



# Developing an Award Winning Service

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## Developing an Award Winning Service

- Introduction
- How do we:
  - Provide sensitive and financially efficient services
  - Manage our budgets in Bereavement Services
  - Innovate

# Introduction

- **Kettering** – 1 Crematorium, 8 Cemeteries, 9 closed churchyards  
Approx 2000 cremations and 180 burials per annum.



# Introduction

- The Team



# Introduction

- An Award Winning Service.....
- APSE Best Service Team of the Year 2017 Cemetery and Crematorium Service



- Runner up Good Funeral Awards 2017



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Income / LA cuts

-v-

External Threats

-v-

Funeral Poverty



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- The Team's aim is to find ways of reducing costs or generating income from sources other than the bereaved wherever possible to try to keep increases to a minimum.
- No increases 2015 – 2016, 2016-17 & 2017-18 – increase of 5% 2018 -19
- So what do we do?
- Firstly and most importantly.....

### The Team

- 6 “office” staff Public Services administration are able to handle basic calls if required.
- 2 gardeners maintain crematorium grounds and cemetery + do all burials in the Borough.
- Outlying cemeteries maintained by Environmental Care grounds maintenance teams during normal area maintenance programme
- We have an ethos of identifying improvements no matter how small.

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- Crematorium & Cemetery improvements

- Crematorium improvements 5 years ago – new crematory with new ATI cremators and abatement.
- One ceremony room was demolished and replaced with a larger more suitable facility.
- Crematorium heated from heat recovery.
- 40 % less gas used than pre improvements.
- Environment better for customers and workforce.
- Fixed maintenance price on cremators fee per cremation + RPI increase – 15 year agreement.
  
- Cemetery Extension provided 25 – 30 years more burial space. – Mausolea, Children's section, Large memorial section. Have another cemetery we can extend.



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- Cemetery maintenance

- Local Authority cemeteries

- Previous ERB offer 40 / 60 / 80 years - moved to only 99 year ERB at 80 year price - No impact on numbers + reduced administration
    - Community Payback do litter picking and some general housekeeping in cemetery
    - Burial income covers cost of cemetery maintenance.

- Closed churchyards – listed and/or conservation areas = expensive

- Closed churchyards – maintenance inspection programme and repair works to prevent deterioration and reduce costs.
    - Capital programme works to deal with major issues. Closed churchyards – listed and/or conservation area = v. expensive.



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- Other offers

- U18 cremations free
- Pre paid cremations – allows preplanning to take place at known costs. Opens up a considerably larger market. Found to be extremely beneficial to independent funeral directors. Number in first year 70.
- Cemetery extension allowed space for self funding mausolea and a 6 chamber childrens vault, all designed in house.



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- Other offers (cont.)

- Removing Hopcrafts (slowly)



- Hopcraft memorials – no manufacturer support, falling apart, poor quality. Gardens look a mess.
    - Move customers away at end of lease. Leaseholders difficult to track down – signs in memorial garden, remove and store for one year in hope of encouraging contact.
    - Options – Customer takes away plaque or has new planter plaque or Sanctum memorial with same lease period and no extra cost to Hopcraft renewal – covers Authority’s cost for memorial.
    - Slowly clearing garden to allow new, varied, better quality memorial provision with range of prices.

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and Roses on leases!



- Roses removed at end of lease period (although some in perpetuity!).
- Tag returned to leaseholder. Replacements provided for any missing tags.
- Moving to garden memorials with Authority managing planting.



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Changes led to a rebranding exercise:



- New signage, website, correspondence, etc.

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### Weddings!

For the payment of £1500 (in Northamptonshire) you can get a wedding premises licence for 3 years.

All of the facilities required are already on site so there do not have to be any additional costs – quality room with sound system, free car parking, nice gardens for photographs.

No impact on funerals – weekends only.

Cost of licence all that needs to be covered. Staffing costs only incurred when there is a wedding so paid for from wedding income.

Any income supports other bereavement services income hopefully relieving pressure on price increases.



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That's where we are so far...  
**THANK YOU FOR LISTENING**



**ANY QUESTIONS?**