

For information only. Parts of this correspondence will have changed since its issue.

Dear Funeral Directors/Arrangers,

This is Covid-19 update number 11. The last update was 12 May 2021.

Relaxation of restrictions from 19 July 2021

With the government removing social distancing legislation and other easing of restrictions from Monday 19 July I am pleased to provide an update which will start to provide more of the service that we were accustomed to prior to the pandemic.

It is important to remember that the pandemic is still here and will be part of our lives for the foreseeable future and that the key point here is the messaging that people 'need to continue to act carefully and remain cautious'.

Putney Vale Crematorium

Due to the ongoing works at the crematorium, East chapel will remain closed until further notice. During the electrical works large areas of damp have been identified and will have to be rectified before we can open to the bereaved. At this stage we do not have a timeline, but I am hopeful that we will be able to open fully in a couple of months.

From Monday 19th July

- Chapel capacity will be set at 80 allowing for full seating and some standing – this is a new cap based on a risk assessed approach to the size of the chapels. This will allow for better staff access in emergencies or where there are issues such as with the AV systems, help to control room temperature by limiting the number of people in the facility and enhance the customer experience ensuring views are not obstructed by excessive numbers of mourners standing in the aisles.
- Once East chapel opens the same will apply but we will have the facility for a service in either chapel to be viewed in the other for the overflow of mourners. A small fee will be charged for this facility.
- The wearing of facemasks will be 'strongly recommended' as the legislation for the mandatory wearing of facemasks is removed. Please advise your families to encourage the wearing of facemasks to limit the spread of the virus.
- NHS track and trace QR notices will remain at entrances.
- Hand sanitiser stations will remain in place.
- Hygiene cleaning will continue with regular cleaning of the chapel/pews throughout the day.
- Singing/professional performance is now permitted but discussions with families should continue to take place as to how safe this is for their family and friends.
- Hymn books will not be replaced for the time being but the words to most hymns can be displayed on the screens and we continue to advise on the use of order of services.
- We regret that due to the electrical works we are still unable to offer witness charging. As soon as the crematory has been completed witness charging will resume with some limitations in place.
- The waiting room will remain closed until further notice. This room is not suitable for use at this time.

- The vestry will remain closed until further notice due the building upgrades. Please advise ministers/celebrants accordingly.
- Our staff will continue to wear face coverings whilst carrying out chapel duties. Please also respect social distancing upon their instruction to do so.
- Access for the collection of cremated remains continues to be from the yard at the rear of the crematorium.

Changes for cemeteries

- Wandsworth chapel will remain closed in the short term. We are working to ensure that we can safely staff this small chapel. Once re-opened there will be a risk-based cap on the number of mourners permitted.
- We are also working on reintroducing weekend burials. We will let you know when these will be available.
- Backfilling of graves by mourners will resume but will be managed to allow the contractor to perform their duties safely. This will include a limit on the number of mourners permitted to backfill at any one time.

Office/Reception

Only staff are permitted in the administration office and funeral director/staff are only permitted in reception. Please be reminded that we no longer need paper copies of cremation/interment paperwork as these should be being sent electronically.

Reception is open to the public during normal advertised office hours.

Thank you for your continued support. If you have any questions on the above, please contact the office or reply to me via email.

Kind regards,

Kelvin.