

# **Crematorium Need Assessment**

**New Crematorium at Grevatts Lane West,  
Bilsham, Yapton, West Sussex**

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# 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report demonstrates that there is a compelling quantitative and qualitative need for a new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West, Bilsham, Yapton, West Sussex.
- 1.2 Drive-time catchment analysis using 2017 data on population and deaths indicates that 108,812 people live within a 30-minute drive-time of the proposed new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West, of which:
- 88,541 people currently living within a 30-minute drive-time of the crematoria at Chichester (65,838 people) and Worthing (22,703 people) will find the new crematorium to be their closest;
  - 48,240 people will, for the first time, live within a 15-minute drive-time of a crematorium. There were 563 deaths in this population in 2017;
  - 20,271 people will, for the first time, live within a 15-minute to 30-minute drive-time of a crematorium. There were 301 deaths in this population in 2017.
- 1.3 In the Essington Planning Appeal decision, the Inspector stated that a crematorium operating above 80% of its practical capacity makes it difficult to offer a cremation service that meets an acceptable quantitative standard. On average, Chichester Crematorium is operating at **104%** of its practical capacity and Worthing Crematorium is operating at **90%** of its practical capacity.
- 1.4 When seasonal variation in numbers of deaths is included, during peak months Chichester Crematorium is operating at **146%** of its practical capacity and Worthing Crematorium is operating at **126%** of its practical capacity.
- 1.5 Evidence provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) indicates a significant and sustained growth from the present time in the population and numbers of deaths within the UK and in West Sussex.

- 1.6 There is a proven quantitative need now for the new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West and this need will become greater as numbers of deaths significantly increase.
- 1.7 A sample of obituaries reveals an average delay between death and funeral of 18 days at Chichester Crematorium and 20 days at Worthing Crematorium during November 2018. Delays will be much longer during months of peak demand, when there can be 40% more deaths than in an average month.
- 1.8 The proposed new crematorium at Grevatts Lane will reduce delays between death and funeral; reduce the funeral journey time for many thousands of people; improve mourners' experience through longer service intervals and reduced congestion at crematoria.

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## **4. Introduction**

- 4.1 This report examines the quantitative and qualitative need for a new crematorium located at Grevatts Lane West, Bilsham, Yapton, West Sussex.
- 4.2 Quantitative need focuses upon the population and numbers of deaths within crematoria catchment areas and the capacity of existing crematoria to accommodate the demand for cremation.
- 4.3 Qualitative need focuses upon the length of time between death and being able to arrange a cremation at a convenient time; the journey time to the crematorium and the experience of bereaved people once they are at the crematorium.
- 4.4 This report includes an initial summary of the national context of demand for cremation in the UK, before examining the need for a new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West, Bilsham.

## **5. The author**

- 5.1 The author of this report is Peter Mitchell. I have been involved in the Bereavement Services sector for 35 years, working at all levels from operations to management in both public and private sector cemeteries and crematoria. In addition to my full-time work, I was also both the Law Tutor (9 years) and Technical Officer (5 years) for the IBCA (now ICCM) and served as a Director of the ICCM.
- 5.2 Since April 2002, I have been an independent consultant specialising in all matters relating to burial, cremation and exhumation. Within an extensive range of consultancy projects, I have completed numerous feasibility studies into new crematoria, cemeteries and green burial sites and completed strategic and operational reviews of existing facilities. I have also completed Proof of Need reports in support of planning applications for new crematoria and cemeteries.

## 6 The national context of demand for cremation

- 6.1 The first public crematorium in the UK opened at Woking in 1885 and carried out only 3 cremations that year. The second crematorium opened in 1892 in Manchester. For many years, cremations continued to represent a very small proportion of funerals in the UK. However, as more crematoria were built in different locations, cremation became more readily available as an option and was selected by an increasing number of bereaved people.
- 6.2 In 2017, cremation accounted for **80.3%** of all funerals in England, with an overall UK rate of 77.1%. There can be local variation from these national average figures.
- 6.3 The number of deaths, the development of crematoria and the number of cremations undertaken each year should be viewed within the context of demographic and other factors. These include improvements in healthcare, diet, lifestyle and disposable income that have contributed to significant decreases in death rates during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 6.4 Figures 1, 2, and 3 below present data in graphical format to illustrate deaths in the UK since 1885, combined with the changing patterns of demand for burial and cremation.
- 6.5 All three charts use data from across 133 years and reveal distinct trends.
- 6.6 Figure 1 below illustrates the annual numbers of deaths, burials and cremations in the UK between 1885 and 2017.

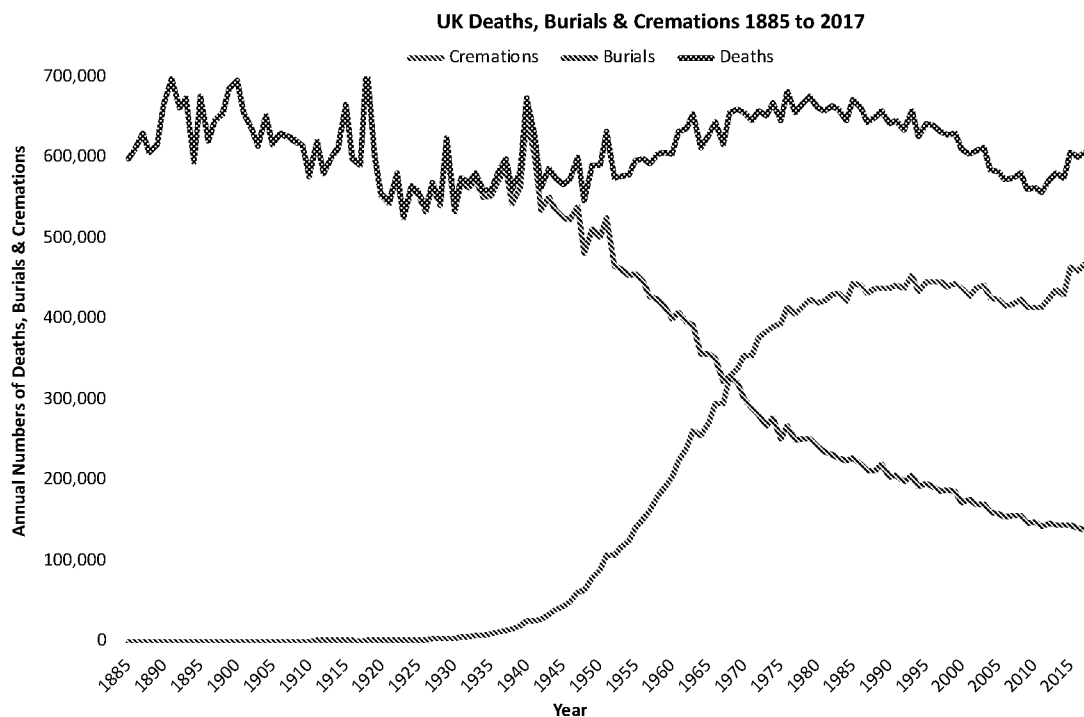


Figure 1: Annual numbers of deaths, burials and cremations in the UK between 1885 and 2017

6.7 Figure 1 illustrates:

- The dramatic increase in the number of cremations since 1940.
- The corresponding significant decline in the number of burials.
- The decline in the number of deaths from a peak in the 1980s, beginning to reverse in 2012.

6.8 Figure 2 below illustrates the proportions of deaths in the UK between 1885 and 2017 resulting in burial and cremation.

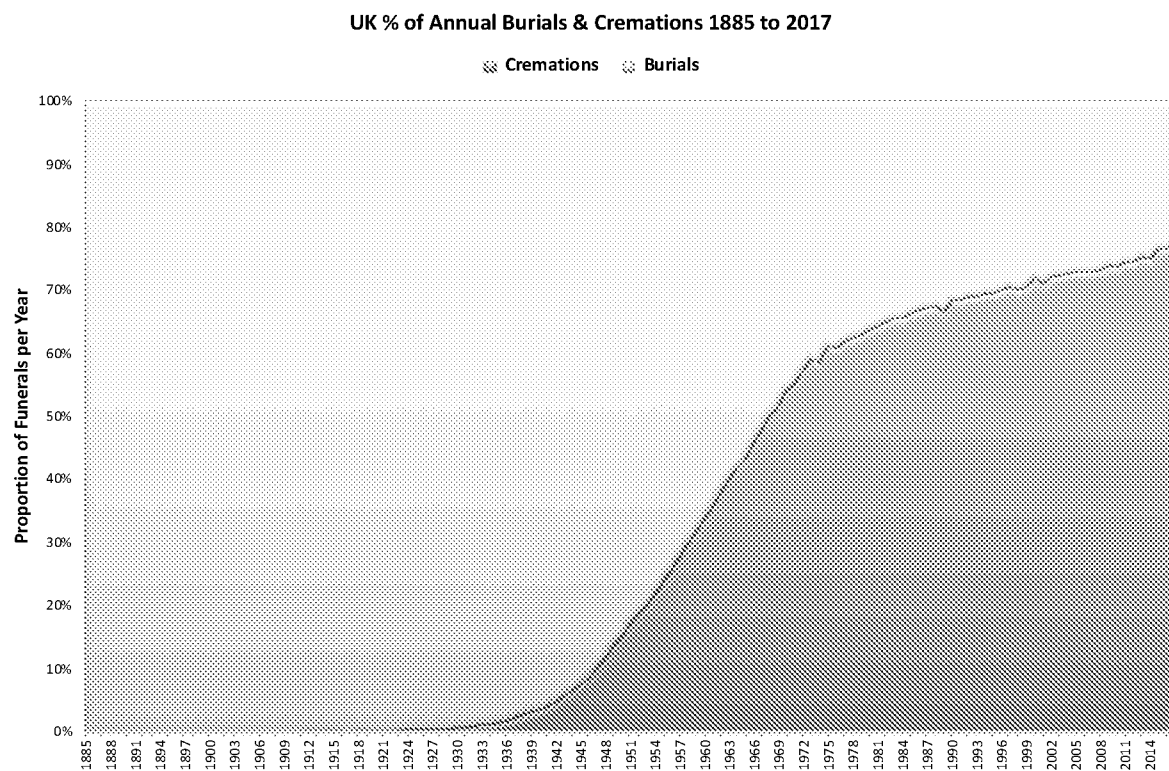


Figure 2: Annual percentages of burials and cremations in the UK between 1885 and 2017

6.9 Figure 2 illustrates:

- The dramatic increase in the proportion of deaths resulting in cremation between 1940 and 1970.
- The sustained increase in the proportion of deaths resulting in cremation since 1970, despite falling numbers of deaths illustrated above in Figure 1.

6.10 Figure 3 below juxtaposes the development of crematoria and the number of cremations in each year between 1885 and 2017.

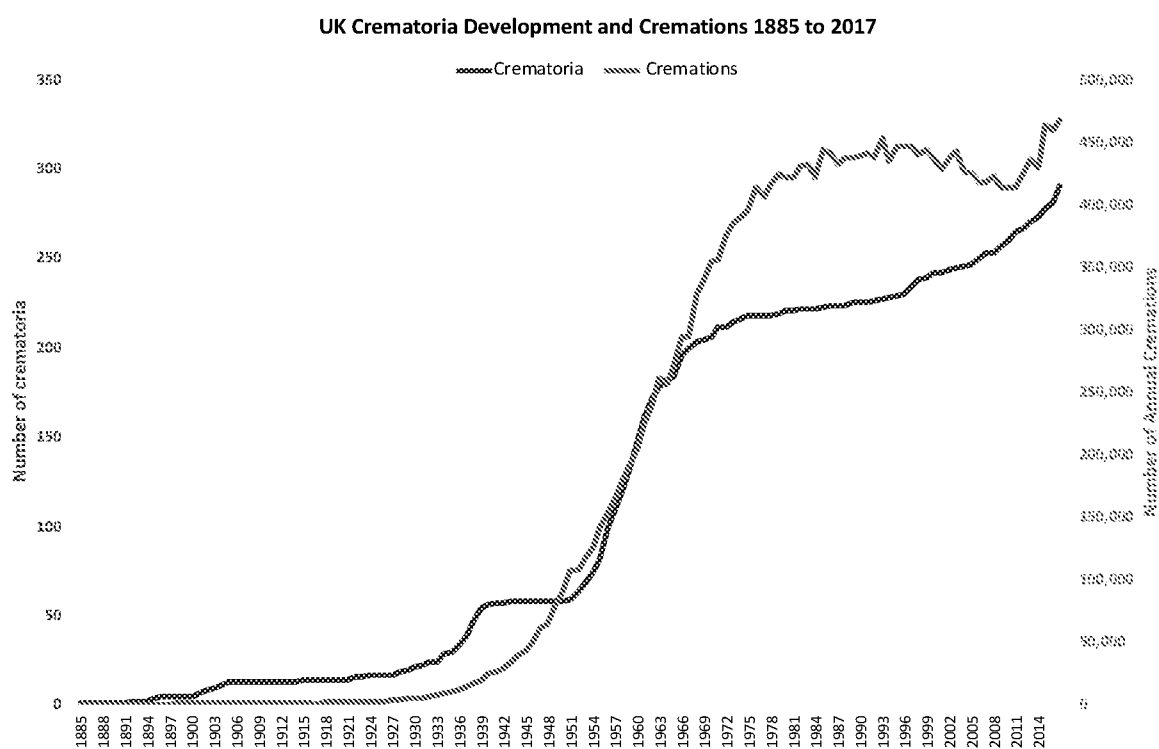


Figure 3: UK Crematoria Development and Cremations 1885 to 2017

6.11. Figure 3 illustrates:

- The close link between the availability of crematoria and the number of cremations.
- The pre-war surge in crematoria construction, with 35 crematoria built during the 1930s.
- The post-war boom in crematoria construction, with 73 crematoria built in both the 1950s and 1960s
- The further surge in crematoria construction since 2000. In the decade commencing in 1990, 14 were built; in the decade commencing in 2000, 17 were built. 30 new crematoria have been built since 2011 and more are at the planning and construction stages.

6.12 The continued development of new crematoria is necessary, both to cater better for current demand and also to meet significant growth in future demand. The chart below at Figure 4 illustrates the ONS 2016-based national population projections for deaths.

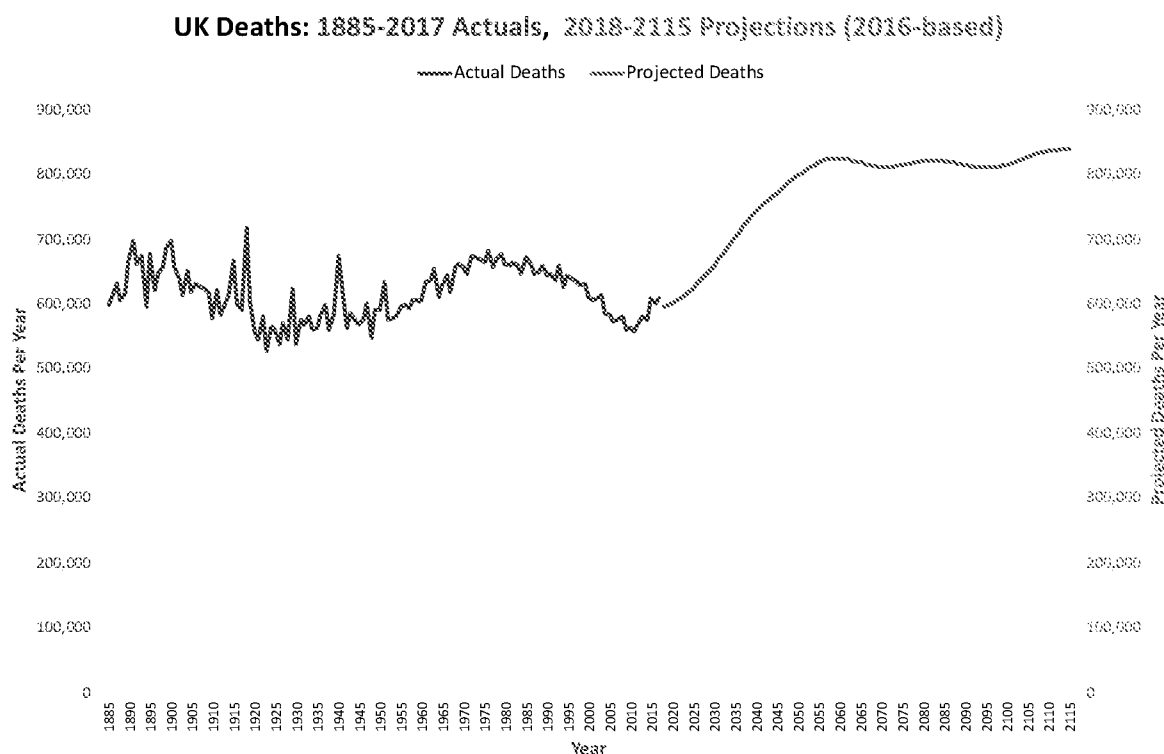


Figure 4: ONS UK Deaths: 1885-2017 Actuals and 2018-2115 Projected

6.13 Figure 5 below summarizes this projected increase in the number of deaths, as contained within the ONS 2016-based estimates, published in October 2017:

| Projected Annual UK Deaths |         |           |       |
|----------------------------|---------|-----------|-------|
| 2018                       | 2115    | Variation |       |
| 594,623                    | 836,931 | 242,308   | 40.7% |

Figure 5: ONS 2016-based projected deaths

6.14 Figures 1 to 6 above provide clear evidence that additional new crematoria are required in the UK to meet the continued and increasing demand for cremation.

## 7 The local context of demand for cremation in West Sussex

- 7.1 Figure 6 below illustrates ONS numbers of deaths in 2016 by quinary age band in the four local authority areas nearest to the proposed new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West, Bilsham, which is located within the area of Arun District Council.

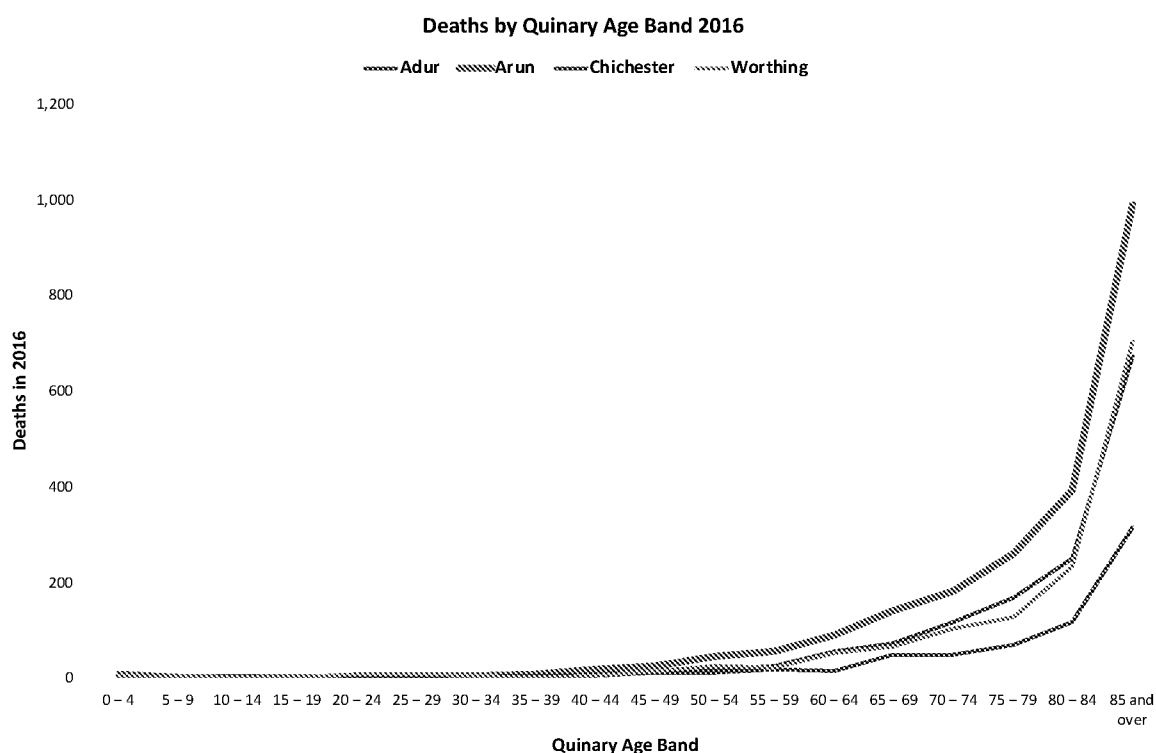


Figure 6: Deaths by quinary age band in 2016 in four local authority areas

- 7.2 Figure 7 below also shows the statistical link between increasing age and death by tabulating the proportions of total deaths of three main age bands. It also includes data for England as a whole for comparison.

| Area       | Age Band |          |           |
|------------|----------|----------|-----------|
|            | 0 to 24  | 25 to 64 | 65 & over |
| England    | 1.1%     | 14.3%    | 84.5%     |
| Adur       | 0.6%     | 9.5%     | 89.9%     |
| Arun       | 0.5%     | 11.1%    | 88.4%     |
| Chichester | 0.5%     | 9.3%     | 90.3%     |
| Worthing   | 0.9%     | 9.3%     | 89.9%     |

Figure 7: Proportion of deaths in 2016 by three broad age bands

7.3 Figure 8 below illustrates the ONS 2016-based projected growth in the population aged 65 years and over in the same local authority areas.

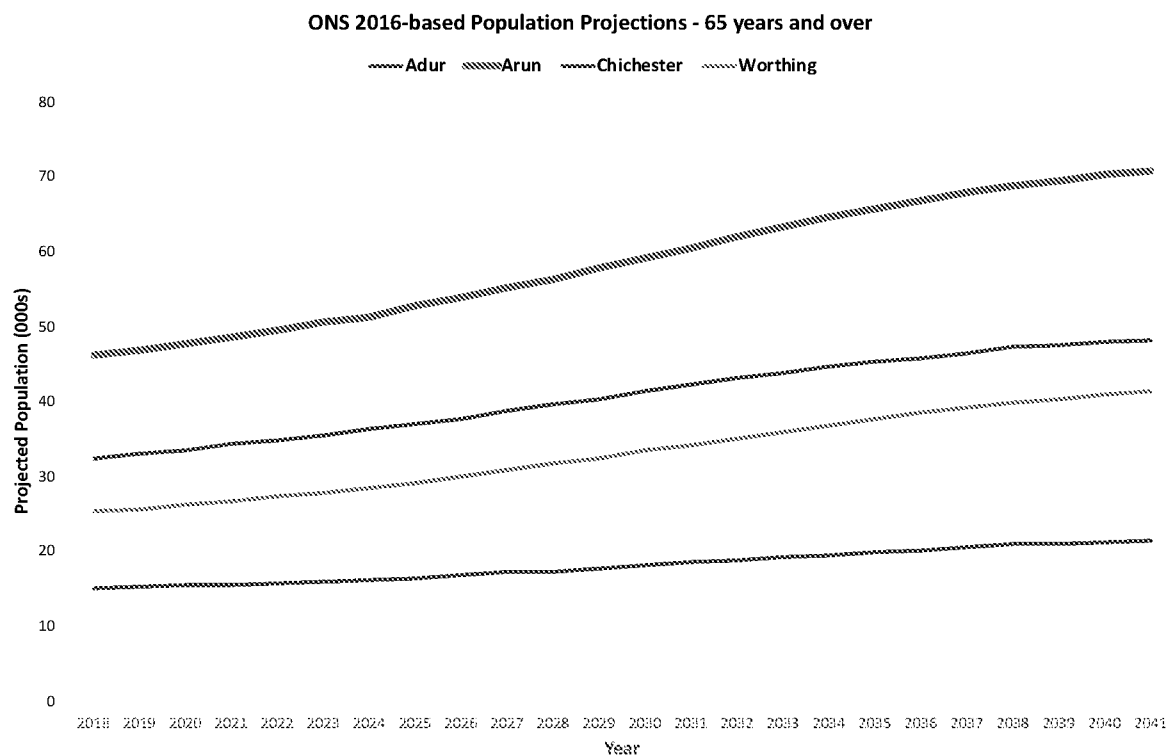


Figure 8: ONS 2016-based projections for growth in the population aged 65 years and over

7.4 Figure 9 below tabulates the same data to illustrate the projected variation between 2018 and 2041.

| Local Authority | 2018   | 2041   | Variation 2018 to 2041 |       |
|-----------------|--------|--------|------------------------|-------|
| Adur            | 15,100 | 21,400 | 6,300                  | 41.7% |
| Arun            | 46,100 | 70,800 | 24,700                 | 53.6% |
| Chichester      | 32,400 | 48,100 | 15,700                 | 48.5% |
| Worthing        | 25,300 | 41,300 | 16,000                 | 63.2% |

Figure 9: ONS 2016-based projected growth in the population aged 65 years and over

7.5 Figure 10 below illustrates the ONS 2016-based projections for annual deaths between 2018 and 2041 for the same local authorities.

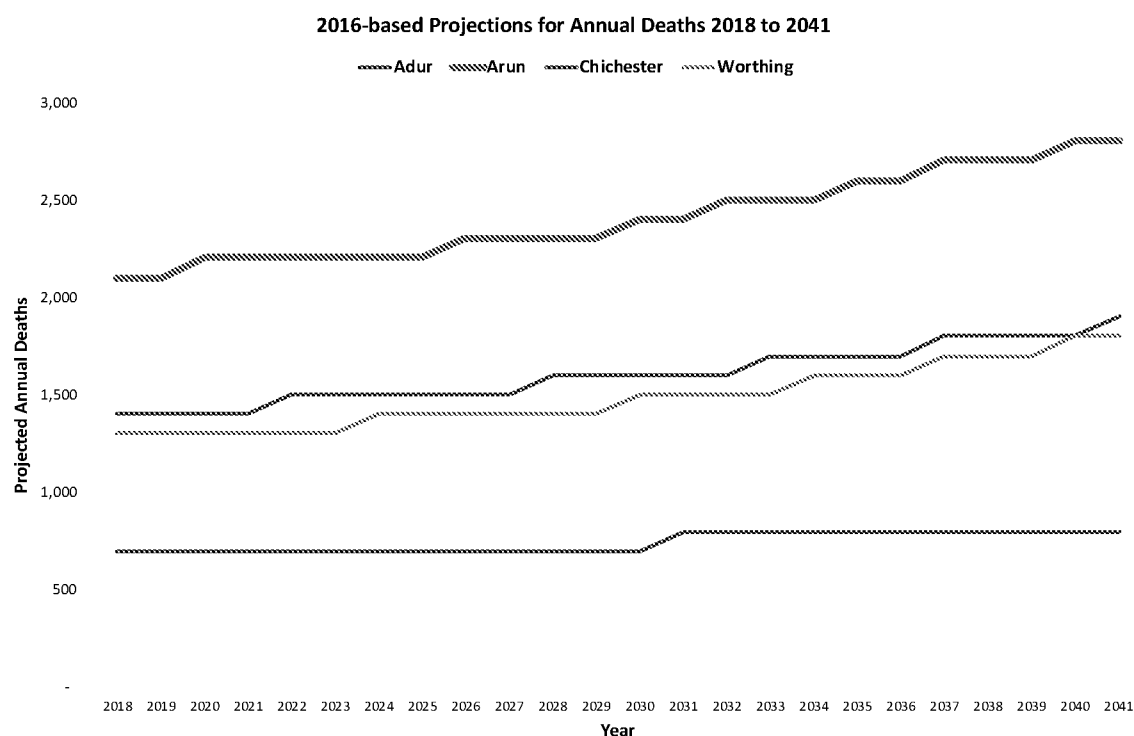


Figure 10: ONS 2016-based projections for deaths

7.4 Figure 11 below tabulates the same data to illustrate the projected increase in deaths in each local authority area from 2018 to 2041.

| Local authority | 2018  | 2041  | Variation 2018-2041 |       |
|-----------------|-------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| Adur            | 700   | 800   | 100                 | 14.3% |
| Arun            | 2,100 | 2,800 | 700                 | 33.3% |
| Chichester      | 1,400 | 1,900 | 500                 | 35.7% |
| Worthing        | 1,300 | 1,800 | 500                 | 38.5% |

Figure 11: ONS 2016-based projected increase in numbers of deaths

7.5 The ONS data on population and deaths illustrated in Figures 6 to 11 above provide clear evidence that the population of the local area aged 65 years and over, and associated numbers of deaths, are projected to increase significantly. This context underlines the need for the new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West in order to meet the quantitative and qualitative needs for cremation among the growing and ageing local population.

## **8. Quantitative need for a new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West**

8.1 Quantitative need is established by:

- quantifying the population that would be in closer proximity to the new crematorium than to existing crematoria
- examining the current and future capacity for funerals available at existing crematoria.

### **8.2 Quantifying catchment populations**

8.3 The distance considered reasonable for people to travel in a funeral cortège to a crematorium has been considered at a number of planning appeals. A 30-minute funeral drive-time at 60% of normal traffic speeds has been held to be an appropriate basis upon which to establish the quantitative need for a new crematorium<sup>1</sup>.

8.4 Where a Funeral Director's hearse and limousine(s) lead a cortège of mourners' vehicles to a crematorium, travel speeds are often much lower than for normal traffic.

8.5 This is mainly a consequence of drivers trying to keep the cortège together when negotiating junctions so that everybody finds their way to the crematorium and arrives together at the right time for the funeral service.

8.6 Sophisticated computer software enables the identification of travel times by road traffic and its graphical representation as isochrones.

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<sup>1</sup> Appeal Ref. APP/D0840/A/09/2098108 Land at Race Farm, Puggis Hill, Treswithian, Camborne, Cornwall

8.7 For this report, transport planning specialists Vectos used ESRI ArcGIS 10.4 and HERE software, together with associated ONS data relating to population and deaths in 2017 by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA), to produce isochrones within three different drive-time catchments: 15-minutes; 30-minutes; and 45-minutes.

- Existing provision - the two existing crematoria at Chichester and Worthing
- Proposed provision - the two existing crematoria at Chichester and Worthing, *plus* the proposed crematorium at Grevatts Lane West

## 8.8 Existing provision

8.9 The images below in Figures 12, 13 and 14 illustrate the 15, 30 and 45-minute drive-time isochrones around the two crematoria currently serving this area. The location of the proposed crematorium at Grevatts Lane West is indicated by the blue circle.

8.10 It is important to note that the isochrones for the crematoria beyond Chichester and Worthing are *not* illustrated. This is simply because, where a death occurs within the catchment area of the proposed new crematorium, bereaved families living locally are very unlikely to travel past existing crematoria to reach more distant crematoria.

- Chichester Crematorium's catchment, as illustrated, is reduced on its western edges, where people live closer to Havant Crematorium.
- Worthing Crematorium's catchment, as illustrated, is reduced on its eastern side by two crematoria at Brighton and to the north west by the Surrey and Sussex Crematorium at Crawley.



Figure 12: 15-minute drive-time catchments for existing crematoria at Chichester and Worthing

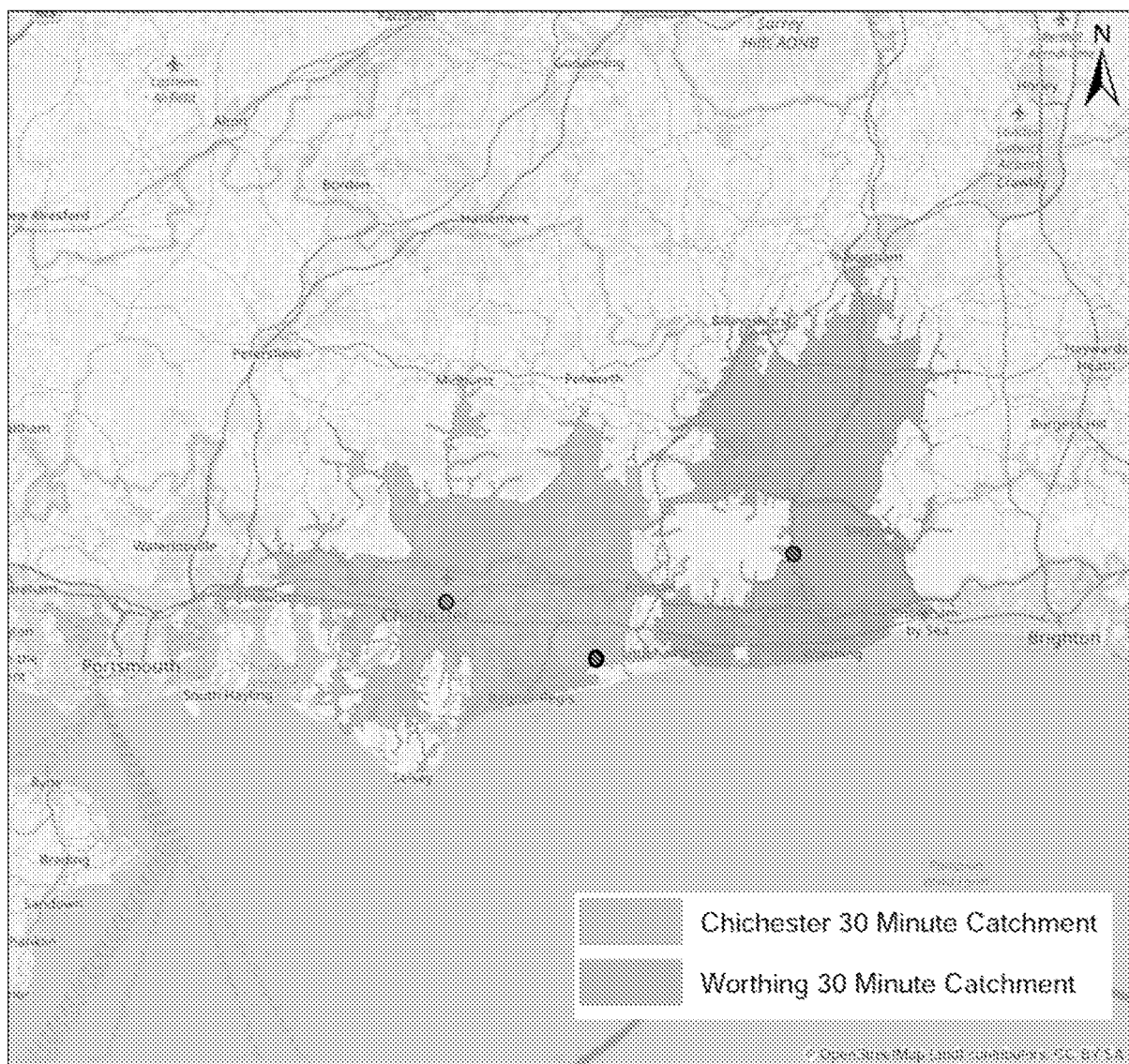


Figure 13: 30-minute drive-time catchments for existing crematoria at Chichester and Worthing

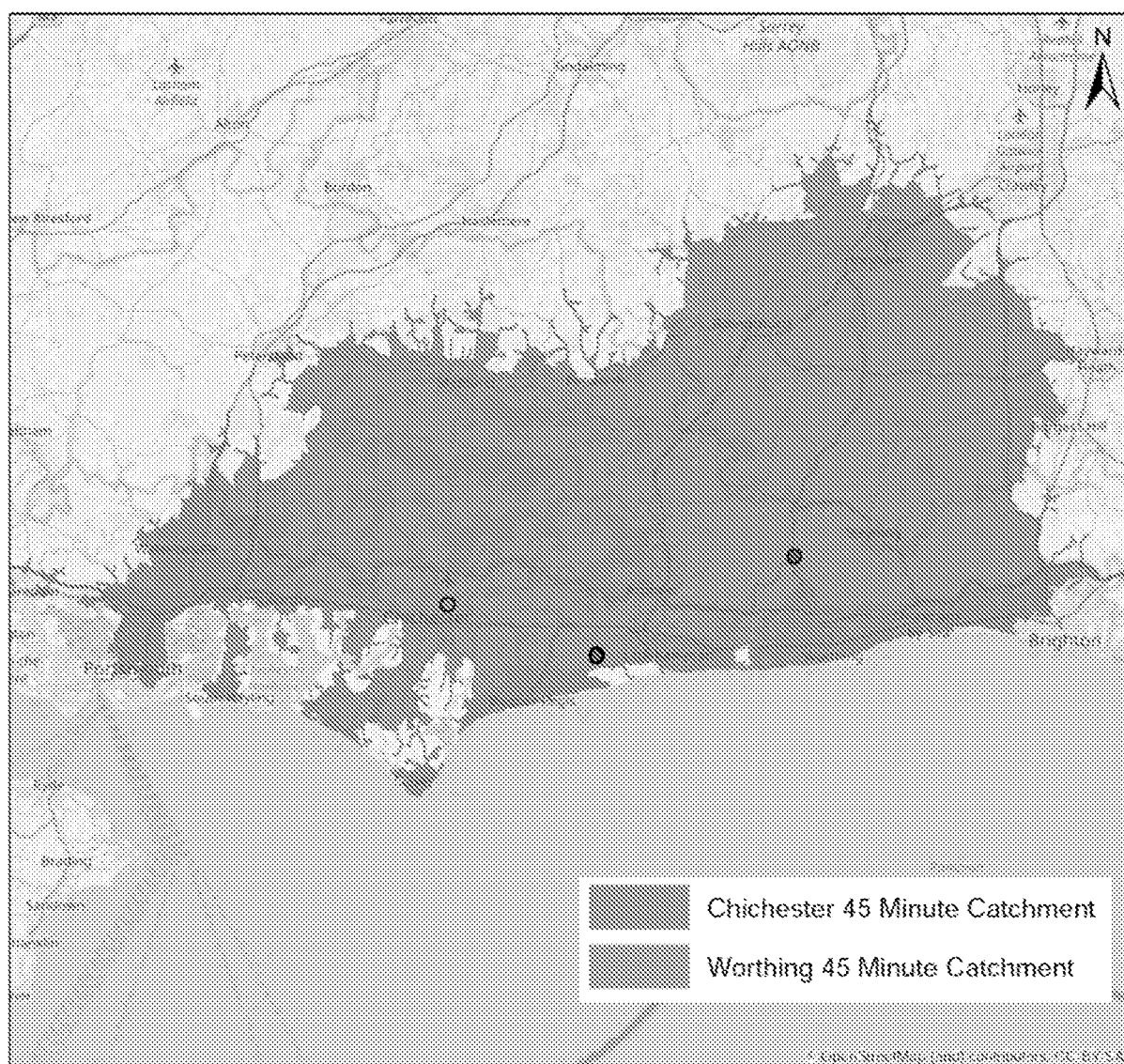


Figure 14: 45-minute drive-time catchments for existing crematoria at Chichester and Worthing

## 8.11 Proposed provision

8.12 The images below in Figures 15, 16 and 17 illustrate the 15, 30 and 45-minute drive-time isochrones around the two existing crematoria at Chichester and Worthing, together with those for the proposed new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West.



Figure 15: 15-minute drive-time catchments for crematoria at Chichester, Worthing and Grevatts Lane West



Figure 16: 30-minute drive-time catchments for crematoria at Chichester, Worthing and Grevatts Lane West

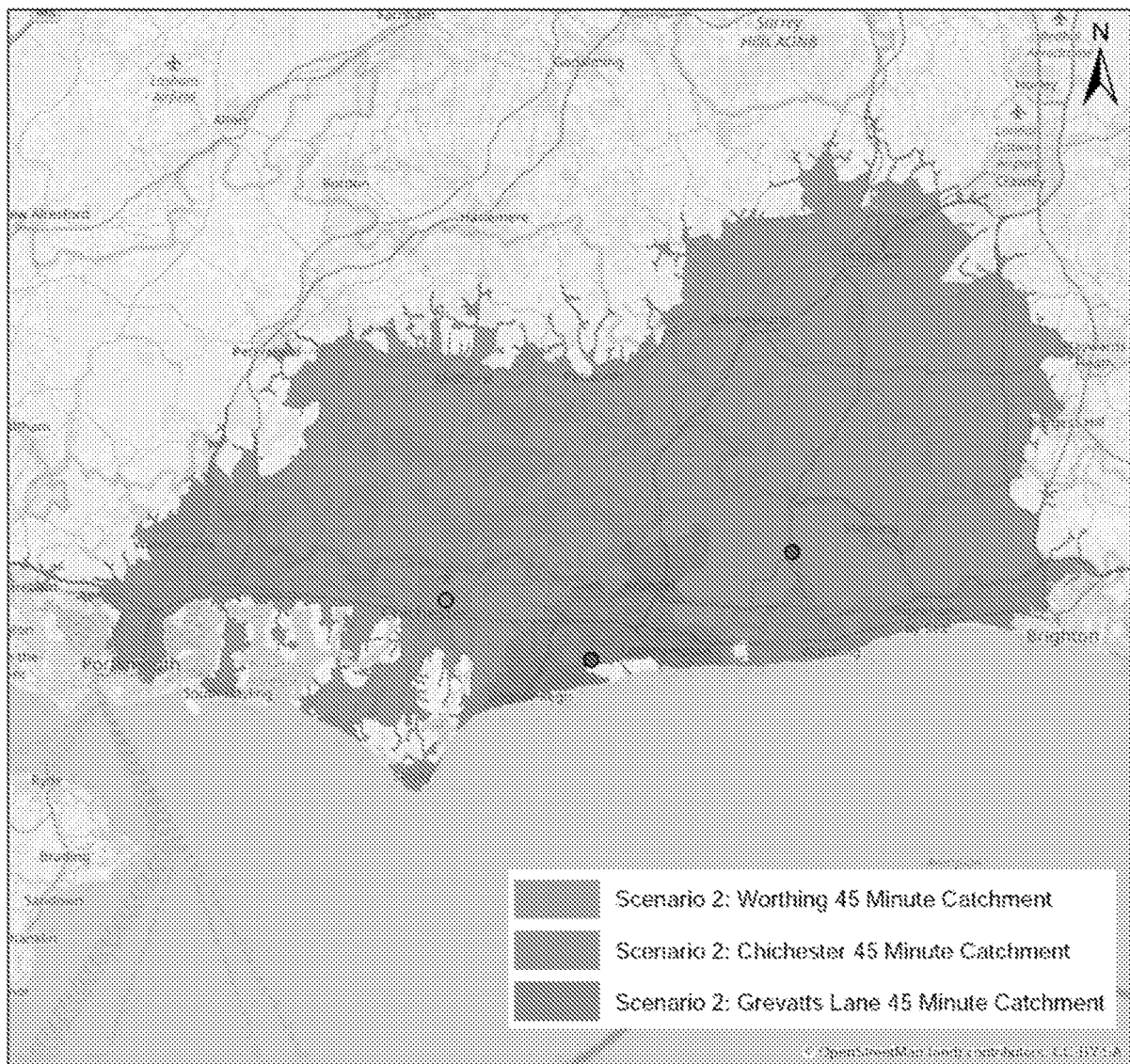


Figure 17: 45-minute drive-time catchments for crematoria at Chichester, Worthing and Grevatts Lane West

- 8.13 The tables below at Figures 18, 19 and 20 illustrate the catchment populations and numbers of deaths in 2017 for both the current and the proposed provision of crematoria.

| Crematorium   | Population    |                |                | Deaths     |              |              |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
|               | 15 Mins       | 30 Mins        | 45 Mins        | 15 Mins    | 30 Mins      | 45 Mins      |
| Chichester    | 45,408        | 154,161        | 415,712        | 462        | 1,917        | 4,484        |
| Worthing      | 18,426        | 225,863        | 466,180        | 205        | 2,739        | 5,197        |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>63,834</b> | <b>380,024</b> | <b>881,892</b> | <b>667</b> | <b>4,656</b> | <b>9,681</b> |

Figure 18: Population and deaths within drive-time catchments of existing crematoria provision

| Crematorium        | Population     |                |                | Deaths       |              |              |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                    | 15 Mins        | 30 Mins        | 45 Mins        | 15 Mins      | 30 Mins      | 45 Mins      |
| Chichester         | 45,408         | 88,323         | 346,793        | 462          | 1,064        | 3,598        |
| Worthing           | 18,426         | 203,160        | 420,048        | 205          | 2,415        | 4,542        |
| Grevatts Lane West | 48,240         | 108,812        | 115,051        | 563          | 1,478        | 1,541        |
| <b>Totals</b>      | <b>112,074</b> | <b>400,295</b> | <b>881,892</b> | <b>1,230</b> | <b>4,957</b> | <b>9,681</b> |

Figure 19: Population and deaths within drive-time catchments of proposed crematoria provision

| Crematorium        | Population    |               |         | Deaths     |            |         |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|---------|------------|------------|---------|
|                    | 15 Mins       | 30 Mins       | 45 Mins | 15 Mins    | 30 Mins    | 45 Mins |
| Chichester         |               | -65,838       | -68,919 |            | -853       | -886    |
| Worthing           |               | -22,703       | -46,132 |            | -324       | -655    |
| Grevatts Lane West | 48,240        | 108,812       | 115,051 | 563        | 1,478      | 1,541   |
| <b>Totals</b>      | <b>48,240</b> | <b>20,271</b> |         | <b>563</b> | <b>301</b> |         |

Figure 20: Variation in population and deaths from existing to proposed crematoria provision

- 8.14 Figure 17 clearly shows that the catchment of the proposed crematorium at Grevatts Lane West is circumscribed by those of Chichester and Worthing and therefore the figures for its catchment population and deaths in Figures 19 and 20 are unaffected by more distant crematoria and fully represent those within its drive-time catchments.

- 8.15 However, as noted above at 8.10, the catchment populations and deaths for the crematoria at Chichester and Worthing are actually less than those shown in Figures 18 and 19, due to the impact of the proximity of other crematoria outside of the immediate area.
- 8.16 Figures 19 and 20 illustrate that the population living within a 15-minute drive-time of either crematoria at Chichester or Worthing would remain closer to these crematoria than to the proposed new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West.
- 8.17 Figures 19 and 20 illustrate that **108,812** people will live within the 30-minute drive-time of the proposed new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West, of which:
- 88,541 people currently living within the 30-minute drive-time of the crematoria at Chichester (65,838 people) and Worthing (22,703 people) will find the new crematorium to be their closest;
  - 48,240 people will, for the first time, live within a 15-minute drive-time of a crematorium. There were 563 deaths in this population in 2017;
  - 20,271 people will, for the first time, live within a 15-minute to 30-minute drive-time of a crematorium. There were 301 deaths in this population in 2017.
- 8.18 The area of residence and numbers of the population that will benefit through proximity to the new crematorium are identified in the table below at Figure 21.
- 8.19 The table illustrates the findings of the drive-time catchment analysis, which identified that the proposed crematorium at Grevatts Lane West will serve the majority of the population of Arun District Council. People living in neighbouring local authority areas are closer to existing crematoria.

|                    | Arun District Council Population |                |                |                    |                |                |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                    | Current Provision                |                |                | Proposed Provision |                |                |
| Crematorium        | 15 Mins                          | 30 Mins        | 45 Mins        | 15 Mins            | 30 Mins        | 45 Mins        |
| Chichester         | 6,556                            | 81,541         | 85,998         | 6,556              | 15,703         | 17,079         |
| Worthing           | 2,575                            | 40,008         | 63,437         | 2,575              | 17,305         | 17,305         |
| Grevatts Lane West |                                  |                |                | 48,240             | 108,812        | 115,051        |
| <b>Totals</b>      | <b>9,131</b>                     | <b>121,549</b> | <b>149,435</b> | <b>57,371</b>      | <b>141,820</b> | <b>149,435</b> |

Figure 21: Population of Arun District Council within current and proposed crematoria catchments

8.20 108,812 residents of Arun District will be within 30-minutes' drive-time of the proposed new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West, which will be closer to them than any other crematorium.

8.21 115,051 residents of Arun District will be within 45-minutes' drive-time of the proposed new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West, which will be closer to them than any other crematorium.

## 8.22 Capacity at existing crematoria

8.23 The theoretical maximum number of funerals that each crematorium can accommodate is readily calculated using the number of funeral slots available per day. This is the 'technical capacity' of a crematorium.

8.24 However, it is widely accepted and understood that there are core times generally preferred by bereaved people and these times are the ones most likely to be booked first. Core times at crematoria lie between 10.30am and 3.30pm. If a core time is not available on the day of choice, people will often select a later day to be able to hold the funeral at the time that suits their particular circumstances.

8.25 The number of core times available is the 'practical capacity' of a crematorium.

- 8.26 The importance of core times was referenced by the Inspector at a crematorium Planning Appeal in Derbyshire, when he stated:
- 8.27 *“The 4 existing crematoria have technical capacity when looking at their operation over any particular year but the fact that Chesterfield crematorium, for example, has plenty of availability in the summer months, or at 1630 hours on a winter’s afternoon is of little comfort or use to those needing to book a funeral at the busiest time of the year at a time of day that would actually allow friends and family to attend. The technical capacity of the 4 crematoria does not bring people who currently live beyond a reasonable distance to a crematorium any closer to that crematorium. Plainly, there is a quantitative and qualitative need in this case”.<sup>2</sup>*
- 8.28 Crematoria may have a single chapel or two, or even three, chapels. They also vary in the length of service interval and duration offered.
- 8.29 The funeral service interval is distinct from, and longer than, the funeral service duration. The funeral service interval allows for the time taken by mourners to enter and leave the chapel. As a generalisation, crematoria allow five minutes for the entry of mourners and a further five minutes for their exit. Thus, a service interval of thirty minutes is only sufficient for a funeral service duration of twenty minutes.
- 8.30 The length of funeral service interval offered at UK crematoria is now generally longer than commonly offered in the past, partly as a result of the guidance provided by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM). The ICCM’s ‘Charter for the Bereaved’ sets minimum standards and targets to achieve. A target for funeral intervals is:
- 8.31 *“Charter members should increase the minimum time allocated for funeral services to 40 or 45 minutes wherever possible.*  
*The burial or cremation ceremony should be considered a highly individual and important occasion. Each funeral should ideally arrive and depart without seeing*

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<sup>2</sup> APP/M1005/A/12/2188880 Land east of Derby Road, Swanwick, Derbyshire para. 31

*other funerals; neither should they be delayed by the late arrival of other funerals. To help achieve this standard, a minimum service time of 40 or 45 minutes [as in e) above] should be an objective.'*

- 8.32 The table in Figure 22 below illustrates the services times commonly available at crematoria with a single chapel, reflecting different lengths of service interval offered and the core service times.

|             | Interval Between Funerals |         |         |         |
|-------------|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
|             | 30 Mins                   | 40 Mins | 45 Mins | 60 Mins |
|             | Funeral Start Times       |         |         |         |
|             | Single Chapel             |         |         |         |
|             | 09:30                     | 09:30   | 09:30   | 09:30   |
|             | 10:00                     | 10:10   | 10:15   | 10:30   |
|             | 10:30                     | 10:50   | 11:00   | 11:30   |
|             | 11:00                     | 11:30   | 11:45   | 12:30   |
|             | 11:30                     | 12:10   | 12:30   | 13:30   |
|             | 12:00                     | 12:50   | 13:15   | 14:30   |
|             | 12:30                     | 13:30   | 14:00   | 15:30   |
|             | 13:00                     | 14:10   | 14:45   | 16:30   |
|             | 13:30                     | 14:50   | 15:30   |         |
|             | 14:00                     | 15:30   | 16:15   |         |
|             | 14:30                     | 16:10   | 17:00   |         |
|             | 15:00                     | 16:50   |         |         |
|             | 15:30                     |         |         |         |
|             | 16:00                     |         |         |         |
|             | 16:30                     |         |         |         |
|             | 17:00                     |         |         |         |
|             | Per Day                   |         |         |         |
| Total slots | 16                        | 12      | 11      | 8       |
| Core slots  | 11                        | 8       | 7       | 6       |
|             | Per Month                 |         |         |         |
| Total slots | 336                       | 252     | 231     | 168     |
| Core slots  | 231                       | 168     | 147     | 126     |
|             | Per Year                  |         |         |         |
| Total slots | 4,032                     | 3,024   | 2,772   | 2,016   |
| Core slots  | 2,772                     | 2,016   | 1,764   | 1,512   |
| Core slots  | 68.8%                     | 66.7%   | 63.6%   | 75.0%   |

Figure 22: Technical and Practical (Core) Capacity at single chapel crematoria

- 8.33 The significant differences between 'technical capacity' and 'practical capacity' are readily apparent, with 'practical capacity' ranging from 64% to 75% of 'technical capacity'.

8.34 The table in Figure 23 below illustrates the services times commonly available at crematoria with two chapels, reflecting different lengths of service interval offered and the core service times.

| Interval Between Funerals | Interval Between Funerals |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|                           | 30 Mins                   |          | 40 Mins  |          | 45 Mins  |          | 60 Mins  |          |
|                           | Funeral Start Times       |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
|                           | Chapel 1                  | Chapel 2 | Chapel 1 | Chapel 2 | Chapel 1 | Chapel 2 | Chapel 1 | Chapel 2 |
|                           | 09:00                     | 09:15    | 09:00    | 09:20    | 09:00    | 09:15    | 09:00    | 09:30    |
|                           | 09:30                     | 09:45    | 09:40    | 10:00    | 09:45    | 10:00    | 10:00    | 10:30    |
|                           | 10:00                     | 10:15    | 10:20    | 10:40    | 10:30    | 10:45    | 11:00    | 11:30    |
|                           | 10:30                     | 10:45    | 11:00    | 11:20    | 11:15    | 11:30    | 12:00    | 12:30    |
|                           | 11:00                     | 11:15    | 11:40    | 12:00    | 12:00    | 12:15    | 13:00    | 13:30    |
|                           | 11:30                     | 11:45    | 12:20    | 12:40    | 12:45    | 13:00    | 14:00    | 14:30    |
|                           | 12:00                     | 12:15    | 13:00    | 13:20    | 13:30    | 13:45    | 15:00    | 15:30    |
|                           | 12:30                     | 12:45    | 13:40    | 14:00    | 14:15    | 14:30    | 16:00    |          |
|                           | 13:00                     | 13:15    | 14:20    | 14:40    | 15:00    | 15:15    |          |          |
|                           | 13:30                     | 13:45    | 15:00    | 15:20    | 15:45    | 16:00    |          |          |
|                           | 14:00                     | 14:15    | 15:40    | 16:00    |          |          |          |          |
|                           | 14:30                     | 14:45    |          |          |          |          |          |          |
|                           | 15:00                     | 15:15    |          |          |          |          |          |          |
|                           | 15:30                     | 15:45    |          |          |          |          |          |          |
|                           | 16:00                     | 16:15    |          |          |          |          |          |          |
|                           |                           |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
|                           | Per Day                   |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| Total slots               | 15                        | 15       | 11       | 11       | 10       | 10       | 8        | 7        |
| Core slots                | 11                        | 10       | 8        | 8        | 7        | 7        | 5        | 6        |
|                           | Per Month                 |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| Total slots               | 315                       | 315      | 231      | 231      | 210      | 210      | 168      | 147      |
| Core slots                | 231                       | 210      | 168      | 168      | 147      | 147      | 105      | 126      |
|                           | Per Year                  |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| Total slots               | 3,780                     | 3,780    | 2,772    | 2,772    | 2,520    | 2,520    | 2,016    | 1,764    |
| Core slots                | 2,772                     | 2,520    | 2,016    | 2,016    | 1,764    | 1,764    | 1,260    | 1,512    |
| Both Chapels Combined     | 7,560                     |          | 5,544    |          | 5,040    |          | 3,780    |          |
|                           | 5,292                     |          | 4,032    |          | 3,528    |          | 2,772    |          |
| Core slots                | 70.0%                     |          | 72.7%    |          | 70.0%    |          | 73.3%    |          |

Figure 23: Technical and Practical (Core) Capacity at twin chapel crematoria

- 8.35 Chichester Crematorium has a single chapel and offers 45-minute service intervals, commencing at 9:30am, with the last funeral commencing at 5.00pm.
- 8.36 Worthing Crematorium has two chapels and offers 40-minute service intervals, commencing in one chapel at 9.00am and the other at 9.20am, with the last services commencing at 3.40pm and 4.00pm respectively.
- 8.37 Both crematoria also accept 'direct cremations', i.e. with no funeral service, in addition to their standard funerals. Chichester allocate 8.00am, 8.15am and 8.20am for such funerals. Both offer funerals on Saturdays and Chichester also offers funerals on Sundays; in all cases at higher fees than Mondays to Fridays.
- 8.38 Figure 24 below illustrates in terms of available slots the technical capacity (total weekday slots) and practical capacity (core slots) of these two crematoria. These are based upon 252 working days per year, Mondays to Fridays excluding public holidays.

|           |                   | <b>Chichester</b> | <b>Worthing</b> |
|-----------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Per day   | Total slots       | 11                | 22              |
|           | <b>Core slots</b> | <b>7</b>          | <b>16</b>       |
| Per month | Total slots       | 231               | 462             |
|           | <b>Core slots</b> | <b>147</b>        | <b>336</b>      |
| Per year  | Total slots       | 2,772             | 5,544           |
|           | <b>Core slots</b> | <b>1,764</b>      | <b>4,032</b>    |

Figure 24: Technical and Practical available capacity at Chichester and Worthing crematoria

- 8.39 Figure 25 below illustrates the levels of technical and practical capacity at which these two crematoria operated during 2017.

| <b>Crematorium</b> | <b>Cremations in 2017</b> | <b>Total slots</b> | <b>Technical capacity</b> | <b>Core slots</b> | <b>Practical capacity</b> |
|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Chichester</b>  | 1,838                     | 2,772              | 66%                       | 1,764             | 104%                      |
| <b>Worthing</b>    | 3,626                     | 5,544              | 65%                       | 4,032             | 90%                       |

Figure 25: Technical and Practical capacity levels in 2017 at Chichester and Worthing crematoria

- 8.40 These calculations involve dividing the total number of cremations in 2017 by the standard funeral slots available in a year and take no account of seasonal variation in demand. The importance of catering for seasonal fluctuations in demand for cremations was referred to by the Inspector at a Planning Appeal in Kent:
- 8.41 *“A number of objectors have questioned the Appellant’s evidence of need, referring to the statements by existing operators of crematoria at Tunbridge Wells, Medway and Eltham that they are currently operating below capacity. While it may be that over a period of a year, there are untaken slots which are theoretically available, this doesn’t take account of seasonal fluctuations in mortality which affect levels of demand.”*<sup>3</sup>
- 8.42 Recovering Planning Inquiry in South Staffordshire involving two proposed new crematoria, the Secretary of State endorsed the Inspector’s views that practical capacity must be measured in the peak month of demand.
- 8.43 *“All parties agree that Bushbury Crematorium in north Wolverhampton, on any assessment, is under significant pressure. The parties agree that the best measure for assessing whether a crematorium is meeting a quantitative standard is its practical capacity in a peak month. In 2015 Bushbury operated at about 115% of practical capacity in a peak month. **The Council accepts that operating above 80% of practical capacity places a crematorium under pressure to offer a cremation service that meets an acceptable quantitative standard.**”*<sup>4</sup>
- 8.44 On this basis alone, both Chichester and Worthing crematoria are operating above practical capacity and there is a need for a new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West. The need for the new crematorium will increase as numbers of deaths in the catchment area increase.

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<sup>3</sup> APP/G2245/A/13/2210128 Land south of Orchard Barn, London Road, Halstead para. 23

<sup>4</sup> APP/C3430/W/15/3039163 Land off Broad Lane, Essington, South Staffordshire para. 215

- 8.45 Figure 26 below illustrates seasonal variation in deaths during 2017 by reference to the average deaths per month compared with the highest number of deaths, which in this year occurred during January.

|            | Average | Highest | Variation |       |
|------------|---------|---------|-----------|-------|
| England    | 41,574  | 53,675  | 12,102    | 29.1% |
| Adur       | 62      | 85      | 23        | 36.9% |
| Arun       | 183     | 262     | 79        | 43.4% |
| Chichester | 124     | 170     | 46        | 37.5% |
| Worthing   | 122     | 173     | 51        | 42.2% |

Figure 26: Seasonal variation in deaths in 2017

- 8.46 The average variation in deaths in the peak month across the West Sussex authorities is **40%**. This figure is used to calculate peak month cremations and capacity in Figure 27 below.

| Crematorium | Average monthly cremations | Peak month cremations | Core slots available | Peak month practical capacity |
|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Chichester  | 153                        | 214                   | 147                  | 146%                          |
| Worthing    | 302                        | 423                   | 336                  | 126%                          |

Figure 27: Peak month practical capacity levels in 2017 at Chichester and Worthing crematoria

- 8.45 In the Essington Appeal decision, the Inspector stated that a crematorium operating above 80% of its practical (core) capacity makes it difficult to offer a cremation service that meets an acceptable quantitative standard. The context makes it clear that practical capacity is calculated using the total number of cremations, not purely those that take place at core times.

## **9. Qualitative need for a new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West**

9.1 Qualitative need is established by considering the impact upon bereaved people of the ability of crematoria to meet quantitative need:

- availability of preferred slots, leading to delays between death and the funeral
- journey times to crematoria
- congestion at crematoria

### **9.2 Availability of preferred slots**

9.3 *Anecdotal evidence from funeral directors who use the cremation service offered at Bushbury indicates that an acceptable qualitative standard is also not being met. In this regard funeral services are taking longer than is acceptable to arrange at times to suit bereaved families and funeral directors are advising some families that earlier services could be arranged at crematoria further away than is generally regarded to be acceptable. The substandard quantitative offer at Bushbury is adversely affecting the crematorium's ability to offer a quality service to bereaved families.*<sup>5</sup>

9.4 *"Further, the overtrading has led to unacceptable delays between the date of death and date of cremation. Analysis undertaken by Dignity (and unchallenged by any party to the inquiry) shows that average waiting times between date of death and date of cremation are materially longer than either Telford or other crematoria in the area. This is a very clear qualitative deficiency which has resulted from the quantitative overtrading."*<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> APP/C3430/W/15/3039163 Land off Broad Lane, Essington, South Staffordshire para. 215

<sup>6</sup> APP/C3430/W/15/3039163 Land off Broad Lane, Essington, South Staffordshire para. 128

9.5 *“Of greater concern is the evidence submitted indicating the delay between death and funeral. ... While these delays can only be partly explained by Coroner delays or similar, this presents substantial evidence of pressures on the capacity at Penmount [Crematorium] to meet the qualitative needs of such a large population.”<sup>7</sup>*

9.6 A number of factors contribute to delays between death and funeral. These include the process of registration of the death; involvement of the coroner; requirement for an autopsy; personal circumstances of the family members (e.g. outside the UK due to holidays or residence); and availability of the Funeral Director and Officiant.

9.7 However, a key factor contributing to delays between death and funeral is the availability of the family’s preferred date and time for the funeral at the crematorium.

9.8 Figure 28 below illustrates data on days between death and funeral obtained from 89 obituaries published online by the Chichester Observer and Worthing Herald for deaths occurring between 14<sup>th</sup> October and 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

|             |            | Days between death and funeral |         |         |
|-------------|------------|--------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Crematorium | Obituaries | Minimum                        | Maximum | Average |
| Chichester  | 32         | 10                             | 29      | 18      |
| Worthing    | 57         | 8                              | 68      | 20      |

Figure 28: Days between death and funeral

9.9 This sample of 89 obituaries suggests average delays of two to three weeks between death and funeral. The sample included 30 funerals at Chichester and 54 funerals at Worthing, which all took place during November 2018. Deaths in November 2017 across the West Sussex catchment area averaged only 1.3% more than average deaths over the whole year, whereas deaths in January averaged 40% more. It is clear that delays between death and funeral during periods of high demand will be extended beyond the two to three weeks’ delays during periods of average demand.

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<sup>7</sup> APP/D0840/A/09/2098108 Land at Race Farm, Puggis Hill, Treswithian, Camborne para. 35

## **9.10 Journey times to crematoria**

- 9.11 This report has previously quantified the need for a new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West by reference to journey times, using drive-time catchment mapping software.
- 9.12 Minimising travel time also has qualitative impacts upon the bereaved, Funeral Directors and those officiating at funerals.
- 9.13 There is great variation in the way people arrange funerals, influenced by personal, social, cultural, religious, financial and other factors. The secularisation of society has affected the level of attachment people may have to their local church and many people no longer live within the same communities as previous generations of their families.
- 9.14 However, funerals are still widely regarded as important events requiring the attendance of family, friends and others who knew the person who has died. The scale of such social gathering exceeds other common family events, such as reuniting for Christmas. Statistically, the probability is very high that a funeral will result from the death of someone of senior years, who has spent a lifetime building up a network of contacts, many of whom will be local to where they live and work. It is entirely logical therefore that this group of people would wish to gather together for the funeral in a location that is convenient for most of them.
- 9.15 By their nature, funerals are emotional events signifying the end of many different relationships with a single person and a change in the relationships that those still living have with each other. Enduring unnecessarily long journeys, often involving traffic congestion and the challenges of keeping a group of vehicles together, is altogether undesirable for a group of mourners on their way to the crematorium for an emotional life event.

## **9.16 Congestion at crematoria**

9.17 The number and types of vehicles attending funerals at crematoria varies and inevitably there are occasional funerals of some-one who was young and/or particularly well-known where access and parking space is insufficient to cope. However, the more common situation where the site is congested occurs where vehicle numbers per funeral are modest, but there are too many funerals on site at the same time.

9.19 This situation arises all too frequently for a number of reasons, the main ones being:

- A funeral arrives at the crematorium either too early or too late
- A funeral takes too much or too little time at the crematorium

9.20 Funeral Directors take pride in arriving at the correct time at each of the various locations that may be involved in a funeral, including the crematorium. However, there are sometimes factors outside of their control, or which could not reasonably be foreseen, which can advance or delay the time when they arrive at the crematorium gates. A funeral can involve a series of events each involving different people, who can have a cumulative impact upon the schedule of the particular funeral. For example, the funeral service held at the church prior to a committal service at the crematorium can last less or more time than expected, influencing the time of arrival at the crematorium.

9.21 If there are other funerals taking place around their particular funeral slot, the arrival of one group of mourners early or late can easily result in vehicles and mourners from different funerals becoming mixed up. This is particularly prevalent at crematoria such as Southampton with more than one chapel.

- 9.22 If a funeral service at the crematorium last longer than allowed for within the service slot, the mourners leave the chapel late. Where there is a funeral immediately following theirs, which is a common situation, that group of mourners will have had difficulty finding somewhere to park the cars as the car park is still occupied by the cars belonging to mourners of the overrunning funeral. They will have to queue outside the chapel entrance waiting for their funeral service to start late because the other group of mourners are still inside the chapel.
- 9.23 This situation can easily have a knock-on effect on all of the subsequent funerals in the day at a busy crematorium. It can be quite common for funerals to be running behind schedule and for there to be a tangible atmosphere of congestion and tension after a morning funeral falls out of match with the schedule.
- 9.24 This all too easily has a qualitative impact upon the experience of bereaved people. Similarly, Funeral Directors delayed by one funeral face challenges in minimising the impact that this has on their ability to undertake the other funerals they have arranged for the same day.
- 9.25 The essence of a funeral is that it is centred upon a unique individual and the distinct group of people that were familiar enough with that person to attend their funeral. This uniqueness is fatally compromised by congestion and delay, or rush, at the crematorium and the sense that one is simply travelling on a 'conveyor-belt' through the crematorium funeral experience.
- 9.26 The new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West will offer 60-minute funeral intervals. Even if all 5 core slots in a day were booked, this generous interval time will minimise the possibility of congestion occurring. People will be able to arrive, park, enter the building, experience the funeral and leave the site with a sense that they are the only people on site and the only funeral that day. This will have a memorable impact upon their experience of the death of the person they knew.

- 9.27 The provision of a new crematorium at Grevatts Lane West will not only have a positive impact upon those bereaved people who use its facilities. Each funeral that takes place at the new crematorium will free up time and space at Chichester and Worthing crematoria, enhancing their qualitative provision. Even if the operators of other crematoria make no changes to the quality of their provision, people will have an improved experience at their sites through reduced congestion.