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The All-Party Parliamentary Group for **Funerals and Bereavement**



Foreword



Sir John Hayes
Conservative MP for South Holland
and The Deepings

Now more than ever it is important that those who have lost a loved one are provided with the highest level of care and that staff working in the funeral and death care sector are provided with adequate protection and support.

Through my role as Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Funerals and Bereavement, I have gained an important insight into the lives and work of those who shoulder the burden of death each and every working day. It is also important to recognise the breadth of this sector, encompassing as it does not just clergy, celebrants and funeral directors, but also morticians, crematorium and cemetery staff, funeral furnishing manufacturers and bereavement counsellors.

The sector contributes around £1 billion to the UK economy and supports thousands of jobs across the UK. Every constituency in the UK will have people employed in the sector living and working within it. It is therefore necessary that it is fully recognised for its efforts and the challenges it faces, all year round and not just during this incredibly difficult time.

These professional staff have ensured that funeral services have remained as bespoke as possible despite the restrictions on numbers of mourners; ensuring that services can be livestreamed for friends and family who are unable to attend in person. These same staff are in some cases exhausted and saddened by what they have witnessed. We will make sure their mental wellbeing is not forgotten in the months ahead as the country recovers and rebuilds from the pandemic. This group is their voice within the corridors of power at Westminster.

It is important for the All-Party Parliamentary Group to recognise all those who have worked around the clock throughout the pandemic, to provide their services whilst also ensuring the safety of staff and mourners. Many of these individuals have gone to extraordinary lengths to support bereaved families and to ensure that funerals, burials and cremations can take place in accordance with the Covid-19 restrictions. We should also acknowledge the important role that cemeteries and crematoria play in our municipal life, often providing a peaceful and green place for residents to enjoy.

I am therefore proud of the work of the APPG in campaigning for all funeral sector staff, including those working in cemeteries and crematoria, to be prioritised in the vaccination rollout and provided with necessary personal protective equipment. The APPG is also leading the call for closer cross-governmental working on issues which affect the sector, but which have traditionally fallen to a number of different Government departments to respond to.

The APPG is central to ensuring that the brightest and best individuals can join the sector and receive the right training and support as they progress in their careers. It is also crucial that the sector that provides a service for every part of society is also fully representative itself.

With care and courtesy, those that officiate, organise and administer funerals and who provide comfort to the bereaved, have been there for us throughout the pandemic and I am determined that the APPG will be there for them as their collective voice in parliament. It will also seek to correct any misconceptions about this critical sector, to raise awareness within parliament of its important societal role and to ensure standards are raised across the country for all with an interest in the funeral and bereavement sector.

I hope you will consider joining the APPG and supporting it in its efforts to represent the views of every part of the funeral and death care sector in the months and years ahead.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Hayes', written in a cursive style.

About The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Funerals and Bereavement

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Funerals and Bereavement brings together all those involved in funerals, burials, and cremation to discuss the approach to the many challenging issues which face the sector. Our aim is to provide a first port of call for anyone looking for advice, information, or assistance from any representative organisation of this vital sector.

You will be able to find information on the Parliamentary Officers of the APPG, members of the Deceased Management Advisory Group who make up the associate members of the APPG, our research, briefings and latest news, minutes of previous meetings of the APPG and information on upcoming meetings, and details to contact us on.

We will all need the support of the funeral sector at some point in our lives. The aim and objective of the APPG is to provide the support for those who need our services, create a better understanding of what we do and how we do it, and ensure a better understanding of the key issues and challenges that face different parts of the sector.

Moving forward the APPG will be reaching out to government, Parliamentarians, and the public with a view to raising greater awareness of these challenges, and providing support, information, and solutions in order to address them.

Do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like to know more about the work of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Funerals and Bereavement.



Aims and Objectives

Members of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Funerals and Bereavement are made up of Parliamentarians from across the political spectrum and the members of the Deceased Management Advisory Group (DMAG) which is the result of – The Association of Private Crematoria and Cemeteries (APCC), Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities (FBCA), Funeral Furnishing Manufacturers' Association (FFMA), Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM), National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD), National Society of Allied & Independent Funeral Directors (SAIF) and The Cremation Society – coming together to develop a consensus approach to the many challenging issues which now face the sector.

Our focus is on raising the issues and helping to address the challenges our sector faces with some of our key stakeholders – such as Government, Parliamentarians as well as the general public. Our focus and message to each of these key audiences is:

Government

Fair and Proportionate Regulations – We are campaigning on behalf of the sector for fair regulations and suitable legislative change.

Learning from Covid-19 – Understanding the impact of decisions made during the pandemic to raise standards.

Mental Health Support – Safeguarding the mental wellbeing of employees and the bereaved.

Parliamentarians

Sector Recognition – Greater understanding and wider championing of the funeral sector and its employees.

Correcting the Misconceptions of our Sector – Promoting better understanding of the processes involved across the sector.

Raising Standards – Improving local services at local levels.

A Greener Sector – Showcasing our commitment to the green agenda and making our sector greener.

Public

A Resource for Consumers – Raising confidence in a process which supports the bereaved and offering reliable, impartial information.

Local Relevance – Encouraging communities to understand better and embrace their local cemeteries and their history.

The APPG and its members look forward to making progress on these issues, and many others, in the weeks and months to come.



The Deceased Management Advisory Group

The bereavement sector is represented by a number of organisations, including funeral directors and those who manage, provide and work in cemeteries and crematoria as well as those who manufacture and provide essential services to the sector. There has always been a great deal of mutual support and cooperation between all the kindred organisations.

In view of the current extraordinary circumstances in which our communities and individuals now find themselves, the organisations have agreed to work together in order to be able to better support not only their members but society as a whole.

The Deceased Management Advisory Group (DMAG) representatives from each of the following organisations will work together to develop a consensus approach to the many challenging issues now facing the sector.

The Association of Private Crematoria and Cemeteries (APCC)



The Association can trace its origins back to 1924 but its primary objective remains very much the same, almost a century later namely, to fully represent and promote the interests of the owners and operators of privately owned and operated crematoria and cemeteries who now make up over 35% of the Cremation Sector.

Some 96 new crematoria have been opened in the United Kingdom and the republic of Ireland since 1985, just under 90% of which were developed by and are now operated by private organisations. A prime objective has always been and still is, to review the prime issues facing the Death Care Sector at any one time and progress them in members' interests. Increasingly, much time is spent interfacing with government ministries, departments and their associated agencies.

The Association has an honorary Chairman and Vice Chairman and a paid part-time Secretary and Treasurer. An Annual General Meeting is held in normal circumstances together with members' meetings as required. The Association is also represented, usually by the Secretary, on key government committees for the sector such as the Burial and Cremation Advisory Group (BCAG) and the National Cremation Working Group (NCWG).

There is a website www.apcandc.co.uk/index.php/about-us, which is currently being revised and updated. Also, there is a Metal Re-cycling scheme which has been running for some 9 years and is operated in conjunction with a metals re-cycling company based in Holland. The scheme raised over £0.9m for members' nominated charities in the 2020 Calendar Year.

Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities (FBCA)



The Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities is the UK's principal representative of burial and cremation authorities and provides a range of services to support its members across the country care for over 370,000 funerals a year.

The FBCA represents approximately 85% of all cremation authorities in the UK. Membership is open to all burial and cremation authorities and is the only organisation dedicated to representing and furthering the interests of burial and cremation authorities, remaining answerable only to its member authorities.

It represents its members at the highest level and is regularly consulted by Government departments on regulatory issues and has considerable influence with these departments.

The Code of Cremation, which members are required to follow, has been regularly updated since its introduction in 1945. Members are also subject to inspections as part of the Crematorium Compliance Scheme.

The FBCA has an Executive Committee, with up to 18 elected members. It also has experienced Technical Officers to advise on construction, design and operation of crematoria, and general issues.

In Scotland, the Scottish Sub-Committee was established to deal with matters specifically relating to the promotion of the cremation movement in Scotland and Scottish law.

The Funeral Furnishing Manufacturers' Association (FFMA)



The Funeral Furnishing Manufacturers' Association represents 70 businesses across the UK involved in the manufacture of coffins, caskets, refrigeration and manual handling equipment to the funeral profession.

Created in 1939, its aim is to safeguard and improve the traditional high standards of products and services that our members provide.

The FFMA has an important role within the sector, including an active dialogue with government departments on the many technical issues that affect the industry. Over the years, the involvement of the FFMA in various contentious issues has ensured continuation of supplies to the funeral trade.

In recent years, the organisation has developed a rigorous testing protocol, resulting in the Coffin and Casket Certification scheme, which provides reassurance that coffins are fit for purpose. At present this is a voluntary scheme. The FFMA would like to see this become a Government backed scheme with all Crematoria supporting.

The scheme was achieved through comprehensive meetings with fellow DMAG members, Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities, Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management, Association of Private Crematoria and Cemeteries & the support of the Cremation Society of Great Britain.

www.ffma.co.uk

The Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM)



The Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management aims to promote the

development, advancement and welfare of its members to facilitate the better provision, operation, administration and management of cemeteries, crematoria and bereavement-related services.

It was originally founded in 1913 as the United Kingdom Association of Cemetery Superintendents.

The ICCM has both professional members, who are those employed in cemeteries, crematoria and ancillary services, and corporate members, who are the authorities and companies that provide burial and cremation facilities and services. It provides fully accredited education and training opportunities for cemetery and crematorium staff, including the bespoke Cemetery Operatives Training Scheme (COTS) and the Crematorium Technicians Training Scheme (CTTS).

In 1996, the ICCM launched the Charter for the Bereaved, which sets a benchmark for service delivery in cemeteries and crematoria throughout the UK. It also provides guidance and best practice covering a range of subjects across bereavement services, especially relating to social and environmental initiatives. An annual Learning Convention and Exhibition, plus branch meetings and events, provide opportunities for members to meet, learn and share their knowledge.

The ICCM is governed by an elected Board of Directors. It has six full-time officers and a team of accredited consultants who provide training, guidance, management cover, undertake consultancies and develop best practice policies and member services.

www.iccm-uk.com

The National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD)



The National Association of Funeral Directors is the largest representative body for the UK funeral sector. It supports its members in arranging meaningful funerals and caring for bereaved people, providing advice, advocacy and support.

Established in 1905, the NAFD represents more than 4,100 UK funeral homes, covering the entire spectrum of the

funeral directing businesses – including independent businesses, corporate businesses and major funeral groups – which, between them, conduct around 80% of all UK funerals.

The NAFD demands high professional standards and members are assessed against strict criteria. All members must abide by The Funeral Director Code and are subject to regular inspections. There is also access provided to a free independent complaints and conciliation service.

A founder member of the Deceased Management Advisory Group, the NAFD advises government on issues relating to funeral service and campaigns on issues that support funeral directors in operating to high standards. It also provides online resources to help bereaved people find out about the services and prices of their local funeral directors, as well as professional education, qualifications and training to support the professional development of the sector.

The Association also hosts the National Funeral Exhibition, one of the world's largest events for the funeral sector.

www.nafd.org.uk

The National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors (SAIF)



The National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors is the largest trade association solely dedicated to representing the interests of independently-run funeral directors and their clients.

Established in 1989, the Association has more than 1,000 funeral homes in membership across the UK. SAIF also represents suppliers to the profession, ranging from coffin manufacturers and clothing businesses to mortuary equipment and vehicle firms.

Independent funeral businesses, which conduct around 70% of funerals in the UK, differ from large chains in that they are not beholden to shareholders. They vary from sole traders arranging just 20 funerals a year to multi-chain operations delivering thousands of funerals.

SAIF's main areas of work centre around: raising standards through the SAIF Quality Assurance Programme and member Code of Practice; helping more funeral directors attain recognised qualifications from the Independent Funeral Directors' College; and promoting wellbeing amongst funeral directors and

their clients via initiatives such as SAIF Support and SAIF Care.

The Association supports the regulation of the funeral profession and online price transparency, and is committed to working with government and policymakers across the UK.

SAIF Scotland is represented on the National Executive Committee, as well as having its own Executive Committee with officers, Quality Assurance Programme and government liaison for Holyrood Parliament.

The Cremation Society



The Cremation Society is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, established in 1874 and recognised as the pioneer of cremation in Great Britain. Since its formation, the Society has been committed to promoting the practice of cremation, resulting in approximately 78% of funerals across the British Islands now being by cremation.

The Cremation Society gathers cremation statistics from across the world and is the principal repository of cremation data, publishing its data in 'Pharos International' – the official journal of The Cremation Society and the International Cremation Federation. This data is used regularly by Government departments and other organisations involved in the development of crematoria and associated practices.

The Society was responsible for creating the original forms of certification for cremation and continues to work with Government departments and other organisations, in the development of best practice in cremation from ethical, environmental, legislative and practical perspectives.

The Society's other on-going activities include hosting educational events and conferences covering topical issues relevant to the crematorium sector; the publication of the annual Directory of Crematoria, which provides essential information to the bereavement sector; and the continued investigation into alternative methods of dignified disposal of the dead which may prove superior to cremation.

Officers



Sir John Hayes is the Conservative MP for South Holland and The Deepings, first elected in 1997. Prior to his election, he trained as a teacher before moving into business as a management consultant. Sir John held numerous frontbench roles whilst the Conservatives were in Opposition under Sir Iain Duncan Smith MP. He also served in the Coalition Government under Sir Vince Cable at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and then under Sir Ed Davey MP at The Department of Energy and Climate Change. Sir John continued to hold ministerial positions in Theresa May's Government, as Minister of State at the Department for Transport. He left this role in early 2018 and was knighted later that year.



Dame Diana Johnson | A former barrister, councillor and member of the London Assembly, Dame Diana Johnson is the Labour MP for Kingston Upon Hull North. Since her first election into Parliament in 2005, Dame Diana has served the Party both in and out of Government. She was PPS to Stephen Timms MP before she held her own position as Assistant Government Whip and as a junior Education minister. Later, in opposition, Dame Diana held frontbench roles in the Shadow Home Office, Shadow Foreign Office and Shadow Health teams.



Rosie Cooper joined the Labour Party in 2000 and stood for election to the European Parliament four years later. The following year she was elected as the MP for West Lancashire. She has been active in many Select Committees which she has been a member of during her time in Parliament. She first sat on the European Scrutiny Committee in 2005 and is currently on the Health and Social Care Committee which she has been a member of since 2016.



Gavin Robinson | A Democratic Unionist Party MP, Gavin Robinson is currently the Party's Spokesperson for Defence and Home Affairs, representing the people of Belfast East. Before becoming an MP, he qualified as a lawyer from Queen's University Belfast and worked as barrister from 2007 – 2011. After this, Gavin was appointed special adviser to the First Minister. He has been an elected Member of Parliament since 2015.



Sir David Amess is the Conservative MP for Southend West and has been an elected representative since 1983. In his time in the House of Commons, Sir David has been PPS to both Edwina Currie and Michael Portillo, whom he supported for some nine years. He has been a candidate for Deputy Speaker on several occasions. Prior to his election, Sir David taught at a school in London before moving to a career in accountancy and consultancy. He was knighted in 2014.



Mark Pawsey | The Conservative MP for Rugby, Mark Pawsey has been a Member of Parliament since 2010. He was formerly a PPS in the Department for Defence, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and finally the Department for Work and Pensions. He currently sits on the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Select Committee and Chairs a number of APPGs.



Robert Goodwill is the Conservative MP for Scarborough and Whitby. Since his election in 2005, Robert has held many roles in both opposition and Government. He began as an Opposition Whip in 2006 returning to this role as a Government Whip in the 2010 Coalition Government. Since then he has moved to the Department for Education, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Home Office. After he finished university, he returned to the family farm at Malton which his family has run since the 1850s. He is also managing director of a cemetery company providing "green" burials in woodland on the farm.



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