A photograph of a room with a large, patterned curtain. The curtain has a repeating floral or leaf-like pattern and a ruffled top. It hangs from a white rod. In the foreground, a small white table holds two blue books. One book is titled 'FUNERAL SERVICES' and the other is partially visible, showing 'Mis p'. The floor is a light brown carpet. The wall is white.

# Behind The Curtain

FUNERAL  
SERVICES

Mis  
p

## **A BREIF HISTORY OF CREMATION.**

Because of religious and cultural prejudice cremation has had a somewhat difficult struggle to gain a level of acceptance, however now cremation stands as one of the most popular forms of post-funeral rite.

The first official cremation in this country took place at Woking, Surrey in 1885. In 1886 a total of ten bodies were cremated and since that time the practice has steadily gained momentum. 1968 saw the first year in which the number of bodies cremated exceeded the number for burial, following this in 1979 nearly half a million bodies were cremated. As of now over 72% of all recorded deaths in the UK are now followed by cremation.

So why do people choose cremation? For some the idea of burial is an unpleasant and even frightening thought whereas cremation allows for more immediate closure for both the family and the deceased.

The cost of burials in the UK is much higher than any cremation fee making cremation a much more affordable option, cremation also has a lot of environmental benefits when it comes to conserving space, most crematoria will also have an area where ashes may be interred which is a lot more long lasting than any burial site.

The laws and guidelines as covered in the cremation code of practice are very strict, both morally and environmentally, they are designed to offer the family with the best possible service ensuring that the cremated remains they receive at the end of the process are 100% their loved one. The laws are also in place to protect the environment both nationally and globally. The funeral industry is ever changing with new practices and more sophisticated equipment being developed constantly.

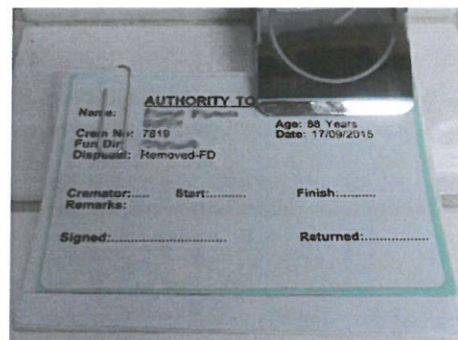


# THE CREMATION PROCESS

One of the most frequently asked questions is, Are they really the ashes of my loved one?

The answers to that is simply yes, and here is exactly how we can prove it.

The name plate of the deceased will be checked when the hearse arrives by the chapel attendant. Every person cremated has their own unique 'authority to cremate' card, this acts as an ID card and follows the deceased throughout the entire cremation process.



At the end of a service once everyone has left the chapel and the curtains have either been closed by the staff or the officiant the coffin will then be removed from the chapel. Upon receiving the coffin the name plate is checked against the ID card as a means of identification.

After the name plate has been checked the coffin will be moved into place in front of the cremator, here the ID card will be placed on the cremator, next to the door, and a second check against the name plate will be made. Once the cremator has reached the appropriate temperature the door will be ready to be opened. Upon opening the door the coffin is then charged into the cremator by the crematorium technician, the door is then closed and the cremation begins.



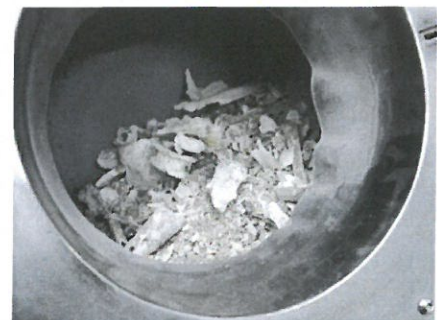


Once the cremation is complete, which on average takes around 90 minutes all that is left is the skeleton, this is referred to as cremated remains these are taken care of with the same level of dignity as the coffin itself. Due to the extremely high temperatures of the cremator, often in excess of 1000°C, precious metals simply evaporate making the retrieval of jewellery impossible. The only metals which survive the process are any artificial joints, and any pins used in the coffin. The cremated remains are removed from the cremator and collected in a cooling chamber, separate from the main cremator to ensure no remains are ever mixed, the remains are removed via a long metal rake, once the cremated remains have been raked down the door is closed and ready for the next cremation. The ID card is also move down the cremator to the cooling chamber.



The cooling of remains generally takes around 60 minutes, once this time is up the remains are dropped into a container which is connected to the cooling chamber to ensure that 100% of the remains are collected. These remains and the ID card are then taken over the the cremulator. The cremulator door is opened and the remains are placed within, with

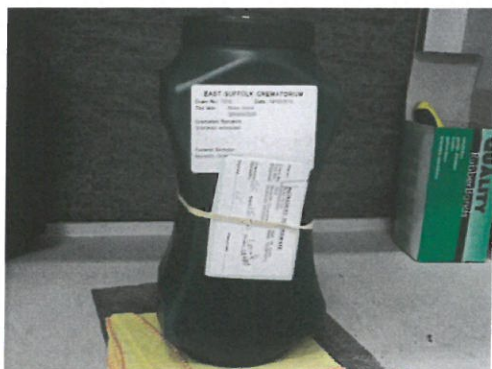
the ID card on the outside of the machine, the cremulator then utilizes large steel balls to crush the remains, pushing them through small holes in the cremulator, the cremulated remains then drop to a container below the cremulator itself, these are what is often referred to as the ashes.



After the cremulation has finished, which can take anywhere between 20 and 40 minutes any metals are then removed from the cremulator by hand or with a large magnet. Non-magnetic and magnetic metals are separated and

sent off to be recycled. The ashes are then placed in an urn, scatter tube, casket or other container as requested by the family, this is done via the aid

of a funnel, the ID card is then placed on the container and the instructions on the ID card are then followed. These instructions include the ashes being removed by the funeral director or the family, scattered witnessed or unwitnessed or left within our care until the family is ready to make a decision.



So as you can see the cremation of a body is carried out with a great deal of respect, at Seven Hills we endeavour to provide the families with the best possible service we can offer. Thank you from the directors and staff at Seven Hills for taking the time to read this booklet and we hoped you have found it informative.



