

Harbour

There are 293 crematoria in Great Britain; 182 are owned & operated by various local authorities, with the remaining 111 being operated by private companies, co-operatives, and non-profit groups.

Of the private crematoria; [3] operate 46, [3] operate 30, and [3] operate 9 - meaning these 3 companies represent 77% of all privately owned crematoria.

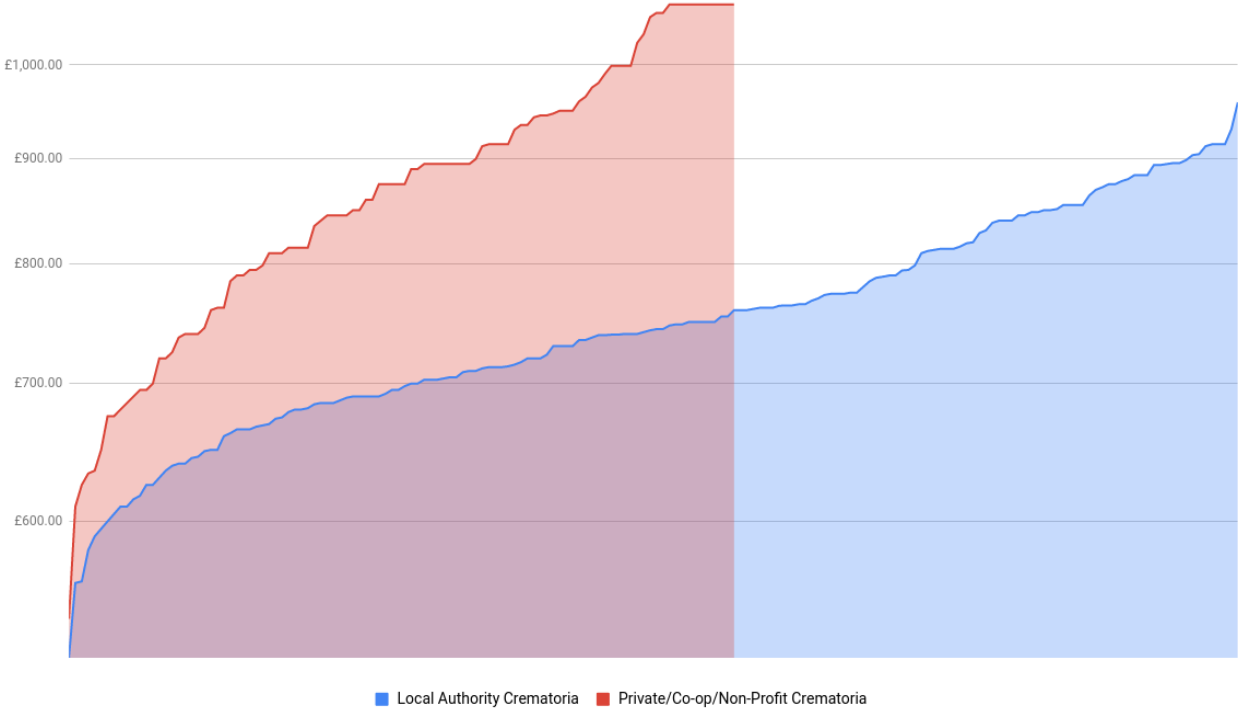
Private Crematoria charge £119 more than Local Authority Crematoria

As part of our study we reviewed all crematoria operating throughout Great Britain. We checked the price of each crematoria based on a typical funeral booking. The average cremation fee is £809.50

On average the crematoria operated by local authorities charge less than private crematoria.

Local Authority Crematoria - Average cremation fee £750, from £515 to £959

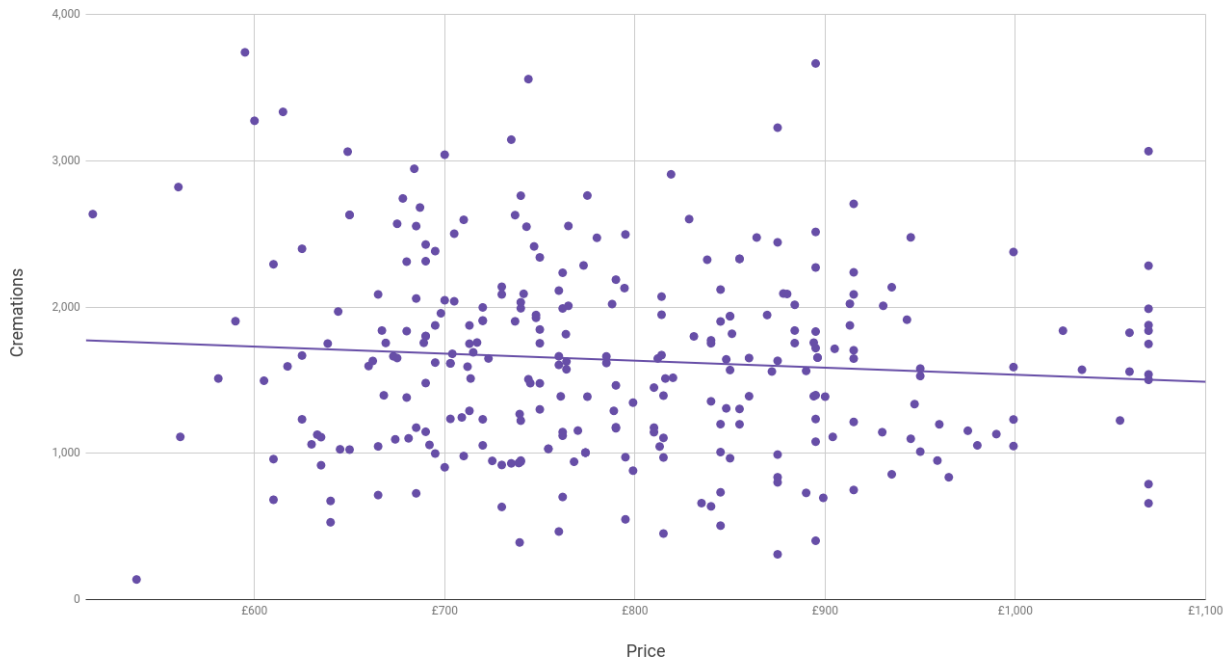
Private/Co-op/Non-Profit Crematoria - Average cremation fee £869, from £538 to £1070



The above graph demonstrates the clear disparity in crematoria pricing - on average a private crematorium (red) charges £119 more than a local authority crematorium (blue).

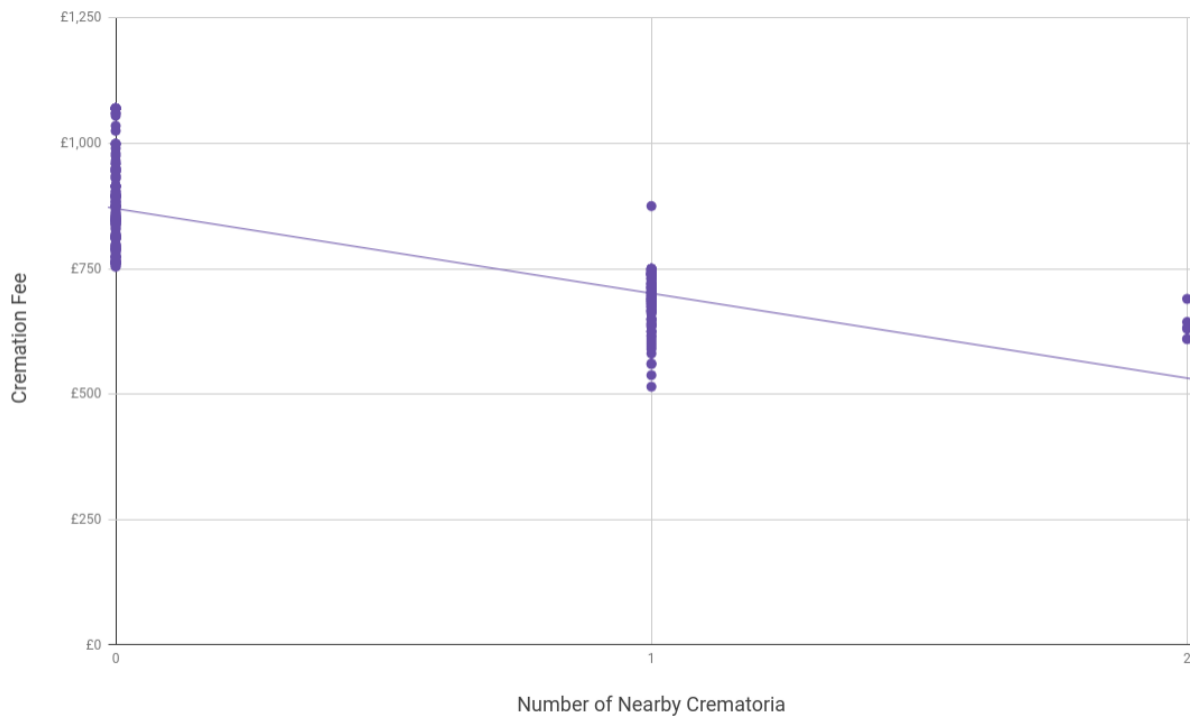
Volume Vs Price

Previous responses from crematoria operators have suggested this price disparity is due to a lower volume of cremations carried out by private crematoria. However, as the following chart illustrates, the data does not support this claim.



Using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient, we found a less than 9% correlation between the fee a crematorium charges and the number of cremations it carries out in a given year.

Competition Lowers Cremation Costs



There is a 52% correlation between lower cremation fees and a second lower priced crematorium operating within a 10 kilometre radius, this rises to a 69% correlation when the radius is reduced to 5 kilometres. Thus it is clear that competition amongst crematoria creates lower prices.

Existing Operators Use Planning Rules as a Barricade

Under current rules, a proposed crematorium must prove the need for a new crematorium. This is often interpreted as more than 1000 deaths within a 30 minute drive of the proposed development and no current crematoria serving this area¹. From our experience, a crematorium could be profitable with around 200 cremations per year if it was efficient and utilised modern equipment with an initial investment recovered after 5 years.

We note the number of objections from existing private crematoria operators to planning proposals for new crematoria across the country as an example of the 'need' requirement being used as a barricade to prevent competition. Here are just a few examples of planning applications for new crematoria which received negative responses from up to 3 private crematorium operators:

¹ See page 9, [The Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities's \(FBCA\) and Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management's \(ICCM\) guidance](#), on 'planning.' For an example of how this is used in practice, see paragraphs 6.11-6.15 of the [planning application for a crematorium in Beccles, East Suffolk](#).

[<].

Conclusion

This study proves that there is no correlation between the fee a crematorium charges and the number of cremations it undertakes. This should dispel any argument that an increase in the number of crematoria operating in Britain would lead to crematoria increasing their fees to offset lower volumes.

There is a far greater correlation between lower cremation fees and the presence of two or more crematorium operators within a close radius. Therefore we would strongly urge the CMA to consider removing the requirement to prove a 'need' before a crematorium is granted planning permission. This requirement restricts consumer choice and represents a significant hurdle for new operators wishing to challenge the incumbent operators.