock Crematorium have not changed and are retain pending a decision from the applicant, collection by the applicant or funeral director, scatter within the Garden of Remembrance, or inter within a lair in the Cemetery.

If instructed, ashes of babies are dispersed within a dedicated section of the Garden of Remembrance, whilst ashes of adults are strewn in one of three separate sections.

The dispersal can be witnessed by family, or carried out by crematorium staff with no family present.

Ashes awaiting collection are stored securely within the office, whilst ashes to be scattered or interred are stored within a secure room within the crematory.

Provision is made for a change of instruction by the applicant prior to dispersal of the ashes.

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

8. Cremators

Number of cremators: 2

Make (s): 1 Joule (currently being replaced with FT) and 1 FT (new)

Size (s): 2 new FT – Both Large

9. Sample of Cremation Register

Category: Adult

Cremation number: 58774

Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 18th January 2023 with the ashes collected by the funeral director on 20th January 2023.

Category: Adult

Cremation number: 58825

Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 2nd February 2023 with the ashes collected by the funeral director on 6th February 2023.

Category: Adult

Cremation number: 58928

Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 9th March 2023 with the ashes collected by the funeral director on 10th March 2023.

Category: Adult

Cremation number: 59004

Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 19th April 2023 with the ashes collected by the funeral director on 25th April 2023.

Category: Adult

Cremation number: 59109

Result: All documentation and records examined (Death in England) and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 8th June 2023 with the ashes collected by the funeral director on 9th June 2023.

10. Use of Baby Tray

Number / Source:

Being a Training Centre, Greenock Crematorium have a number of baby trays that are used.

11. Pregnancy Loss Policy / Procedure

NHS / Shared:

There has been no change to policy or procedure since the date of the last inspection, other than a temporary arrangement during the period when the crematorium had only one cremator operational.

The Cremation Authority have a Service Level Agreement with NHS (Inverclyde Royal Hospital) and a local funeral director for cremation of individual pregnancy loss, transported to the crematorium on the last Wednesday of each month.

This arrangement, and with the agreement of all concerned, allows the scheduled training of crematoria operatives on fixed days most months.

Greenock Crematorium do not carry out cremation of shared pregnancy loss, although under exceptional circumstances ie twins, a joint cremation can be considered.

Individual:

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

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

12. Metal Extraction

Policy:

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

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

Unless otherwise instructed by the applicant metal extracts are sensitively re-cycled as part of the ICCM scheme, with revenue accrued distributed to nominated charities.

On the date of the inspection the crematorium dealt with the rare instruction for the metal extracts to be returned to the applicant.

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 Crematorium Management Plan for Greenock Crematorium was examined during the course of the inspection and was found to be of a very high standard, incorporating a great deal more than that required under the Regulations.

The Plan had recently been updated in light of staff changes and the ongoing major works to the crematory.

The Plan is held both electronically and in hard copy.

14. General Observations / Recent Changes

The extensive major refurbishment to the crematory referred to in the last inspection report commenced on schedule, and is expected to be complete by the end of this year (2023).

The most notable change seen during the course of the inspection was the replacement of one of the two cremators, which had recently been fully installed and tested successfully.

Other planned changes include installation and upgrading of music and streaming systems, the purchase of new equipment for use in the handling of coffins, and alteration and extension to the car park, once the building work has been completed.

The crematorium will remain operational whilst the remainder of the extensive refurbishment is being completed.

The Garden of Remembrance and grounds around the crematorium were seen to be well maintained and freely accessible to all.

15. Overall Assessment

The Inspection found there to be no shortcomings in any area of the cremation process at Greenock Crematorium, with good practice noted throughout the different stages.

Full credit must go to all staff for maintaining such high levels of service, whilst keeping the crematorium operational during the major ongoing refurbishment.

Planning for, and being able to facilitate funerals, particularly during periods when the cremators are being replaced is a significant achievement.

To date, staff has managed to ensure that delays are kept to the absolute minimum.

As referred to in the last report, the Cremation Authority are very fortunate in having such a committed and experienced workforce.

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

Date: 16th June 2023