

Cremation - frequently asked questions

	Question	Answer
1	Are there any religious groups which forbid cremation to their members?	All Christian denominations, including the Roman Catholic Church, allow cremation. Cremation is also acceptable to Sikh, Hindu, Parsee and Buddhist religions but is forbidden by Orthodox Jewish and Muslim religions.
2	Is cremation more expensive than burial?	Generally the cost of burial is much higher than the fee charged for cremation. In addition to the charges for the interment, a number of other fees for the grave purchase, memorials may be incurred. Cremation usually necessitates the production of medical certificates for which fees are payable to doctors concerned. These certificates are not required when the death has been referred to and investigated by the Coroner.
3	What service arrangements are available at the crematorium?	A full religious ceremony may be conducted at the crematorium within the time allowed for each funeral. Alternatively, a service may take place in any separate place of worship followed by a brief committal ceremony at the crematorium. Families can arrange for their particular Minister to conduct the service or, when required funeral directors may secure the services of a suitable minister on behalf of the family.
4	Is it necessary for the cremation to be associated with a religious ceremony?	The deceased's family can make any arrangements which they consider to be appropriate. Secular ceremonies can be conducted at the crematorium or, if required, no ceremony need take place. Memorial services can be conducted separately from the cremation ceremony in the local places of worship by arrangement with the Minister concerned.
5	How is a cremation arranged?	A number of arrangements need to be made following a death. The responsibility normally falls to the Executor or the nearest surviving relative who may wish to approach a professional funeral director who will undertake some of the various tasks on their behalf. The funeral director will need to discuss with the family their requirements concerning the service arrangements and will assist in completing the necessary statutory and non-statutory forms. The funeral director will make the practical arrangements for the collection of the deceased and will obtain the necessary medical certificates. It will be necessary to register the death and information will be provided by the funeral director to assist in completing that duty.
6	What is the procedure followed at the crematorium on the day of the funeral?	Mourners will normally gather at the crematorium in the waiting room or close to the entrance of the chapel a few minutes before the appointed time of the funeral service. It is not usual for the ceremony to commence before the publicised time. When the principal mourners are ready to proceed, the coffin will be conveyed into the chapel by the funeral director unless the family bearers are used by request. The coffin will be placed on the catafalque and mourners will be directed to their seats after which the service will proceed. At the moment during the service when the committal of the body takes place the coffin may be obscured from view by curtains or withdrawn from the chapel unless advised otherwise. At the end of the service the mourners leave the chapel and may then inspect the floral tributes.

7	What happens to the coffin after the committal?	The coffin is withdrawn into the committal room where the nameplate is carefully checked by the crematorium staff to ensure the correct identity. An identity card will then accompany the coffin and the resultant remains until their final disposal or removal from the crematorium.
8	Do relatives need to decide at this stage about the disposal of cremated remains/ashes?	The funeral director will discuss with relatives the alternative arrangements which may be adopted for disposal of cremated remains/ashes. A form of authority will be required to be signed by the applicant for cremation advising the crematorium of the wishes of the family. If they are undecided it will be possible for the cremated remains/ashes to be retained, either at the crematorium or at the funeral director's premises pending a decision. A fee will apply after 30 days has elapsed.
9	What are the normal options for disposal of cremated remains/ashes?	The crematorium has a garden of remembrance where cremated remains/ashes can be interred. Cremated remains/ashes can be removed from the crematorium in a suitable container for disposal elsewhere. This may include interment in a grave in a cemetery, dispersal at another crematorium or dispersal privately in a particular area selected by the family (suitable permission should be obtained from the appropriate authority or land owner in these cases). Alternatively cremated remains/ashes can be removed from the crematorium and retained by the family in a suitable urn. http://www.southend.gov.uk/memorials
10	What is the garden of remembrance and what facilities are provided there?	The garden of remembrance consists of special areas, some of which are adjacent to the crematorium. These areas are used continually for this purpose and as a result it may not be possible or appropriate to mark or identify the exact location of individual cremated remains/ashes. The gardens are arranged to provide a focal point for visitors and includes a variety of memorial facilities. http://www.southend.gov.uk/memorials
11	Is the cremation of a body governed by a code of ethics and working practices?	We are a member of the Federation of British Cremation Authorities and are required to operate strictly in accordance with the Code of Cremation Practice. The code, which provides the ethical standard for cremation practice can be viewed from the Federation website www.fbca.org.uk
12	How soon after the service will the cremation take place?	The cremation will usually be commenced shortly after the service. A body not cremated on the same day as the coffin is received at the crematorium may only be retained at the crematorium with the written consent of the Applicant for Cremation or in circumstances deemed necessary by the Cremation Authority, including impacts upon the environment. All bodies retained at the crematorium will be accommodated in secure and sanitary conditions within the building.
13	Is the coffin cremated with the deceased?	The Code requires that the coffin be placed in the cremator in exactly the same condition as that in which it was received at the crematorium. Crematorium regulations require that the coffin and all its fittings and furnishings be made from materials suitable for cremation. The Environmental Protection Act 1990 has placed responsibility on cremation Authorities to ensure that the process is completed under controlled conditions which will minimise the impact on the environment. In these circumstances it will be necessary for any items included in the coffin for presentation or viewing purposes to be removed by the funeral director before the coffin is conveyed to the crematorium. It will not be

		possible for any floral tributes to be included with the coffin for cremation.
14	Should items of jewellery be left on the deceased person for cremation?	It is preferable that all items of jewellery be removed from the body before the coffin is conveyed to the crematorium. The funeral director should ascertain your wishes in respect of this matter when the funeral arrangements are being discussed. It will not be possible to recover any items of jewellery after the coffin has been received at the crematorium.
15	Can more than one body be cremated in the cremator at the same time?	The Code insists that each cremation is carried out separately. Exceptions may be made for instance in the case of mother and baby or twin children providing that the next of kin has made a specific request in this regard.
16	What happens to the cremated remains/ashes after the cremation?	At the conclusion of a cremation the cremated remains/ashes are removed from the cremator in their entirety and conveyed to a treatment area in a special container. Ferrous metals used in construction of the coffin or metal used in medical implants and non-ferrous metals which may include an unrecognisable element of precious material will be disposed of in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Cremation Practice, which states “any metal found amongst the cremated remains/ashes shall be disposed of in accordance with the directions of the Cremation authority or higher authority”. The utmost care is taken to ensure that cremated remains/ashes, following their removal from the cremator, shall be kept separate from any other remains and suitably identified. The cremated remains/ashes will be placed into separate containers awaiting final disposal.
17	What procedures are followed to ensure that cremated remains/ashes are kept separate?	A cremator can physically accept only one coffin at a time and all remains are removed before the cremator can be used again. Following the cremation process, all cremated remains/ashes are retained awaiting final disposal in separate containers which are suitably identified at all times. The identity card referred to previously accompany the coffin and cremated remains/ashes throughout the process until final disposal, whether that is by internment in the Garden of Remembrance or collection from the crematorium for final disposal elsewhere. The code of ethics and practical necessity are complementary and combine to ensure that the separation of cremated remains/ashes is achieved.
18	How are the cremated remains/ashes treated at the crematorium?	Cremated remains/ashes are removed from the cremator only when no further reduction is possible. The remains are withdrawn into a cooling area where any metals are removed and then placed in a suitable and carefully identified container to await dispersal or collection in accordance with the applicant’s instructions.
19	What quantity of remains will there be following a cremation?	The cremation of an adult will normally result in the presentation of cremated remains/ashes weighing between 2 and 4 kilos. In the case of non-viable babies, stillborn babies and very young deceased babies there will be a very small amount of remains available for collection following the cremation process. There is, however, the option of a burial.

