



# Westerleigh Group Infant cremation Policy (Scotland)

Reviewed by Tech Team Sept 2019



## *Borders Crematorium*

### **Policy Statement Relating to the Cremation of Pregnancy Loss, Stillbirth, Neo-natal and Infant Deaths.**

This Cremation Authority wishes it to be known that it considers the interests of the bereaved family and baby in our care to be the central focus of our attention. This will be reflected in all of our administrative and operational practices and procedures.

#### Statutory Forms

<b>Schedule</b>	
<b>A2</b>	Application for cremation of a stillborn baby
<b>A3</b>	Application for cremation of a pregnancy loss on or before 24 weeks – family arranged
<b>A4</b>	Application for cremation of a pregnancy loss on or before 24 weeks – individual or shared - health authority or body arranged
<b>B3</b>	Cremation register – stillborn baby and pregnancy loss

#### Definition of ‘ashes’

The term “ashes” means the material (other than any metal) to which Human remains are reduced by cremation, including the coffin and any clothing.

#### Maximising the recovery of ashes during cremation

We have developed an approach to the cremation of babies that is designed to maximise the recovery of ashes. This includes the use of a cremation tray designed to retain ashes where practicable, and the maintenance of operational conditions that will minimise the loss of any ashes during the process of cremation. It should be noted; to allow the use of a metal baby tray, the external dimensions of the coffin cannot exceed 33” (838mm) length and 17” (431mm) wide.

Our staff will be vigilant during the cremation process and adjust operational conditions when necessary in order to protect the ashes of babies and maximise their recovery.

All necessary steps will be used in order to fully recover ashes, but in the event that ashes are not recovered, the Inspector of Cremation will investigate the reasons.

We will adhere to our identification procedure that guarantees that the ashes resulting from individual cremations returned to parents are those of their babies.

In addition, as members of the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities we will also adhere to their Code of Practice.

### Shared cremations

Where a shared cremation has been authorised, and hence ashes are not individually identifiable, we will take the same care throughout the cremation process, including steps to maximise the recovery of ashes, and will scatter/bury the Ashes within the crematorium's designated area. The location will be recorded for future reference. Shared cremations will involve no more than 12 Pregnancy Losses, individually contained within a single child's coffin. This allows the coffin to be cremated using the Cremation tray.

### Disposal of Ashes and Record Keeping

In accordance with the Cremation (Scotland) Regulations 2019, made under Section 48 of the Burial & and Cremation (Scotland) Act 2016.

### Questions or Queries

If you have any questions or queries about cremation, you can speak to:

**Ms Judith Gray (Manager)**

**Border Crematorium**

**Melrose**

**TD6 9HA**

**Tel: 01896 823357**

## WESTERLEIGH GROUP

**INFANT CREMATION CODE OF PRACTICE 2019 (Scotland)**

- 1.** The deceased infant\*, their family and their friends must be treated with respect, dignity and sensitivity at all times.
- 2.** The nearest relative\* must be the main signatory or applicant on all relevant documents, unless exceptional circumstances applies as defined in the Cremation (Scotland) Regulations 2019.
- 3.** The principle of informed choice for next of kin\* must apply to all decision-making discussions and documentation. This must include transparency as to alternative options and applicable costs, and provide clarity over who may hold future decision-making powers.
- 4.** Communication with, and the information available to, family and friends of the deceased must be consistent across all involved organisations and institutions.
- 5.** Next of kin must be allowed some time to reflect and, if necessary, make changes to their initial decisions.
- 6.** Next of kin must be provided with a copy of any documentation signed by them.
- 7.** All applications for cremation must be made on the relevant statutory “application” forms defined in the Cremation (Scotland) Regulations 2019.
- 8.** 'Ashes' are defined as "the material (other than any metal) to which Human remains are reduced by cremation including the coffin and any clothing."
- 9.** All organisations and institutions involved in infant cremations\* must adhere to the principle of maximising the recovery of ashes when agreeing contracts, arranging and/or conducting infant cremations.
- 10.** Arrangements relating to any hospital-arranged infant cremations must be set out in a contract / be agreed in writing between NHS, funeral director, cremation authority and/or burial authority, as applicable.
- 11.** All organisations and institutions involved in infant cremations must regularly review their own procedures and policies to ensure best practice is maintained.
- 12.** All organisations and institutions involved in infant cremations must establish regular sharing and learning of multi-agency and cross-country best practice.
- 13.** All relevant staff must successfully complete relevant, available training before their involvement in discussing, organising or conducting infant cremations.
- 14.** Records must be accurate, clear, accessible and maintained electronically where possible.
- 15.** All organisations and institutions involved in infant cremations must allow and assist with regular inspection of their premises, personnel, policies, procedures and/or records etc. by the individuals or bodies designated by statute for this purpose.
- 16.** All organisations involved in infant cremations must ensure that all their existing or new infant cremation policies, codes of practice, guidance, procedures and processes adhere to this national Code of Practice, including its supplementary Level 2 Guidelines and any accompanying Explanatory Notes.
- 17.** All organisations involved in infant cremations must ensure they are and continue to be fully compliant with the law in Scotland.

## CODE OF PRACTICE LEVEL 2 - CREMATORIA

### Introduction

1. This guidance relates to the single cremation of infants and babies (i.e. not shared cremations). This guidance forms part of the overarching Code of Practice for infant cremation in Scotland.
2. All Cremation Authorities will ensure that they have published, and are compliant with, the agreed policy statement on infant cremation, issued to them by the National Committee on Infant Cremation.
3. The purpose of this guidance is to set down recommendations on approaches cremation authorities should use to maximise the recovery of any ashes in the cremation of an infant or child, where 'ashes' is defined as "The material (other than any metal) to which Human remains are reduced by cremation including the coffin and any clothing."

### Practices for maximising the recovery of ashes:

4. All crematoria in Scotland should use baby trays, wherever practically possible, to maximise the recovery of ashes when cremating an infant or baby. Baby trays should be of robust construction to minimise buckling and scaling in the course of use, and should enable easy collection and removal of ashes. Cremation authorities must conduct a risk assessment on the use of baby trays, and ensure staff involved in the handling of baby trays have been appropriately trained and are aware of best practice.
5. In instances where a baby tray cannot be used eg a coffin is too large to fit into the tray, the technician must apply additional care and vigilance in order to maximise the recovery of any ash.
6. Baby trays should be used in conjunction with other methods for maximising the recovery of ashes, including:
  - 6.1 Manufacturer pre-programmed infant settings, or equivalent manual settings, must be used to restrict or eliminate the introduction of turbulent air into the primary chamber. There should also be minimal use of the primary chamber burner in order to create the best conditions possible for the recovery of ashes. Vigilance must be maintained, with manual adjustments of air and burner made when necessary in order to maximise the recovery of ash. Advice should be sought from manufacturers/suppliers on the use of settings, and the age/weight/size of babies and infants where such settings should no longer be used.
  - 6.2 Cremation of infants and babies at the end of the day, and cooling the tray containing ashes outside of the cremator overnight is acceptable, provided a risk assessment is conducted. Cremation authorities are advised to refer to their manufacturer for operational information before leaving ashes to cool within the cremator overnight, as in many instances the automatic introduction of turbulent cooling air during the close down process could result in fragile ash being lost.
  - 6.3 The coffin and baby tray should be placed just inside the cremator at the charge door end. Where possible the coffin and baby tray should be in view throughout cremation, so the process can be monitored.

6.4 In order to maximise the recovery of ashes, any ash resulting from cremation of an infant or baby should be appropriately processed, but not using a standard, adult cremulator.

6.5 Where the above approaches are adopted it is expected that the recovery of ashes will be maximised.

6.6 Baby cremators are not considered necessary to maximise the recovery of ashes, provided the other approaches recommended above are followed. Cremation Authorities are however free to use baby cremators if they so wish.

### **Monitoring and Assurance**

7. Cremation Authorities will be expected to follow the above practices for all infant and baby cremations.

8. All necessary steps will be used to recover Ashes, but in the event that ashes are not recovered, the Inspector of Cremation will investigate the reasons.

9. No crematoria can conduct infant cremations unless crematoria staff have been specifically trained and certificated by either the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) or the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities (FBCA).

10. In addition, all crematoria must adhere to the requirements of SEPA permits, and all crematoria will be inspected by SEPA at regular intervals.

11. Professional guidance and training from professional membership bodies, including the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities (FBCA) and the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) reflects the above guidance.

12. The Inspector of Cremation will, in the course of inspections of crematoria, assess compliance against these above recommendations and requirements.

### **References**

*ICCM Crematorium Technicians Training Scheme information can be found at: <http://www.iccmuk.com/iccm/index.php?pagename=training>*

*ICCM Policy and Guidance on the Sensitive Disposal of Fetal Remains can be found at: <http://www.iccmuk.com/iccm/library/FetalRemainsPolicyNOV2014ReviewFINAL.pdf>*

*ICCM Baby & Infant Funerals Policy can be found at:*

*<http://www.iccm-uk.com/iccm/library/BabyandInfantFuneralsNovember%202014.pdf>*

*FBCA "TEST" Training and Examination Scheme for Crematorium Technicians, revised July 2015 – Available to*

*all current and future trainees registered under the FBCA training scheme.*

*FBCA "A Guide to Cremation and Crematoria" Instructions to Funeral Directors.*

*FBCA "A Guide to Cremation and Crematoria" Questions People Ask About Cremation.*

### **NHS Hospital Contracts**

Existing agreements with NHS trusts will continue to be honoured subject to them accepting in full the company's Infant Cremation Policy.

At this time we will not accept any new agreements/contracts.

### **Review of Policy**

This policy statement will be regularly revised by the Technical team to reflect both industry and legislative changes.

### **Operational Standards**

The policy document will also form part of any site audits

### **Contacts**

We understand that this is a highly sensitive subject and wish to reassure you that we are here to help, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time.

**George Bell - 07584 311778**

**Kevin Davies – 07825 550176**

**Jason King – 07973 970038**

**David Loudfoot - 07833 091570**

**Les Smith – 07968 769633**

**Alan Jose – 07881 106948**

### **Ownership of Document**

This document is specific to Westerleigh and is not to be copied to other Cremation Authorities unless approved in writing by the Tech Team.