

Motion to Flintshire County Council Climate Change Committee: Columbaria in Flintshire County Council managed cemeteries

Flintshire County Council Climate Change Committee notes:

1. that local authorities across the United Kingdom are facing challenges with limited burial space, with the shortage of burial space in Wales being described as reaching 'crisis point'¹
2. that Flintshire County Council has itself faced issues in relation to limited burial space, with Flintshire previously having been described as having an 'unusually high' number of people who opt for traditional burials, placing significant pressure on local authority cemeteries²
3. that UK trends show an increase in demand for cremation and a reduction in demand for traditional burial, with up to three-quarters of Britons now choosing cremation over burial³
4. that both burial and cremation have a significant detrimental impact on the environment
5. that Flintshire County Council currently offers traditional burials, cremation and natural woodland and meadowland burials
6. that a number of local authorities and community councils across the UK offer columbaria as an option for the deceased

Flintshire County Council Climate Change Committee believes:

1. that Flintshire County Council must explore options to tackle the problem of reducing burial space across the County
2. that Flintshire County Council should be adequately prepared for an increase in demand for cremation of deceased remains and their associated storage
3. that columbaria* offer a more efficient form of storage for human remains than traditional burial and cremated remains burials as they are relatively small in size (per individual) and above ground meaning cemetery space can be better utilised and diversified
4. that residents of Flintshire should be able to access as wider-range of bereavement options as possible
5. that the offering of columbaria would assist the authority in solving the problems caused by a lack of space for traditional burials and could reduce the necessity of purchasing and using more land for cemetery space, which has a significantly detrimental impact on the environment
6. that columbaria are a versatile option which can be situated on areas of land which may not have suitable ground for traditional burials

Flintshire County Council Climate Change Committee resolves:

1. to recommend to Cabinet and the Environment & Economy Scrutiny Committee that Flintshire County Council offer columbaria as an option for residents as part of its suite of bereavement and burial services

¹ [Wales' burial space running out, warns Church - BBC News](#)

² [Flintshire bucks the national trend for more burials - BBC News](#)

³ [A greener way to go: what's the most eco-friendly way to dispose of a body? | Death and dying | The Guardian](#)

2. to recommend to Cabinet and the Environment & Economy Scrutiny Committee that Flintshire County Council explores the viability of offering other environmentally-friendly burial options, such as resomation**, in the longer term

* a columbarium is an above ground piece of funerary architecture which is made up of individual chambers which house cremated remains

** resomation is sometimes referred to as 'water cremation' or alkaline hydrolysis. It involves the use of water and alkali at high temperatures and pressure to chemically reduce the body to liquid and white ash. The resulting ash is returned to relatives as is the process for flame cremation. The excess fluid created during the process can then be used as fertiliser because of the high nutrient content.