Alex Strangwayes-Booth

BBC

The Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management
Tackling Funeral Poverty Seminar 2016
PUBLIC HEALTH FUNERALS AND THE BBC

How Persistence Paid Off.

Alex Strangwayes-Booth
Religious Affairs Producer, BBC English Regions
WHY DO AN FOI ABOUT PH FUNERALS?

Burial space in England 'could run out in 20 years'

By Alex Strangwayes-Booth
Religious affairs reporter, BBC News

27 September 2013
We approached 436 councils. Of the 409 who were responsible for Public Health Funerals, we had full responses from 300 (all the data requested, for all the years).

The data is taken from those 300.

Many councils publish the data online now. But not in the form I wanted it! I spent a lot of time with a calculator!

It took a year to gather the data.

And another few months to crunch it.
'Paupers' funerals' cost councils £1.7m

By Caroline Wyatt & Alex Strangwayes-Booth
BBC News

30 November 2015 | UK
North West has the most funerals – followed by London.

The South East saw the biggest increase in numbers of PH funerals – 32% more.

Biggest rise in costs in the South West – 63%.

Birmingham did 245 PH funerals in 2014.
WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

- Government Select Committee Inquiry
- BBC Data contributed to their findings
- Are we now looking at an overhaul of the funeral industry and the Social Fund, and could our data have helped push that forward – I like to think so!