



westerleigh
GROUP

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Energy use and Climate Change

We will encourage the efficient use of energy and the use of renewable energy where cost effective.

We will do this by:

1. Implementing the “Energy code” to ensure that energy efficiency improvements for new and existing Westerleigh Group buildings and plant are properly considered at the brief, specification and design stages.
2. To meet Best Practice Energy Usage Benchmarks to develop cost effective energy usage.
3. Purchasing energy from renewable sources, where feasible and cost effective.
4. Monitoring energy consumption at Westerleigh Group buildings to save energy, such as IT equipment and heating.

Our key targets are:

1. To reduce our fuel consumption
2. To improve the energy efficiency of our premises
3. To investigate renewable energy sources and utilise where possible.

Water Consumption

We will reduce the amount of water used by the Company and work with visitors to our sites to encourage water conservation

We will do this by:

1. Monitoring our use of metered water.
2. Investigate a programme of water saving measures such as waterless urinals, push taps and tap restrictors.
3. Where possible provide visitors to our sites with water butts to capture rain water for the irrigation of plants and flowers left in remembrance.
4. Investigate the re-use of water on sites.

Our key target is:

To reduce the amount of water consumed on our premises.

Transport

We will reduce the impact of our transport on the environment whilst maintaining an acceptable level of accessibility

We will do this by:

1. Adopting policies to reduce the travelling carried out by our staff.
2. Purchasing fuel efficient vehicles and motorised equipment.
3. Developing a car sharing scheme for all staff travelling into work.
4. Ensuring that best practices are achieved in the operation of motorised garden equipment.
5. Offering incentives for staff to cycle to work.

Our Key targets are:

1. Reduce the amount of travelling during business hours by our staff.
2. Reduce our fuel costs and usage.

Purchasing and use of Materials

We will reduce the environmental effects caused by the purchasing and use of materials by the Company and its contractors.

We will do this by:

1. Developing an internal waste minimalisation and recycling action plan.
 - a) Recycling of waste paper at all sites
 - b) Recycling flowers and floral tributes left at the sites.
 - c) Composting garden waste
 - d) Recycling old and redundant computer systems

2. Developing a sustainable procurement strategy to ensure that where possible supplies are purchased from renewable sources.

3. Ensure that our contractors are using best practice techniques when supplying materials.

Our Key targets are:

1. Develop recycling plans
2. Develop strategy for best practice techniques when purchasing

Waste Management

We will encourage waste minimisation, composting, re-use, recycling and Energy from waste and reduce the amount of waste removed from site.

We will do this by:

1. Promoting waste minimisation, re-use, recycling and composting schemes.

Our key target is:

To reduce the amount of waste removed from our sites to landfill.

Air Quality

We will improve air quality

We will do this by:

1. Ensuring our cremators are up to date serviced regularly and meet all current pollution control legislation.
2. Investigate techniques to improve the emissions to air generated by our crematoria.
3. Install abatement equipment where feasible
4. Ensure that all of our vehicles are well maintained and meet all current pollution control legislation
5. Ensure that all staff monitor and review the emissions to air caused during their working day.

Our key target is:

To ensure that the level of emissions generated by our company are reduced

Noise

We will prevent and control noise nuisances

We will do this by:

1. Ensuring that our plant and equipment is well maintained and used correctly.
2. Ensuring staff are well trained and are sympathetic to our neighbours.

Our key target is:

To reduce noise generated by our equipment and staff.

Ecology and trees

We will maintain and develop areas within our gardens to conserve biodiversity and encourage the growth of native species

We will do this by:

1. Implementing planting schemes using native species
2. Plant trees at all sites.
3. Ensure a structured approach to planning and designing gardens of remembrance to provide for native species, wildlife and the wishes of visitors to the grounds.
4. encourage habitats for wildlife
5. Reduce the amount of pesticides used
6. Maintain good horticultural practice.

Our Key targets are:

1. Plant trees at all sites
2. Ensure that wildlife is protected on our sites
3. Protection of plants and trees at all sites.

Sustainable development and the built environment

We will ensure that all developments and construction carried out by the Company are sensitive to the local environment and adhere to our Environmental Policy

We will do this by:

1. Ensuring that best techniques are used in the construction of our buildings.
2. Ensure that most modern insulation and energy efficient methods are used during the design and build of our new crematoria.
3. Ensuring that hard surfaces are kept to a minimum
4. Ensuring that drainage schemes are designed with the local needs in mind.
5. Selecting sites for new builds to reduce the travelling of mourners and visitors.

Our key targets are:

1. Investigate areas of the UK where mourners travel considerable distances for cremation and burial.
2. Investigate new techniques for building
3. Investigate new materials used in the construction of crematoria.

Publicity and participation

We will encourage active participation by staff and users of our sites in the reduction of pollution and waste generated at our sites.

We will do this by:

1. Increasing awareness of environmental issues.
2. Participating in recycling schemes appropriate to our industry.
3. Supporting local initiatives to reduce waste and pollution
4. Working closely with cremator manufacturers to reduce the emissions to air generated by our equipment.
5. Promote the efficient use of energy and the reduction of waste to our staff.

Our Key target is:

Increase awareness and change behaviour through participation, support and example

Principles of action

The following principles set out ways in which Westerleigh Group Ltd intends to deal with environmental issues.

Our environmental management practices will include:

- Seeking continual improvement of our environmental performance
- Ensuring that our environmental standards are upheld by those working for us and those supplying materials to us
- Assessing all new policies, activities and practices for their effects on the environment.
- Ensuring that we respond promptly and take full account of environmental concerns expressed by members of the public
- Ensuring that staff, suppliers, contractors and other user groups are aware of their responsibilities under this environmental policy.

Environmental impacts of funerals

Coffins

There are two ways in which the use of coffins can have an impact on our environment.

Firstly the impact of the manufacturing process and secondly the impacts associated with the burial or cremation of the coffin. In particular, solvents, glues and finishes have the potential to cause a negative impact.

From an environmental point of view it is important to consider not only the material used to make the coffin, but also the energy use and pollution of the manufacturing process. Improved legislation in recent years has resulted in a significant reduction in the environmental impacts of coffins manufactured and sold in the UK.

A wide range of coffins is now available, either through Funeral Directors or directly from the suppliers. These include:

- Wooden coffins
- Cardboard coffins
- Woven willow coffins
- Papier-mâché coffins
- Bamboo coffins

Westerleigh Group Ltd do not discriminate against the use of alternative coffins and accept funeral services not only from Funeral Directors but also family arranged services carried out by members of the bereaved family. Further details and information can be obtained from The Natural Death Centre.

Embalming

Questions are sometimes raised over the environmental impact of embalming. This is a process of preserving a body between the time of death and the funeral. For relatives who intend to view the deceased during this period, embalming may bring comfort and longer term psychological benefits.

Embalming involves the injection of formaldehyde (or similar) into the blood vessels of the body. The blood and other body fluids are drained. The embalming fluid contains dyes which are intended to recreate natural colour.

There is conflicting advice as to whether embalming has any significant negative long term impacts on the environment. The main concern is the potential impact of the fluid on the soil following burial.

Which is greener? Burial v Cremation

Burial

In some parts of the UK there is a crisis facing those providing burial services in terms of the land use. Burial space is dwindling in existing cemeteries and it is becoming increasingly difficult to find suitable new burial sites especially within urban areas where the demand for housing and commercial property is greater. Within the more rural areas planning restrictions often play a part in securing a suitable burial site.

Westerleigh Group have several cemeteries, ranging from the traditional Victorian style cemetery to more modern facilities such as woodland or natural burial areas. Within a traditional cemetery, graves are often marked by stone memorials and are literally small cities containing notable local people. Within a woodland burial area, the graves are marked with trees or shrubs and are often left to meadow to create a more natural setting. The efficient use of land is greatly reduced in woodland areas as often the graves will only contain interments for one coffin whilst traditional cemeteries often have up to 4 coffins buried within the same grave.

Westerleigh plans to open two further cemeteries within 2006 offering both traditional and woodland plots. These woodland plots will allow for more than one coffin to be buried within the grave, subject to the agreement of the deceased family.

The other potential impact is the use of traditional coffins and embalming techniques which can cause soil pollution which eventually reach their way into the water course.

Cremation

Air Pollution

Crematoria are subject to strict rules to ensure that air pollution is minimal. The cremators used in the United Kingdom are the amongst the most advanced in the World, with European standards being the highest to be achieved. In order for a crematorium to become operational, a permit needs to be obtained from the local Environmental Health Officer. This entails a rigorous process detailing the exact emissions and the process for testing and monitoring. Once obtained the permit is subject to scrutiny over the life of the crematorium with regular inspections (planned and unplanned) by the EHO to ensure that the cremators are performing as detailed in the permit.

The cremators themselves are controlled largely by computers which will not allow a cremation to take place unless certain temperatures are achieved (to ensure the most efficient combustion) and notify the cremator technician of potential breaches. These cannot be overruled. After the cremation has taken place the computer produces a report detailing the emissions generated and these form part of a larger report which is submitted to the EHO periodically.

The most common pollutants are non organic mercury (arising from the evaporation of amalgam fillings in teeth), greenhouse gases and Dioxins. These are in very small levels in comparison with other industries using incineration and minute compared with some manufacturing industries. There is equipment available which removes these dangerous gases from the cremator emissions. Westerleigh Group have already retrofitted this equipment to some of its sites and has plans to fit to all new facilities.

Energy Use

Most Cremators are fuelled by gas, although there are electric cremators in the UK. Westerleigh Group use only gas fired cremators either fuelled by mains gas or LPG where mains are not available. With the stricter guidelines in place, in most cases the gas consumption has risen to ensure that the higher temperatures are reached. However cremator designs are now being produced which will reduce this to the previous level of consumption.