

Update on Mansfield and District Crematorium for the Joint Crematorium Committee

10th May 2020

As previously reported the Team at Mansfield Crematorium continue to work hard to maintain service provision for customers, alongside providing key input into the County Excess Deaths Cell, which has oversight of strategic planning for a significant increase in deaths in the County, to be implemented if required. It looks like this may be reduced down, however it is felt that it is beneficial to the funeral industry to maintain those connections made and this will be followed through in the future to build on the existing Nottinghamshire Cemetery and Crematorium Managers group and include other factions of the death care industry.

Current Situation

- The Crematorium is currently providing normal funeral services and is able to provide up to 20 per day under usual working hours
- From 8th April 2020 the operational team have been working different shift patterns to spread the work more evenly between operatives and to try and keep the working time for each shift within the standard 37 hours per week, (usually work 8.00am-4.30pm and 9.30pm-6.00pm or finish, but currently working a 3 rota pattern to cover 6am start up to finish (which is currently anywhere between 8pm and midnight). This will be reviewed dependent upon numbers of funerals being booked in and government guidelines on social distancing within the workplace.
- No requests have been received for Saturday funerals as the funeral directors are concentrating on services during the week to ideally allow staff a little downtime as the weeks have been busy.
- We continue to ensure that between each service each chapel and associated facilities are thoroughly cleaned by a member of staff redeployed from another service area, to reduce the risk of infection for mourners and staff.
- There are restrictions on the number of mourners, which are restricted to a maximum of 15 people to be close family only as stipulated by Government, however we have had a few problems with mourners arriving with over 15 mourners which seems to be a problem with most crematoria/cemeteries. Reminders have gone out to funeral directors that only 15 mourners are allowed and the services cannot be relayed outside as they will impact on services taking place in the adjacent chapel. Mourners are being encouraged to show their respects in other ways.
- Both chapels have been changed around to ensure only 15 seats are available and funeral directors are aware that if family are from the same household they may move the seats together.

- The crematorium building remains closed to the public, other than those attending services as per the Government directive but there is pedestrian access to the grounds.
- Cremated remains are collected by funeral directors from the office if that is the families wish otherwise if families wish to witness the scattering of remains these are postponed until after the current pandemic situation is over when the office will contact families to arrange suitable appointments.
- In the event that families have instructed the crematorium to scatter remains unwitnessed then this is taking place as normal.
- The Book of Remembrance is available online at <https://mansfield.bookofremembrance.uk/>
- Crematorium chapel staff are maintaining social distancing during services and wearing gloves throughout. Further distancing measures have also been put in place by allowing the funeral director to move the coffin into the chapel and their staff retreat before mourners are then allowed in.
- Home working has been implemented to reduce the number of Admin staff in the office to two, to reduce the potential exposure to infection. The Director & Registrar is currently working from home but is available for contact by e-mail and has daily contact with staff.
- Additional PPE over and above what is normally issued to staff carrying out cremations and working in the chapels has been put in place.
- Grounds maintenance has been on hold, (other than moving funeral flowers and tributes left within the grounds on a weekly basis), however a basic mowing regime was reinstated from 14th April 2020, (away from the main building to avoid disruption to services)
- The staff are being supported by a former member of staff who has been employed on a casual contract who is fully qualified as a technician
- Additional time slots as agreed up to 5.15pm are being offered if needed during the week.

Future Proposals

- Further government guidelines around funeral provision and attendance will be implemented as it emerges.

Current Statistics:-

Week commencing	No. of cremations undertaken
30.3.2020	57

6.4.2020 (4 day week)	56
14.4.2020 (4 day week)	76
20.4.2020	86
27.4.2020	76
4.5.2020 (4 day week)	42
11.5.2020 booked so far to 15.5.2020	73

To put this into some sort of perspective for the period 30.3.2019 – 15.5.2019 we undertook 294 cremations.