National Association of Funeral Directors

Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Bill

Established in 1905, the NAFD represents the interests of the entire spectrum of funeral directing businesses – including independent businesses, the Co-operative and major funeral groups – who conduct in excess of 80% of UK funerals every year. Independent and inclusive, the NAFD is the largest trade association for the funeral sector with 3,800 funeral homes represented as well as hundreds of suppliers to the sector and international funeral firms.

The NAFD is committed to working with the Scottish Government, the Scottish Parliament, local authorities and the NHS to raise standards in our profession and ensure the highest levels of service to the bereaved that we serve. In particular, the NAFD has been represented on the following groups:

- Infant Cremation Commission
- Scottish Working Group on Funeral Poverty
- Pan Lothian Bereavement Group
- Local Health Authority Forums
- Death Certification Funeral Industry Subgroup
- Death Certification NHS Local Implementation Groups
- National Advisory Group for Death Certification
- The Cross Party Group for Funerals and Bereavement

The NAFD also worked with the Scottish Government to host a series of roadshows throughout Scotland to promote the recent death certification changes.

The Association ensures that its members set the highest standards of customer care in the industry through a robust Code of Practice, Code of Professional Standards and independent arbitration service. The NAFD Code of Practice sets out the high standard of service that bereaved families may expect in their dealings with a funeral firm member of the NAFD, including key requirements in respect of price information, estimates, final accounts and marketing. The Code of Practice is strictly monitored by a team of Standards and Quality Managers to ensure compliance.

The Funeral Arbitration Scheme is an independent conciliation and arbitration scheme designed to resolve complaints from clients relating to NAFD member funeral firms. As a condition of membership of the NAFD, funeral firms are not only bound by the terms of the Association’s Code of Practice, but are also required to comply with a client’s wishes to proceed to conciliation or arbitration under the Scheme and to abide by its rulings.

The NAFD agrees with the Scottish Government’s policy objective that new legislation is required to provide a modern and comprehensive legal framework for burial and cremation in Scotland. The fees of funeral directors
are ultimately paid for by the bereaved so any new regulations must be carefully scrutinised to avoid any unnecessary costs. The current legislative position is confusing and outdated. It's hard to know all of the legislation that covers each of these areas as it is spread across so many different pieces of legislation. The legislation that does exist has been amended many times making it hard to follow. Moreover, any new legislation needs to allow for new technologies to be utilised in the future without the need to amend the legislation. For example, alternative methods of cremation including Resomation, Promession and Cryomation.

Overall, we look forward to working with the Scottish Government, the Scottish Parliament, the NHS and local authorities to maintain the very highest levels of standards for the bereaved.

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