



## **CONSUMERS ARE DRIVING PROFOUND CHANGE IN THE FUNERAL LANDSCAPE**

### **Change in tastes and rise in costs driving change says Pure Cremation**

More UK families are taking control of their departure events, representing the biggest shift in funeral customs for two centuries.

They're planning simple and inexpensive cremations followed by a really personal "celebration of life" as costs rise and tastes change, according to one of the UK's leading provider of simple, unattended cremations.

Pure Cremation, the only UK dedicated direct cremation provider to have its own crematorium, reported a 50 per cent surge in enquiries last year from families seeking a no-frills option and the sales of their simple cremation-only plan have doubled.

Awareness of direct cremations – simple respectful cremations with no mourners present, after which the ashes are returned to grieving families – is growing steadily in the UK.

As well as being considerably cheaper than the average conventional funeral, direct cremations allow families the freedom to arrange their own farewell events that better reflect the lives of a loved one, at a time and place to suit mourners.

The recent Sun Life Cost of Dying Report revealed that nearly half of people questioned were unaware that the option of a direct cremation even existed – yet many were enthusiastic once they were enlightened.

Having heard what a direct cremation entailed, 42 per cent said they would consider it for themselves. More than one in eight – 13 per cent – made it their positive choice, a finding Sun Life described as "significant" in light of the fact that only three per cent of the services held last year were classified as direct cremations.

Catherine Powell, Customer Experience Director of Pure Cremation, said: "There is definitely a shift in how people want to say goodbye – they are moving away from the constraints of traditional services that are often formal and sometimes very expensive.

“There is a universal desire to pay proper tribute to the person who has died and a simple, transparently-priced direct cremation, combined with the more upbeat, personal, celebrations of life meet that need.

“Celebrations of life can vary immensely, from gatherings that are similar to a traditional wake, to a champagne lunch, or a picnic at a well-loved beauty spot which could only be reached by kayak. The possibilities are endless!

“Direct cremations allow families to mark the passing of their loved ones in their own time, in their own way, often in a place that holds very dear memories.

“They can also avoid financial stress by tailoring the whole farewell to their budget. Too many people get into debt when they arrange a traditional funeral because they don’t anticipate how much all the extras will cost.

“The most recent CMA report update (Jan 30<sup>th</sup> 2020) specifically highlights the fact that most people make funeral arrangements without any getting price information in advance, and few are asked what they can actually afford.”

In the past decade the average cost of dying – including the funeral, the wake and sorting out the deceased’s estate – rose by 62 per cent to £9,493 last year, according to the Sun Life Cost of Dying report.

Funeral costs rose faster than wages, inflation, house prices or energy costs.

The average funeral service costs £4,417 last year, with basic burials averaging £4,975 and cremations £3,858. That doesn’t include the send-off or wake, which averaged £2,306. Professional services such as lawyers’ fees added another £2,771 on average.

Catherine co-founded Pure Cremation with funeral director husband Bryan in response to demand for simple services with transparent pricing. Pure Cremation offers the same affordable package, from £1,195 across the UK.

The company takes care of the deceased, arranges a respectful cremation, and hand-delivers the ashes afterwards or, alternatively, families can choose to scatter the ashes at Pure Cremation’s Charlton Park Crematorium near Andover, Hampshire.

The Sun Life report states: “This straightforward send-off is building in popularity year on year – probably because there’s no need for extra expenses like hearses and limos, embalming, officiant’s fees, flowers and orders of service.”

But Pure Cremation believes that the growth in demand for this style of service is down to more profound and human factors - a desire to truly celebrate what made someone special, and this will change the funeral landscape forever.

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