

Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee

Development Plan 2008–2014

City of Portsmouth

Borough of Gosport

Borough of Fareham

Borough of Havant

Portchester Crematorium Development Plan – 2008 to 2014

1.0 Introduction and Purpose of Plan

- 1.1 Portchester Crematorium was opened on 27 September 1958 and is the only crematorium in south east Hampshire. It is managed by a Joint Committee of 8 Councillors, 2 from each of the four constituent authorities of Fareham, Gosport, Havant and Portsmouth. This Plan revisits and reviews the previous Development Plan approved in June 2006. Earlier Development Plans were produced in 1992 and 1996.
- 1.2 The Plan seeks to look at medium term developments in the period up to 2014, and in the longer term beyond 2014, and to set out the Joint Committee's intended course of action. **Emboldened typeface** has been used throughout the text to indicate the future intentions of the Joint Committee.
- 1.3 The Plan has been prepared in the following sections –
2. Progress since the previous 1996 and 2006 Development Plans.
 3. Local authorities' cremation responsibilities.
 4. The role of the private sector.
 5. Portchester Crematorium's Aims and Objectives.
 6. Standards of Service and Working Practices.
 7. Developments in Technology and Provision of Crematorium Web Site.
 8. Multi Cultural and Secular Services.
 9. Memorials Policy.
 10. Fees and Charges Policy.
 11. Financial Policies.
 12. Repairs and Maintenance
 13. Cremation Trends.
 14. Population Trends.
 15. The Chapels.
 16. Environmental Issues.
 17. The Grounds and Long Term Strategy for the Disposal of Ashes.

2.0 Progress Since the Previous Development Plan

- 2.1 The current Development Plan was approved by the Joint Committee in June 2006 and built upon the previous Plan approved in 1996. When agreeing the current Plan the Joint Committee agreed it should be reviewed every two years.
- 2.2 The key features of the 1996 plan were –
- That cremations were averaging over 4,000 a year in 1996, and that this figure could well reach 4,500 a year by 2000.

- That even with population growth and an expected increase in cremations there was sufficient cremator capacity at Portchester for at least the next 10 years and probably much longer.
- The existing two chapels adequately served on most occasions the requirements of funeral services and an extension to either could not be justified.

Although not identified in the 1996 Development Plan, the Joint Committee decided in 2001 to provide improved waiting room facilities. A separate building, comprising two discreet well furnished waiting areas for mourners, was built to the east of the Crematorium and linked to it by a covered way. This has provided much appreciated accommodation to allow mourners to wait a sufficient distance from the two chapels. The new facilities were completed and open for use in the summer of 2004

- A possible extension to the Crematorium grounds. However, further land to the north that had been identified for this was in private ownership. The Joint Committee was unable to acquire the land, which was subsequently laid out and opened in 2002 as the 'Portchester Memorial Gardens', by a private company.
- The provision of a garden of contemplation, as envisaged has been completed.
- Difficulties that could arise with car parking in Upper Cornaway Lane when both the car park within the grounds and an overflow car park were full required management measures. The Joint Committee in 2004/2005 addressed the difficulties that had worsened since 1996 by building an extension to the overflow car park to provide an additional 43 car spaces.
- To replace the existing six cremators. They were replaced and enhanced in 1998 to further comply with air quality emissions under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

2.3 The key features of the 2006 Plan have again been included within this document and progress with initiatives is indicated within each of the relevant sections. These include particularly the proposed project for the installation of mercury abatement equipment during the lifetime of this Plan, and which is dealt with in Section 16.

3.0 Local Authorities' Cremation Responsibilities

3.1 A local authority's powers to provide cremation facilities flow from the Cremation Acts 1902 and 1952, and Section 214 of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 3.2 Under the 1972 Act a local authority has power to provide cemeteries and crematoria within or outside its area.
- 3.3 In the case of Portchester, the Fareham, Gosport and Havant Borough Councils together with Portsmouth City Council decided in the 1950's to provide a crematorium. The authorities used powers in the Local Government Act 1933, now superseded by the 1972 Act.
- 3.4 The four local authorities entered into an agreement delegating their powers to a joint committee comprising councillors from each authority. That agreement has been revised and revisited over the years, most recently as a result of the Local Government Act 2000. The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations 2001 make the provision of crematoria an Executive function (applicable to Portsmouth, Havant and Fareham) except for an authority (Gosport Borough Council) operating "alternative arrangements".
- 3.5 This means that except for Gosport the representatives from Portsmouth, Fareham and Havant on the joint committee must be Executive Members.
- 3.6 The Joint Committee decides the overall policy for the provision of Crematorium facilities, including approving capital and maintenance works programme, the consideration and approval of accounts, and setting the scale of fees and charges.
- 3.7 Crematorium staff are employees of the Joint Committee. They are responsible to the Manager and Registrar for the day-to-day running of all aspects of the Crematorium.
- 3.8 Although most of the cremations undertaken are in respect of those who lived in the area of the four local authorities, funerals also come from the immediate hinterland.

4.0 The Role of the Private Sector

- 4.1. The private sector has a significant role in the disposal of the dead, whether it is directly in the provision of cemeteries and crematoria or through funeral directors. In addition there are ancillary services such as monumental masons, florists and other death related businesses.
- 4.2 At the present time a number of crematoria in the United Kingdom are privately owned and the services they provide vary little from that in the public sector. The only major difference is usually in the number and variation in the type of memorials offered post funeral.
- 4.3 Portchester is almost unique in the fact that it has a privately owned Memorial Garden located in its immediate vicinity. This private facility, whilst having very little effect on the day to day running of Portchester, does however offer bereaved families a greater choice in the way they dispose of cremated remains and how they are remembered by way of memorials. Although,

inevitably there is a cost implication to this. Ideally, because of the lack of available ground within the Crematorium in which to bury ashes it would be desirable if greater numbers of remains were taken from the Crematorium for disposal elsewhere. The Memorial Gardens probably do not deal with as many disposals as could have been the case had the Joint Committee developed the land. Even so the trend to remove remains to scatter or bury elsewhere than at the Crematorium is still upwards, and this aspect is dealt with in more detail in Section 17. The Memorial Gardens have very little effect on any of the workings of Portchester Crematorium.

- 4.4 The relationship the Crematorium has with funeral directors and other 'bereavement services' is little different from any other local authority running commercial services. Virtually all of the ancillary services are in the private sector and consideration has to be given at all times to their commercial interests when considering the service that the Crematorium aims to provide.

5.0 Portchester Crematorium's Aims and Objectives

- 5.1 The Joint Committee is committed to the maintenance of high standards in relation both to staff performance and to the maintenance, repair and improvement of the fabric of the Crematorium and its assets.

5.2 The Joint Committee will therefore continue and adhere to the following general policies:

- (a) Seek to maintain, and where possible, enhance the beauty of the grounds, as an area for quiet contemplation;
- (b) Keep the grounds open to the public subject only to such restrictions as may be necessary in the interests of security;
- (c) Seek to ensure that all works to the fabric are of high quality in keeping with an atmosphere of dignity and reverence appropriate to the purpose of the establishment;
- (d) Adhere to staff recruitment and training policies which will ensure that all members of staff reflect both in appearance and behaviour the high standards both express and implied in the Code of Cremation Practice of the Federation of British Cremation Authorities, to which the Joint Committee is fully committed;
- (e) Seek to promote the practice of cremation as an alternative to burial by ensuring that the Crematorium is an open and welcoming place whose staff understand the needs of the bereaved.

6.0 Standards of Service and Working Practices

- 6.1 Historically Portchester has always strived to provide the best quality of service it can, both through its buildings and the quality of staff it employs. Recently this has been made more apparent with the expansion of the cloister

area and the provision of new waiting rooms as well as updating existing areas. The “turnover” of staff has been extremely low in the last 20 years with staff generally leaving due to retirement. Retention of staff provides experience and competence in all areas of the day to day work. The staff work flexible hours which means the provision of the service can be maintained throughout the day with no breaks.

6.2 Portchester is a member of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management. Its ‘charter for the bereaved’ lays down minimum standards that the public are entitled to expect from any establishment dealing with the disposal of the dead. A copy of the charter is available to the public either through the office or on the ICCM web site at www.iccm-uk.com. Under this charter Portchester undertakes an annual best value assessment by way of a questionnaire on all areas of the charter, and is ranked alongside similar establishments.

6.3 As a member of the Federation of British Cremation Authorities, Portchester also undertakes to abide by their Code of Practice (*a copy of which is attached at Appendix 1*).

6.4 **The Joint Committee will continue to ensure the Crematorium buildings are open for inspection by the public at any time in addition to the more regular tours that are conducted.**

7.0 Development in Technology and Provision of Crematorium Web Site

7.1 Over the years technology has moved on and this has led to the provision of new equipment in order to maintain the standards expected for modern services. In the past this has meant CD players and more recently the provision of DVD players to cover more modern formats of music production. In the future it is expected that provision for viewing services via a secure Internet link may be the next advance in technology, and this is something the Joint Committee has agreed could be investigated. This could be something ultimately that might be incorporated into the Crematorium website. The website was established during 2005 and this is something that with the march of technology will become more of an integral part of the service that Portchester can offer. This could include online booking, genealogy and the viewing of the Book of Remembrance digitally. In addition to the information that may be viewed on the website, hard copies of information leaflets and brochures are also available.

7.2 **The Joint Committee will keep under review the way in which technology and the web site could be further developed in the interests of an efficient and effective, yet caring, service to the bereaved.**

8.0 Multi Cultural and Secular Services

8.1 Both chapels at the Crematorium are designated as non denominational although there is a removable cross in both reflecting the largely Christian

nature of funerals. There is a greater trend for a less Christian type of service and more secular and humanist services. The cross in the chapel is easily removed for these services if requested. There are other Christian symbols on the building most notably on the stack and front and rear external walls of the South Chapel. These are part of the original structure and there has been no objection to these. **The Joint Committee will continue to keep under review the wishes of mourners.**

8.2 Secular services at present do not present a problem as the nature and style of the services conducted in the chapels is generally outside the direct control of the Crematorium staff and is more to do with officiants, family and funeral directors. Generally these services tend to take no longer than a “standard” Christian service but are generally more complex and personalised in nature. Currently the Crematorium has facilities for the playing of all forms of recorded media and these facilities have been expanded over the years by replacing equipment with the most modern available as and when it is perceived the need arises. If the trend continues towards a more secular style of ceremony it is anticipated that the range and scope of equipment needed to cater for these will increase. It has become apparent over the last few years that slide projectors, screens, computers, recording equipment and other similar equipment have all been used. **This is an area where provision will need to be made, and the Joint Committee will keep this under review.**

8.3 It has become noticeable over the last twenty years that the number of services held in church (prior to a short committal in the Crematorium chapel) has declined markedly. This trend is also a consideration with secular services as there is very little scope for any style of service to be held anywhere other than at the Crematorium. With the decline in the number of church committal services this is not anticipated to be a problem as the Crematorium is already managing this decline effectively.

8.4 **The style of service does not really affect the running of the Crematorium in any meaningful way. This will be kept under review by the Joint Committee to consider whether it may be necessary to provide extra services, although this has always been done over the years to reflect changes in technology and society.**

8.5 Whilst the Crematorium is available to serve the whole community and has a range of paper and web site publications to support the services its provides, **the Joint Committee will nevertheless carry out an equalities impact assessment of the Crematorium’s activities.**

9.0 **Memorials**

9.1 The Joint Committee has maintained a consistent policy against the provision of permanent memorials although these are sometimes desired by families at the time of bereavement. Although some private crematoria see the sale of such memorials as a valuable addition to their income the Joint Committee has taken a long term view not to sacrifice the simple beauty of the gardens for the sake of the increased income that would arise. **The Joint Committee**

will continue this policy unless and until there is sound evidence that it no longer represents the considered views of the wider community. With the opening of the privately owned Portchester Memorial Gardens to the north of the Crematorium the bereaved have been encouraged to make use of these facilities. Funeral directors are asked to advise the bereaved that when a permanent memorial is desired it is more appropriate for cremated remains to be interred in that setting or a cemetery.

- 9.2 Invariably from time to time plaques, ornaments and other objects do tend to be left within the grounds. **The Joint Committee will continue the long established management policy that it should be left to the Manager and Registrar to decide when and for how long such personal objects should be allowed to remain within the grounds.** At present a certain amount of time is left before all of the grounds (usually 4-6 months) are cleared of such material. It is then kept for collection by families or disposed of dependent upon circumstances.

10.0 Fees & Charges Policy

- 10.1 The Joint Committee sets the level of fees that are charged. The present policy requires a fee to be charged for all cremations where the deceased is over the age of 16.
- 10.2 The fee that is charged covers use of the chapel irrespective of whether a funeral service takes place in the chapel. In any event, for practical purposes all cremations that are to take place are received into the Crematorium through one of the chapels. The main reason for this is that if a separate charge was made for provision of a chapel there would be nothing to stop families and funeral directors asking and expecting a double slot or greater to be granted. At present the provision of a double time slot is left to the discretion of the Manager and Registrar, who takes into account all reasons why the request has been made and whether to grant such times. The primary reason for this is that during busy times the allowance of double time slots may cause inconvenience and distress to other families wishing to arrange funerals. **The Joint Committee will continue with this policy.**
- 10.3 Medical Referees fees are included in the cremation fee, and unless and until there are legal changes involving the role of medical referees this arrangement will continue.
- 10.4 The cremation fees set (usually annually) by the Joint Committee have no provision for variation to meet, for example, specific circumstances, and there are no plans to alter this. **However, the Joint Committee will keep this arrangement under review because in coming years it may be desirable to have some variance in the way fees and charges are levied.**

10.5 Some of the ways this may happen could include -

- Discounts on the early time slots in the day
- Provision of double or longer time slots
- Charging for minors and infants
- Increasing the range of memorials and fees
- Saturday and Sunday openings with increased fee
- Bank Holiday opening with increased fee
- Consideration of charges being made for car parking
- Provision of Internet remote viewing of services

10.6 Whilst at present it is considered unnecessary to contemplate most of these, circumstances in coming years may make it necessary to consider some or all of the above suggestions.

10.7 Charges are also made for entries into the Book of Remembrance, organist and use of organ, and burying of remains from other crematoria. **The Joint Committee will continue to review all of its charges on no less than an annual basis.**

11.0 Financial Policies

11.1 The Joint Committee is in a strong financial position and able to meet all planned expenditure from income. Since the 1996 Development Plan the Joint Committee has been in a position to make an annual surplus which has been distributed to each of the constituent authorities. This surplus is effectively recognition of the significant original investment by each of the authorities in the Crematorium. The payment to each of the authorities also assists them indirectly to support their own cemeteries and bereavement services.

11.2 A comprehensive Finance Strategy is in place which provides a clear overview of the Joint Committee's financial framework and is aimed at providing added assurance to the Committee and to the constituent authorities that sound and affective arrangements are in place to manage the Crematorium's finances. The strategy will be reviewed by the Joint Committee each December for incorporation into the budget setting process.

11.3 A Capital Works Fund has been set up to fund future major works. Examples of this are works needed to remove mercury emissions from flue gasses, and any further improvement works to the fabric of the Crematorium. The total expenditure required for these works has still to be determined but for planning purposes a figure of up to £2million has been used. The method of funding these particular works is the subject of a comprehensive report to the Joint Committee at the September 2008 meeting.

11.4 When the last Development Plan was approved in 2006 a business plan projection included a forecast of income and expenditure until 2012. A new forecast has been made for the period until 2014 (see *Appendix 2*). The

assumptions on inflation, annual surplus, contributions to each authority etc are shown in the notes.

11.5 The Joint Committee re-affirms the following long standing policies:-

1. Sufficient reserves and provisions will continue to be made to ensure that:
 - (a) no precept will be required from the constituent authorities within the foreseeable future and;
 - (b) all anticipated capital works can be funded from revenue income.
2. that an optimum annual surplus be available for re-distribution to each of the constituent authorities.

12.0 Repairs and Maintenance

- 12.1 As a result of the ongoing maintenance programme, the buildings are now in good condition and no exceptional requirements are foreseen at the present time, other than those outlined in the maintenance programme.

13.0 Cremation Trends

- 13.1 Since the opening of the Crematorium in 1958 the number of cremations performed annually has grown steadily, from under 2,000 per year to over 4,000 a year now. However, the operational capacity of the cremator installation, working within existing limits, is 5-6,000 per annum. In simple physical terms the cremator capacity is about 40 per normal working day, but the requirement for timed funerals and chapel services reduces this figure to a maximum of 27 funerals per day. At present, the limit of 27 per day occurs not more than once a week. Generally funerals do not normally have to be booked more than one week in advance. Timing adjustments could create further spare capacity though depending on its extent, this could have some adverse effects on the standard of service provided. In the longer term, operational hours could if necessary be extended to deal with periods of high demand by Saturday opening, although current national experience shows that there would be little demand at present.
- 13.2 The table set out at *Appendix 3* shows the trends in cremation from 1960 - 2006, indicating the national percentage of cremation to burials for those years and various other cremation comparisons. These show the national rate is now fairly constant at around 72%, having risen in the last 10 years from around 70% .
- 13.3 Locally the table below gives a comparison of the burials in the 4 local authority areas covered by the Joint Committee and the percentage relationship of cremation to burial. These figures are a guide only as they do

not take into account funerals that may be undertaken from outside of the 4 areas.

Cremations			Burials	
			Portsmouth, Havant, Gosport, Fareham	
			Local authority cemeteries	
2001	4,211	(82%)	931	(18%)
2002	4,248	(83%)	854	(17%)
2003	4,372	(83%)	870	(17%)
2004	4,134	(83%)	877	(17%)
2005	3,987			
2006	3,993		These figures are still be finalised	
2007	4,000			

13.4 The number of cremations in future years is hard to predict, and whilst the Crematorium is currently working at a high rate there is still further capacity available. Although factors such as weather conditions and flu epidemics can affect numbers there is no sign of a marked and permanent increase. The growth in our catchment area will ultimately lead to an increase in numbers, but due to the current demography this may well be offset for perhaps 20 or more years until the age of these residents' increases.

14.0 Population Trends

14.1 Set out in *Appendix 4* are estimates of population projection and age profile for the period up to 2026. These take account of Regional Planning Guidance and assumes that development will continue at the same average annual rate between 2011 and 2026. This indicates that in respect of the four local authority areas –

(a) The population is projected to increase from the 1991 figure of 482,700, as follows (with the previous 2006 estimates in brackets) –

2001	–	489,800	
2011	–	505,717	(498,015 – previous estimate)
2026	–	533,807	(511,592 – previous estimate)

This represents an increase of some 8.2% between 2001 and 2026 (an increase from the 4.5% figure reported in the 2006 Development Plan).

(b) The population profile will change with a larger proportion in the upper age range than has previously been the case.

14.2 The 1996 Development Plan suggested that even with a one per cent increase each year in cremations at Portchester, the annual figure would not reach 4,500 before the year 2000 assuming a static population. In fact, the population in the catchment area increased by 7,100 between 1991 and 2001, but there was not a permanent increase in the number of cremations. The 1996 Development Plan also suggested that projecting an increase in the

cremation proportion would give a figure of about 5,000 cremations a year by the year 2015, based on the assumed increase in the population/deaths over the 20 year period from 1996. However, these increases have not actually come to fruition, with the current level of cremations at 4,000 per annum.

- 14.4 The Hampshire population and death projections (*set out in Appendix 5*) for each local area show the following actual and projected deaths for the 4 local authority areas –

1991	–	5,143
2001	–	5,091
2011	–	4,787
2026	–	5,135

- 14.5 On the assumption that average national trends both in respect of cremation and burial continue to apply in the Joint Committee's area the conclusion is that there will be sufficient cremator capacity at Portchester at least for the next 10 years.

15.0 The Chapels

- 15.1 The south chapel has a seating capacity of about 80, but with standing can accommodate well over 100 persons. The smaller north chapel has seating for about 40. Both are served with new well appointed waiting rooms, incorporating toilet provision in a separate building linked to the chapels by a covered walkway. The capacity of the Chapels is in line with the Department of the Environment Guidance Notes on the Siting and Planning of Crematoria issued in April 1978. Sometimes overflows occur in the south chapel but this happens infrequently. Funeral directors are usually aware when a high attendance is likely and will then suggest to the bereaved that a church service should be held before the committal. Any chapel extension could result in a loss of intimacy which would arguably outweigh any gain. The existing chapel capacity in terms of how many mourners they hold is not related to cremator capacity. At the present time the two chapels are arguably not suited to services where only a few mourners are present and consideration could be given to the provision of a third small chapel. This could give the ability to increase the number of cremations carried out.

- 15.2 **The Joint Committee will keep under review the possibility of an additional small discreet chapel being provided, to fulfil the needs of small family funerals, thus maintaining full use of the existing north and south chapels.**

16.0 Environmental Issues

- 16.1 As a matter of principle the Joint Committee seeks to minimise the environmental consequences of its operation commensurate with the need of providing a facility sensitive to the needs of its clients. The buildings have been developed at different stages but always in a manner sympathetic to the

original design. It is considered important that any future works abide by this principle and that they are considered acceptable to the public. Environmental considerations can be very complex and in this development plan it is only considered practicable to outline in the broadest terms the environmental issues that the Joint Committee can reasonably influence.

- 16.2 The crematorium is a major consumer of both gas and electricity and spends well over £90,000 per annum on these commodities during the life of this development plan. Clearly it is in the interests of the Joint Committee to minimise this consumption both from an environmental perspective and from the cost point of view.
- 16.3 Most of the energy consumed is in relation to the prime purpose of the crematorium i.e. the cremation process, and the energy used is largely determined by the regulatory requirements that govern this. The Manager and Registrar routinely monitors and reports to the Joint Committee on gas consumption.
- 16.4 The Joint Committee has determined that they will install equipment to remove mercury from the flue gasses and this will involve major works to the cremators together with associated building works. The latest date set by the government for these works to be completed is 2012. One of the issues associated with mercury removal is the regulation of flue gas temperatures. At an early stage in the research process for the project it was thought an opportunity may exist to utilise waste heat in the heating of the buildings thus minimising the overall consumption of gas, and this was mentioned in the previous Development Plan. Investigations have indicated this will not now be possible. A comprehensive report on all aspects of the mercury abatement project with an indicative cost of up to £2million will be considered by the Joint Committee in September 2008. The report indicates that, if agreed, the project could proceed with a view to completion in September 2010. Earlier in 2008 the Joint Committee gave authority for the submission of a planning application to enable the necessary building works for a modest extension to be put in hand in due course. **The Joint Committee will continue to receive regular reports on all aspects of the mercury abatement project and other capital and revenue works.**
- 16.5 In respect of the flue gasses the Joint Committee has provided high quality computer controlled cremation and monitoring equipment to ensure that it fully meets the requirement of the Environmental Protection Act. To ensure that the equipment is maintained to a high standard the principle has been adopted of engaging the original suppliers on a long-term rolling contract. Flue gas emissions are determined by a number of factors. This includes the "what goes in must come out" principle and this is an area that is largely outside the direct control of the Joint Committee.
- 16.6 The buildings are heated by a combination of systems largely brought about by the incremental development of the buildings. **When suitable opportunities arise consideration will continue to be given by the Joint Committee to issues of sustainability and possible rationalisation of**

these systems to achieve both environmental and cost benefits. The buildings are largely insulated to accord with modern requirements and whenever appropriate the opportunity is being taken to upgrade the buildings insulation.

- 16.7 The crematorium does have large roof areas that could be used to trap the sun's energy and convert this to useful energy. This is a field that has developed considerably in recent years and shows potential for energy savings. **Within the timescale of this development plan it is proposed to consider investigating the possibilities for utilising "alternative" technologies to generate electricity on the site.**

17.0 The Grounds and Long Term Strategy for the Disposal of Remains

- 17.1 At the present time an average of 55% of ashes are removed from the crematorium for scattering elsewhere. This is a trend that appears to be on the rise not only locally but nationally. This means that the remaining 45% are scattered within the grounds. The current risk assessment is in place to ensure that the grounds are able to take the number of scatterings that the Crematorium requires without causing detrimental effects on the soil structure.
- 17.2 The remaining 45% (some 1,800 cremations) are scattered within the grounds by placing them beneath the surface and into the soil directly. Taking a snapshot of the current diary, most of these scatterings are in existing locations with other family members and as such would always have to be scattered within the current layout of the garden. Approximately 20% of the 1,800 scatterings per annum are what would be termed new locations. This equates to fewer than 400 scatterings. At the present time there are areas of the garden that are able to take these scatterings and are relatively under-utilised.
- 17.3 In the opinion of the Manager and Registrar any extension to the existing grounds at the present time is not necessary as the majority of disposals have to take place within the existing layout. He believes that the trend for removals coupled with the ever increasing demand for repeat scatterings means that the demand for 'new' positions will continue to diminish and as such would render any extensions under-utilised. **The Joint Committee will keep under review the level of remains that are so removed.**
- 17.4 The disposal of cremated remains is carried out within the shrub borders. This does have a cumulative adverse effect on the condition of the soil and plants grow less well. The effect can be to some extent ameliorated by shallow rotovation and top dressing but the former is inappropriate in areas of recent disposal. This problem was recognised by the Joint Committee in earlier Development Plans and as a result, steps were taken to acquire an extension to the grounds to increase the area available for the disposal of cremated remains. With the number of disposals being on average 35 per week this is a reduction from previous levels.

- 17.5 Over the last 6 years the shrub beds have been mulched with bark, thus allowing access to visitors throughout the year. The mulch has improved the aesthetic appearance of the borders and also conserves moisture.
- 17.6 The ground maintenance regime has a greater emphasis on shrub pruning, which is allowing more room around plants for remains to be placed. However, there will come a time in the next 6 to 10 years when the remains will become an unacceptably dominant part of the soil structure. In the medium term this could be helped by the creation of new shrub beds. **The Joint Committee will keep under review the need to maintain good soil conditions both for the disposal of remains and for the requirements of the planting and will take appropriate measures to ensure a balance is maintained.**
- 17.7 The Joint Committee has recently reviewed its car parking facilities and this has included consideration of parking provision for cars and other means of transport. Car parking is provided, both within the Grounds (capacity for 68 cars) and an overflow car park in Upper Cornaway Lane (capacity 73). Car parking for the disabled has been provided in the Grounds. **Whilst it is appropriate to consider cars as the primary means of transport to the Crematorium the need to provide space for alternative and more environmentally friendly means of transport will be kept under review by the Joint Committee.**
- 17.8 The Manager and Registrar will consider staff transportation during the lifetime of this development plan with the objective of minimising the environmental impact of the travel to work journey.
- 17.9 **The Joint Committee will periodically monitor car parking arrangements to ensure that it is being managed in the most efficient and effective way.**

Appendices

1. Federation of British Cremation Authorities Code of Practice
2. Projections of Annual Estimates of Expenditure & Income
3. Cremation Trends 1960 – 2006
4. Population projection and age profile
5. Actual and projected deaths in south east Hampshire

JH/me
19 September 2008