JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE:	BEREAVEMENT SERVICES OFFICER		
POST NO:		**SERVICE UNIT:**	Customer Focus

JOB PURPOSE:
To support delivery of all Bereavement Services functions.

POSITION IN ORGANISATION:
Number Directly Supervised: 0

Immediate Superior (post title): Deputy / Bereavement Services Manager

POST CLASSIFICATION (tick one box):

Director in Charge	Exec. Director	Head Major Division	Senior Managem't	Middle Managem't	Junior Managem't	Supervising Small Section	No Supervisory Responsiblty
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Main duties:

- Carry out administrative duties, including: data input, processing of cremation and burial legislative documents, processing Garden of Remembrance memorial applications, assist in maintaining Crematorium / Cemetery registers and maps.
- Carry out reception duties (including taking funeral bookings and instructions from Funeral Directors / the public by telephone and face-to-face, search the registers as required, help with assisted funerals and users of our services at all times and undertake administrative duties).
- Carry out coffin checks against paperwork and undertake cremations, prepare ashes and ensure paperwork is accurate for casket collection.
- Undertake front-of-house duties in the chapels, including: operating the music and video tribute systems, preparing the chapel before each service by checking temperature, facilities and cleaning / clearing the chapel, waiting rooms, public lavatories, vestries to a high standard.
- Maintain front of house areas, including watering plants, leaf / debris removal, place funeral information up for that day and any other relevant signage, welcoming funeral parties onto the site.
- Monitor services and support Funeral Directors and officiants to ensure services run smoothly and efficiently, compliant with legislation and good practice guidelines and our policies.
- Prepare ashes burial sites and know how to bury ashes, to ensure dignity and compliance with current legislation, good practice guidelines and our policies (occasionally, with bereaved families in attendance, as required).
- Provide accurate information to Funeral Directors, officiants, bereaved persons and members of the public in an appropriate and sensitive manner.
- Assist with maintenance of the Garden of Remembrance and monitoring grounds maintenance to ensure all areas are safe, attractive, accessible, clean and free of litter / detritus at all times.
- Carry out mowing, strimming, weeding, dead-heading, hedge-cutting and pond-clearing duties.
- Pay particular attention to Health & Safety in every task carried out and in every area of the buildings and grounds to ensure you, your work colleagues, members of the public, Funeral Directors, officiants and any other visitors are kept as safe as possible at all times.
- Comply with our Data Protection policies and procedures, to ensure that personal data is handled in an appropriate manner – safely and securely.
- Be proactive and passionate about giving an excellent service to all 'customers' and service users, aiming to deliver a quality service that is right first time.
- Ensure we deliver all our services and treat all our customers equally and be flexible / adaptive and sensitive to the needs of all disabled people and those with specialist or religious needs.
- Comply with our safeguarding policies with regard to children and vulnerable adults.

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE: Minimum Time on Job: 2 years

- The postholder must have a minimum of five GCSE passes of level four, or above (or relevant work experience)
- The postholder has proven customer service skills and be able to build and use relationships inside and outside the organisation and be able to emotionally cope with funerals, cremations and / or dealing with the bereaved every day
- The postholder has the ability to maintain gardens, using a variety of non-specialist tools to a high standard and undertake basic maintenance tasks
- The postholder is willing to undertake ICCM qualification(s), to support their ablity to do some roles
- The postholder is able to treat bereaved people sensitively, sympathetically, helpfully and respectfully
- The postholder has experience of using Microsoft Office applications (Outlook, Word, Excel, Powerpoint)
- The postholder's work is accurate, they are conscientious, have good attention to detail, methodical, organised, able to plan, monitor and prioritise their work, to work on their own or as part of a team
- The postholder understands of the principles of data protection legislation, to ensure compliance

PROBLEM SOLVING, COMPLEXITY, USE OF INITIATIVE:

- The postholder understands the purpose of Bereavement Services, how the funeral industry works and how external factors can impact our business. They appreciate how their role fits into North Devon Councils' (NDC) activities, aims, values and vision for the future and be able to explain this to a variety of user groups of the Bereavement Services.
- The postholder tailors their behaviours and approach to different customers, understanding how their relationships and interactions will change with a variety of user groups of the Bereavement Services
- The postholder regularly refreshes their industry knowledge, understand complex crematorium and cemetery laws, data protection and other key legislation, as well as know how our internal guidance policies and procedures relate to Bereavement Service provision
- The postholder quickly recognises any funerary issues and proactively and speedily suggests solutions to Funeral Directors / families, to mitigate impact to that and other services; they refer higher-level problems to a senior officer or manager
- The postholder recognises and implements day-to-day improvements, or speak up and make suggestions where higher-level approval is needed (and they know the difference between these)
- The postholder has an good level of horticultural knowledge and is able to distinguish and understand the treatment and maintenance of varied species'
- The postholder, wherever they are on the site, is able to sensitively and accurately answer on-the-spot queries from mourners / users of our services, able to deal with conflict with confidence and self-assurance and recognise feedback needing more formal acknowledgement
- The postholder is able to control and understand how the cremators work, they recognise when there are technical cremator issues and have the ability to pinpoint if they can fix the issue (within manufacturer's guidelines) or book an engineer visit

DECISIONS, LEVEL OF ADVICE AND IMPACT:

- The postholder has a working knowledge of legislation and procedures, to be able to discuss bereavement requirements enquiries, including cemetery burials, memorials and burial of ashes – with often highly distressed bereaved people
- The postholder produces accurate work when maintaining records and files for the manager, the Registrar this includes both Register of Burials and Register of Cremations
- The postholder handles confidential information, so will immediately need to know their limitations on what can and cannot be shared with whom and why
- The postholder must be able to give customers reassuring and correct answers to their queries and handles confidential information.
- The postholder judges where their authority and autonomy limits are and which of their colleagues to refer to when they reach their limit, after building strong team relationships within the small Bereavement Services wider team.
- The postholder recognises if cremator, or other technical failures, will cause future service provision issues and discuss these immediately with the manager
- The postholder is responsible for their own timetable to ensure booked services, cremations, ashes burials and paperwork meets legislative and internal deadlines, several times every day.

OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY:

- The postholder is a keyholder and responsible for ensuring their work area is safe, secure and alarmed correctly before leaving the site
- The postholder is familiar with and works strictly within Health and Safety at Work Act, The Environmental Protection Act 1990, crematory and cemetary laws and ICCM guidelines
- The postholder inputs, extracts and analyses data from bespoke bereavement software, checking their own work to ensure it is of a very high standard, as they are trusted by the Registrar (BS Manager) to maintain accurate Burial Registers and Cremation Register (official records / public documents for generations to come)
- The postholder carries out general repairs, cleaning, routine garden, grounds and building maintenance to a high standard, as they form part of the facilities management team
- The postholder maintains crematory equipment (rectifying faults safely using own initiative)and monitors / orders stock as appropriate to ensure booked cremations run on time, in accordance with legal deadlines and with customer focus in mind at all times
- The postholder handles large amounts of cash (in donation boxes or for memorial / funeral payments) and is responsible for keeping this secure and recording it properly)
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WORKING CONDITIONS:

- The postholder must be able to work outside all year round, in all weather conditions
- The postholder is regularly required to manoeuvre a very heavy Book of Remembrance, delicately and safely.
- The postholder must, manually and repetitively:
  - transport heavy and precious ashes
  - push coffins into the cremators
  - rake and sweep the cremators
  - manoeuvre heavy trolleys
  - use garden machinery, where noise and vibrations will be present

  *(*Necessary PPE supplied for all roles and vibrations / noise impact monitored*)
- Regular lone worker in gardens and chapels / crematory
- Work effectively whilst being respectful of the bereaved and deal with distressed people on a daily basis, whilst maintaining their own good mental health

COMMUNICATION: (INTERNAL 20% / EXTERNAL 80%)

- The postholder must have excellent communication skills and be confident dealing with all kinds of people in many different situations, as they will be using the phone, have face-to-face conversations, send emails and letters.
- The postholder will have daily contact with colleagues in the rest of Bereavement Services and occasionally with Parks / Legal Services colleagues to ensure burial / memorial information is shared and complies with legislation.
- The postholder will regularly speak to bereaved people / meet relatives of the deceased; it will be imperative they maintain NDC and TDC' s reputation, so they conduct these interactions knowledgably, sympathetically and appropriately in potentially very stressful situations.
- The postholder may interact with Ministers, Officiantes, Funeral Directors, Medical Referees, Solicitors, Monumental Masons and other third-parties; it will be imperative they maintain NDC and TDC's reputation, so they conduct these interactions knowledgably, sympathetically and appropriately in potentially very stressful situations.
- The postholder may occasionally interact with contractors, tradespeople, consultants and other service-users; it will be imperative they maintain NDC and TDC's reputation, so they conduct these interactions knowledgably, sympathetically and appropriately in potentially very stressful situations.

Officer's Signature ..... **Date** .....

Supervising Officer's Signature ..... **Date** .....

Business Unit Manager's Signature ..... **Date** .....

Post Last Evaluated: new role

JOB DESCRIPTION
PERSON SPECIFICATION

BUSINESS UNIT: Customer Focus	POST TITLE: Bereavement Services Officer

THE EMPLOYEE	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
HEALTH & PHYSICAL MAKE UP:	• Good general health. • No specific problems relating to the use of VDU's.	
EDUCATION & TRAINING:	• Prepared to study for ICCM qualifications • Have five GCSE passes level four or above • Previous use of MS Office including Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Outlook.	
WORKS EXPERIENCE & SKILLS:	• Be methodical and organised, able to plan, monitor and prioritise their own work • Excellent communication skills: listening, verbal and written • Proven experience in dealing with customers with sensitivity • Ability to identify new opportunities in service delivery and improvements to working practices that are customer focussed.	• Desire to work in a local government environment • Working with funeral directors, clergy and other stakeholders.
CHARACTER:	• Pleasant manner with a compassionate, calm and composed approach to the bereaved and stakeholders / users. • Ability to understand disability and cultural needs and be flexible to accommodate, or, explain why we cannot say yes to all requests. • Ability to be part of a strong team ethic.	
CIRCUMSTANCES:		