

# Nene Valley Crematorium

## Recycling of metals retrieved following the cremation process

### Introduction

The Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) is the professional body of which the Nene Valley Crematorium will be a member. It has, for a number of years been promoting a metal recycling scheme which provides an alternative to the burying of metals.

Working in conjunction with an approved contractor, all metal materials produced from the cremation process will be recycled. The income derived from this would then be redistributed to local charities determined by the shareholder.

To date 150 Councils across the UK have joined the scheme with over £1 million raised for charities since the inception of the scheme.

Considering the sensitive nature of the scheme the consent of the next of kin or executor would be obtained for permission to recycle the metals following cremation.

The Institute of Crematorium and Cemetery Management (ICCM) has a dedicated page with all relevant information available to view, including legal comments and the various charities that have benefited from the recycling scheme: <http://www.iccm-uk.com/iccm/index.php?pagename=recyclingmetal>

### 1. Background

- 1.1 Traditionally, if metals retrieved following the cremation process are retained at the crematorium they will be held until a sufficient quantity exist for the material to be taken to cemetery grounds and respectfully buried. Once buried in the grounds these metals would not decompose and would remain in the ground forever. As a result burial ground within cemeteries will be taken up as there would need to be areas designated for the burials of metals.
- 1.2 The contractor currently used by ICCM - Orthometals - are providing a metal recycling service throughout the UK and across the continent. Based in Holland, they have been providing this service in the UK for a number of years and throughout the Dutch Cremation Federation for considerably longer.
- 1.3 The ICCM acts as a national agent, working directly with Orthometals and co-ordinating the collection of implants from crematoria throughout the country. Any monies raised from the recycling process will be paid to the ICCM, who will offset the operating costs and supervise the re-distribution of the income to a range of charities working in areas that relate, in some way, to death and bereavement. The charities will be nominated by the council and could include hospices, cancer/heart charities etc.
- 1.4 There will be no commercial gain for the council in participating in the recycling scheme; the primary benefits are to the charities who will receive

financial support, the preservation and space in the cemetery grounds, and the service becoming environmentally efficient.

- 1.5 The consent of the applicant for cremation (next of kin or executor) will be obtained for permission to recycle the metals following cremation.

## **2 The scheme in detail**

- 2.1 All metals are extracted from the cremated remains in the same way in the UK and Europe. The metals consist of ferrous metals, which are predominantly staples and nails used in coffin construction, and non ferrous metals used in orthopaedic surgery, which are manufactured from cobalt steel. An element of precious metal is recovered, which emanates from jewellery. During the cremation process metals melt and become unrecognisable reducing to granular form and are not generally recoverable from cremated remains. Some might be combined with refractory brickwork, some will be contained in the cremated remains, and some recovered during the sorting process carried out by the contractor.
- 2.2 Containers will be supplied to the crematorium. These will be 120 litre wheeled bins of 120 x 55 x 48cms in size and complete with a lid. Bins will be provided for ferrous metals and non-ferrous. The contractor's staff will carry out basic training in the process with crematorium staff.
- 2.3 Crematorium staff will separate ferrous metals from non-ferrous metals and place them in separate containers.
- 2.4 Frequency of collection is twice per year, normally in May and November.
- 2.5 Containers will be collected by the contractor, using a small truck equipped with a hydraulic lift. As full containers are collected, they will be replaced with empty containers.
- 2.6 All metals will be recycled in the UK, and all carriers and treatment plants will be suitably licensed to comply with UK legislation. The carrier will issue a waste transfer note for each collection. The transfer note records the weights of metals collected.
- 2.7 To ensure the process is properly monitored, the contractor maintains a database of weights of metals collected from each crematorium, with the database being provided to the ICCM. The contractor will advise the ICCM of the figures for the sale of the recyclable materials and this will be validated.
- 2.8 Weights of recyclable metals received by the contractor will be advised to the ICCM, following completion of the collection. This will take the form of a freight bill identifying the weights collected per crematorium. Each crematorium will be informed of the weights collected from their crematorium. All orthopaedic implants will be smelted into granules for industrial use, with all other metals being recycled in appropriate ways. Some of the higher grade metals from orthopaedic implants are used in the manufacture of new implants.

- 2.9 Prior to the start of any collections, full health and safety/insurance information will be obtained from the contractor and their sub-contractors, including any Health and Safety policies and relevant risk assessments, safe working practices and relevant insurance documentation.
- 2.10 To ensure that start-up costs are spread over a reasonable period, contractual arrangements between the ICCM and the contractor will be for a minimum three year period. In turn, each crematorium should commit to the scheme for the same period.
- 2.11 Surplus achieved through the contract shall be based on gross total income, minus a charge for collection, transport, smelting and service improvement costs. This is standard procedure with existing contracts currently operating in Europe. Any monies collected by the ICCM will be donated to death-related charities. When surplus is paid to the Institute (six monthly), it will contact all scheme member crematoria, requesting a nomination for a local death related charity. The number of nominations received, and the amount of surplus, is confirmed and recorded at an Institute board meeting. The number of nominations received is divided into the surplus, with each charity receiving an equal share of the surplus. Cheques are sent to scheme member crematoria, payable to their chosen charities. A covering letter to the charity is included. Scheme member crematoria are encouraged to arrange a cheque presentation ceremony designed to raise positive local publicity for the charity and cremation service.
- 2.12 A leaflet and web notice will be designed to inform and educate the public with regard to recycling of metals.
- 2.13 The cremation forms will incorporate approval from the applicant for cremation, to allow recycling.

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