

19th June 2020

Crematorium Matters – Manager’s Report

Update from Previous Minutes

Solar Panels

No developments – project on hold due to covid crisis.

Achievements

The Aspen Flower area frame (not roofing) was completed on the day the covid shutdown was announced. The contractor did some safety works (fencing and waterproof cover) to prevent damage. It is hoped works will be completed by mid-June.

Both cremators were re-lined immediately prior to the covid-peak. The Barnstaple Hotel provided free key-worker accommodation for the engineers after their hotel closed. Without their support the works would have been very difficult.

The new logo’d caskets are in use after the sourcing was switched to the UK (originally China). There have been increased costs.

Staffing

The new technician started work on 6th April.

A new lead Medical Referee (Dr Nick Relph) has been appointed by the Ministry of Justice. The previous post-holder (Dr Loveden) remained in a deputy role to support the crematorium during the covid crisis.

Covid Crisis Update

- Uptake of Cremation services increased in April, returning to normal levels in May.
- Free webcasting was (and remains) available to mitigate the reduced mourner numbers. My personal thanks to Councillor Walker who sought the Joint Committee’s consent.
- Crematorium gardens were initially shut by legislation but re-opened when that element was amended to allow.
- Only Rowan Chapel is in use as its size allows easy social distancing. At the time of writing this report the capacity is 18. The maximum possible whilst maintaining 2-metre social distancing is 33. Rowan’s exclusive use is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.
- The office closed early in the crisis but its re-opening is imminent with screens, gel points, barriers and split receptions (enquiries at one, booked appointments at the other) all in place by mid-May.
- The early ordering of safety equipment/materials and support of North Devon Council procurement ensured all equipment was available before and throughout the crisis.
- The efforts of the staff has been the subject of much positive comment by Funeral Directors.

- The conduct of professionals using our service has been exemplary and extremely supportive.

Metals Recycling Charity Award

Over and Above (maternity bereavement suite) has been nominated for the next award (July) as previously reported. Subsequent nomination list:

Clarity

Calvert Trust

Over and Above (Cancer & Wellbeing Centre)

Families in Grief

North Devon Children's Holiday Foundation

North Devon Hospice

Cruse

Children's Hospice SW

Over and Above (North Devon Hospital – Maternity Unit Bereavement Suite)

No further additions to be considered prior to February 2022.

Cremation Figures

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
April	109	102	161	125	139	163	117	150	121	176
May	111	123	117	135	118	126	138	136	137	136
June	129	116	102	123	143	125	129	127	127	
July	107	111	121	106	111	126	142	133	128	
Aug	116	106	117	100	109	114	120	106	118	
Sept	88	104	107	122	127	121	127	106	114	
Oct	102	101	98	125	140	127	137	132	129	
Nov	116	129	96	120	108	157	135	127	115	
Dec	88	100	98	120	128	123	131	119	113	
Jan	143	159	164	142	131	158	182	169	147	
Feb	127	121	116	154	136	137	175	143	133	
Mar	132	144	127	157	151	162	164	145	143	
Total	1368	1416	1424	1529	1541	1639	1697	1593	1525	

The average delay from death to service is currently 15 days. The increase in services in April returned to normal levels in May.

Garden Improvements 2020/21

Works have been suspended due to the covid crisis. The cover for the Rowan exit will be reviewed as the long-term use of the chapel makes the works difficult unless weekend working can be secured.

Larkbear Development – Traffic Management

No developments.

Enquiries are in hand regarding releasing a small strip of the frontage to Devon County Council to allow for a large footpath improvement scheme. The previous support of the Joint Committee will be communicated to the two authorities whose authority is required in matters of land acquisition.