

CMA Funerals market study omnibus research Technical Report (28 August 2018)

Introduction

This study was designed to assist in evidence-gathering around the supply of funerals within the “at need” funeral market, specifically with regards to competition between funeral directors and how competition works between crematoria.

The survey collected responses from consumers of an “at need” funeral across the United Kingdom, with the starting sample structured to be representative of the population of adults age 15+. Only adults age 18+ qualified to answer the CMA’s questions.

Data Collection Methodology

The survey was conducted on CAPIbus, Ipsos MORI’s weekly face-to-face omnibus survey over three waves of fieldwork, with a single, proportionally representative boost survey to 177 adults in Northern Ireland.

Interviews took place between 22 June and 25 July 2018 and were conducted in respondent’s homes using Computer Aided Personal Interviewing (CAPI) methodology.

Over the course of three fieldwork waves, 6,109 adults 18+ were interviewed across 527 sample points in the UK.

Sampling “at need” funeral users

Informed Consent

Given the potential sensitivity of the research topic, the CMA’s question set was introduced to qualifying respondents as follows:

The following questions are about the ways in which people arrange funerals.

We understand that this can sometimes be a difficult thing to talk about and would like to reassure you that these questions are asked for research purposes only. During this study, we will not ask for personal details about anyone who has died or the circumstances around their death. Your responses will be kept anonymous, and if there are any questions which you feel uncomfortable about answering, then you will be able to choose not to answer.

At this stage, 17 respondents, over the course of three waves of fieldwork, declined to answer any questions, including screening questions, on the topic of funerals. We do not know how many of these respondents, if any, were eligible to answer the full CMA question set.

Eligibility

Those eligible to answer the full CMA question set were defined as:

- Age 18+
- Personally involved in making the arrangements for a funeral in the UK, where:
 - the funeral was arranged in the last 2 years (since June 2016);
 - the funeral was an “at need” funeral; and
 - a funeral director was involved in making at least some of the arrangements.

Personal involvement was defined as *“having sole or shared responsibility for making important decisions about the funeral such as: what kind of funeral to have, when and where it would take place; who would lead the funeral service; and how much to pay for the arrangements being made”*.

An “at need” funeral was defined as *“... one where the funeral arrangements are made and paid for at the time someone dies. They can be paid for using: someone’s savings; money set aside by someone in their will; money paid out from a life insurance policy; and/or a credit card or a loan. It is not a funeral that someone has partly or fully paid for in advance because they’ve bought a “pre-paid funeral plan”*.

In total, 331 respondents met these criteria and were eligible to answer the full CMA question set.

Weighting the sample

All information collected on Capibus is weighted to correct for any minor deficiencies or imbalances in the sample achieved.

The data were weighted to the targets derived using the latest set of census data or mid-year estimates and National Readership Survey defined profiles.

Data were weighted by age, government office region, socio-economic grade, and working status within gender, with additional weights for household tenure (private & HA/LA renters) and ethnicity. Data were weighted to be representative of the population of adults aged 18+ in the United Kingdom.

In order to match the sample and the weighting targets, the weight scheme was applied to all 6,109 adults age 18+ in the base sample, including those who declined to answer any questions or were screened out, with a weighting efficiency of 91.1%.