

I write further to publication of your report entitled *Funerals Market Study. Interim Report and Consultation*.

First, thank you for quoting (Page 24) from my recent book *The Evolution of the British Funeral Industry in the Twentieth Century. From Undertaker to Funeral Director*. I hope you continue to find it useful in investigating the market.

Please may I make the following contributions to the process of consultation.

1. Please examine competition not only in terms of funeral costs, but also the number of businesses in an area. Your report does mention the expansion of the market and I think this needs to be further and more fully investigated, particularly in the urban areas where most of the new businesses have emerged. I think there may well be local factors, driven by the concentration of the competition, that have affected the costs. A few years ago I looked at the expansion of the industry in west London by assessing the number of funeral directors in certain local authority areas. The findings were given as a conference paper, but this has not been published. The document is attached and I hope you find it useful.
2. Please also reconsider the issue of non-resident fees charged by cemeteries (page 11). This is a hugely controversial area and one that impacts on a proportion of burials and often unfairly. It is particularly concerning as local authorities don't have to provide cemeteries, which therefore forces their residents to use other authorities cemeteries whilst being severely financially penalised. Again, I have explored this in an unpublished paper, which is also attached.
3. In respect of the choice of crematoria, a further factor to consider is the size of the chapel. My experience is largely London-based and from visiting all twenty-five crematoria (in addition to others around the country), the size can become a determining factor when discussing the local options with clients. If a large number of mourners are attending, then a funeral director would certainly recommending going to a crematorium with a large chapel capacity. The same works in respect of a smaller number.

I hope these comments are helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can assist further and or anything needs clarification.