

ICCM



Professionalism through specialism

Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria

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Section One

Introduction

The Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria ...What is it?

The *ICCM Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria* is a tool to encourage organisations to pursue recognised principles of organisational *excellence*.

The *Excellence Criteria* have been specifically designed for organisations providing and operating cemeteries and crematoria, using the experiences of organisations working within this Industry. The Criteria cover all issues which affect the value provided to communities through these services.

The Criteria are based on and linked to the 32 sub-criteria of the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) Excellence Model (often known in the UK as the "Business Excellence Model"), and can be used as industry-specific "Areas to Address" for these sub-criteria. This Model is used throughout Europe to identify generic principles of organisational *excellence*, and there is currently significant growth in its use by UK local authorities.

The *Excellence Criteria* incorporate the relevant elements of existing generic "quality" initiatives; interpreting them for cemeteries and crematoria (e.g. ISO9002, ISO14001, EMAS, Charter Mark, Investors in People, etc), and incorporate the statutory requirements and guidelines for the duty of Best Value.

The *Excellence Criteria* reflect the underpinning service principles identified in the *ICCM Charter for the Bereaved* and the need to adopt these principles and to measure the service against them. Throughout the Criteria, links are made to the *ICCM Charter for the Bereaved* and the *Reference Copy*, to ensure that the Industry views these initiatives as part of the same continuous improvement process.

The *Excellence Criteria* are presented in a structure, style and language which is suitable for Industry professionals. The structure of the Criteria is aligned to the ILAM Parks and Green Space Quality Criteria, to allow for integrated use of the two sets of Criteria by departments or authorities wishing to adopt one continuous improvement programmes for its parks and green space and burial and cremation services

The Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria ...What is it for?

The *ICCM Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria* is designed to be used as an organisational-wide Self Assessment and improvement planning tool. Explanation and advice relating to Self Assessment and improvement planning techniques are provided in Section 3. This is valuable for the following reasons:-

- (a) It enables achievable, realistic improvements in effectiveness and efficiency to be made;
- (b) It enables organisations to move on from the highly successful *ICCM Charter for the Bereaved* to new levels of organisational *excellence*;
- (c) It is a credible and useful Best Value Review and Performance Planning tool;

- (d) It can be used as part of a departmental or council-wide continuous improvement programme, based on the EFQM Excellence Model;
- (e) It assists in the development of long and medium term strategy;
- (f) It provides a vehicle for staff involvement and "ownership";
- (g) It helps to develop understanding of the way in which organisations work and recognised, modern concepts of organisational continuous improvement;
- (h) It provides the basis for best practice/process benchmarking with organisations within and outside of the Industry.

The tool is part of the ICCM Continuous Improvement Toolkit, which comprises 4 interrelated tools designed to help organisations improve the service provided, responding to the changing demands upon the industry, particularly the duty of Best Value:-

- (I) *ICCM Charter for the Bereaved*
- (II) *ICCM Best Value Charter Assessment Scheme*
- (III) *ICCM Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria*
- (IV) *ICCM Excellence Recognition Scheme*

The *ICCM Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria* is an easy-to-use tool designed to assist in achieving structured continuous improvement to new levels of *excellence*, moving on from the *ICCM Charter for the Bereaved* and *Best Value Charter Assessment Scheme*. It is a recognised Best Value Review and Performance Planning tool, and can be used as part of a departmental or council-wide continuous improvement programme, based on the EFQM Excellence Model programme.

The Excellence Criteria also provide the basis for the *ICCM Excellence Recognition Scheme*. Guidance for this Scheme accompanies this Pack.

Who will benefit from the Excellence Criteria?

The *ICCM Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria* applies to all organisations involved in providing these services, whether private, public or voluntary. Where the service is delivered in partnership between different organisations or departments, the Criteria and the assessment processes should be applied to all organisations, as though they were one organisation. This principle also applies where the service has been contracted by the public sector to the private sector.

Clearly, many of the *Excellence Criteria* are affected by the functions of the wider organisation i.e. local authority or company. This is particularly relevant to the *Leadership* and *Policy and Strategy* Areas in the criteria. Therefore, the functions which have an impact upon these issues should be involved in the implementation of the Criteria; e.g. department leaders, etc.

No organisations are disallowed or discouraged from using the *Excellence Criteria*. Any organisation can develop and implement a Self Assessment programme using the Excellence Criteria, regardless of their current stage of development. However, the *ICCM Charter for the Bereaved* and the *ICCM Best Value Charter Assessment Scheme* are useful foundation tools for your continuous improvement programme.

Links with other *Quality Initiatives and Standards*

The *ICCM Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria* is not designed to compete with other *quality* initiatives and standards. It is designed to incorporate the relevant elements of these initiatives, putting them into a framework, which is user-friendly, practical and of real value to continuous improvement.

The *Excellence Criteria* can be used as part of an integrated approach to Best Value and continuous improvement, in conjunction with the other industry specific *quality* schemes. The link with the *ILAM Parks and Green Space Quality Scheme* is particularly significant. The *Excellence Criteria* are designed so that they can easily be added to the *Parks and Green Space Quality Criteria* to create an integrated set of criteria. The integrated use of these Criteria along with other connected criteria, such as *Quest* (the UK Quality Scheme for Sport and Leisure), provides significant improvement opportunities; e.g:-

- improving the departmental processes;
- developing common approaches;
- improving the relationship between sections;
- developing a seamless, *customer shaped* service.

The *Elements* in the *Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria* can be used as industry-specific sub-criteria for the *EFQM Excellence Model*. Therefore the *Excellence Criteria* can be used as part of an integrated council-wide continuous improvement programme; e.g. Self Assessment and improvement planning against criteria designed specifically for other council services, based upon the EFQM Excellence Model. This approach will maximise the improvement opportunities.

The *Excellence Criteria* are designed to incorporate the relevant principles of generic "quality" standards and initiatives; such as *ISO9000* (quality management), *Investors in People*, *Charter Mark*, *ISO 14001* (environmental management) and *OHSAS18001* (health and safety management). The relevant principles of these standards and initiatives are interpreted and presented in way which suits the cemetery and crematoria industry. In this way the ICCM Excellence Criteria are the "big picture" of organisational excellence. If an organisation is pursuing the criteria in any of these generic "quality" standards and initiatives, they are pursuing part of the *ICCM Excellence Criteria*.

As stated in the first section, the *Excellence Criteria* are part of the *ICCM Continuous Improvement Toolkit*, comprising 4 interrelated tools designed to help organisation improve the service provided, responding to the changing demands upon the Industry, particularly the duty of Best Value:-

- (I) *ICCM Charter for the Bereaved*
- (II) *ICCM Best Value Charter Assessment Scheme*
- (III) *ICCM Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria*
- (IV) *ICCM Excellence Recognition Scheme*

The *Excellence Criteria* are designed to help organisations move on from the *Charter for the Bereaved*, to new levels of excellence and continuous improvement. The Excellence Criteria reflect the need to adopt the underpinning service principles identified in the *ICCM Charter for the Bereaved*, and the need to measure the service against them, using the *ICCM Best Value Charter Assessment Scheme*. Throughout the *Excellence Criteria*,

links are made to the *ICCM Charter for the Bereaved*, to ensure that the Industry views these two sets of criteria as part of the same continuous improvement process.

The links between the *Excellence Criteria* and the *EFQM Excellence Model*, the *ILAM Parks and Green Space Quality Criteria* and the underpinning service principles in the *ICCM Charter for the Bereaved* are shown in Appendix Three.

Section Two

**The
Excellence Criteria**

Structure of Excellence Criteria

The *Excellence Criteria* are structured into the following 18 **Areas**:-

1. Leadership
2. Public Consultation and Research
3. Policy and Strategy
4. Process Management and Improvement
5. Environmental Performance Planning
6. Financial Management
7. Staff Planning, Training and Development
8. Service Design
9. Grounds Maintenance
10. Burials
11. Cremations
12. Buildings, Equipment and Consumables
13. Health and Safety Management
14. Communication with the Bereaved
15. Feedback
16. Public Relations
17. Measurement and Review
18. Results Achieved

Each **Area** is sub-divided into **Aims**. These are the criteria, against which the organisation carries out Self Assessment and is externally assessed (if required). They do not tell you how to design and deliver the service. They identify what should be pursued in the various areas of your organisation. Area 18 asks the organisation to analyse the actual performance of the organisation in pursuing its desired outcomes. Therefore, this section does not have **Aims** in the same way as the other Areas

Each **Aim** is sub-divided into **Elements**. These are the issues which should be considered by your organisation in pursuing the Aims. The Elements are not designed to be prescriptive or to tell you how to design and deliver the service. They identify the specific issues, which should be considered in designing and delivering the service. Some of the Elements may not be completely applicable to your organisation.

Notes are included in some of the **Areas** to provide explanation and guidance, as necessary.

In Appendix One, there is a list of **Useful Publications**, which could assist you in making the necessary improvements.

The Excellence Criteria

1. Leadership

NOTE:

"Leaders" are defined as people in the organisation who have influence on the behaviour of other people; e.g. directors, managers, supervisors, project team leaders, elected members, union representatives, etc.

Aim A:

Leaders demonstrate commitment to providing value-adding cemetery and crematoria services, and to the concepts and practices of continuous improvement

Elements:

1. Leaders clearly establish the organisation's purpose, values and philosophies.
2. The concepts and practices of continuous improvement are reflected in the organisation's values and philosophies.
3. Leaders clearly establish the leadership style.
4. Leaders communicate the value provided by the cemetery and crematoria services, throughout the organisation.
5. Leaders demonstrate that they understand the organisation as a "system", including the significance of "processes" (see Area 4).
6. The organisation's system includes identification, planning and implementation of improvements to enabling approaches.
7. Leaders allocate resources to organisational improvements.
8. Leaders show commitment to the "Rights" and "Targets" in the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved.
9. Leaders review the effectiveness of their leadership.

Aim B:

Leaders create a system in which the team and individuals "own" the responsibility for planning, delivering and improving the service.

Elements:

1. The organisation's structure supports "ownership" of the service and its success amongst the team and individuals.

2. Members of the cemetery and crematoria team are actively involved in the development of policy and strategy, targets and plans.
3. Leaders communicate the organisation's purpose, values/philosophies, policy and strategy, targets and plans throughout the team.
4. Leaders encourage and enable the team to identify, plan and initiate improvements to the facilities and way in which the organisation operates.
5. Leaders support team working.
6. Leaders support personal improvement and lifelong learning amongst the team members.
7. Leaders encourage an innovative and creative approach to the services and how they are operated.
8. Leaders recognise the achievements of individuals and teams.

Aim C:

Leaders seek to develop partnerships and relationships with other bodies to deliver integrated cemetery and crematoria services for the community.

Elements:

1. Leaders initiate value-adding partnerships with commercial, public and voluntary bodies; e.g. funeral directors, etc.
2. Leaders are involved in discussions with sections of the community regarding the needs for the service; e.g. through "Friends Groups", etc.
3. Leaders are involved in discussions with public, voluntary and commercial organisations regarding their needs relating to the service.
4. Leaders work to ensure that other local authority departments are working in partnership with the cemetery and crematoria team.
5. Leaders discuss policy and strategy with partners.
6. Leaders are involved in resolving any strategic conflicts with partners.
7. Leaders are involved in the activities of the relevant professional bodies (e.g. the ICCM, etc) and support their initiatives (e.g. the ICCM Best Value Charter Assessment Scheme, etc).
8. Leaders promote the principles of continuous improvement and organisational excellence

2. Public Consultation and Research

NOTE:

These criteria are based upon the published Best Value requirements and statutory guidance.

Aim A:

A proactive approach to formal and informal consultation is implemented, to develop an understanding of the needs, wants and expectations of the various individuals and groups in the community for cemetery and crematoria services.

Elements:

1. A programme of regular public consultation is planned and implemented, to develop an understanding of the needs, wants and expectations of the various individuals and groups in the community for cemetery and crematoria services; e.g. local bereavement groups, etc.
2. Regular dialogue takes place with individuals and community groups, to assist in identifying their needs, wants and expectations for cemetery and crematoria services.
3. The organisation promotes better understanding of cemetery and crematoria services throughout society, to assist people to identify their needs; e.g. open days, etc

Aim B:

External market information is used to develop an understanding of the needs of the various individuals and groups in the community for cemetery and crematoria services.

Elements:

1. Awareness and understanding of current demographics, socio-economics and other community factors affecting the provision of cemetery and crematoria services is developed and maintained.
2. Awareness and understanding of political, technical and legal issues relating to cemetery and crematoria services is developed and maintained.
3. Appropriate secondary research data is identified and used regularly to develop understanding and awareness of the needs of the various individuals and groups in the community for cemetery and crematoria services.
4. Awareness of national cross-cutting social, economic and environmental themes and how these relate to the community is developed and maintained.

5. Awareness of international, national and regional policies, initiatives and trends relating to cemetery and crematoria services is developed and maintained.
6. Knowledge of the practices of other organisations providing cemetery and crematoria services is developed and maintained.

3. Policy and Strategy

NOTE:

These criteria are based upon the published Best Value requirements and statutory guidance

The ICCM Excellence Criteria define “policy and strategy” as the long and medium term direction that the organisation is taking to ensure that it is meeting real needs of the community for burial and cremation services. “Policy and strategy” could include “policy statements”, “strategic aims”, “strategic objectives”, etc. Performance targets and plans are seen as the means by which “policy and strategy” are implemented. “Policy and strategy” could be reviewed and developed on a council, departmental or service basis. Best Value Reviews should be seen as in-depth reviews of the relevance and effectiveness of policy and strategy.

Aim A:

The organisation reviews and develops its strategic approach to ensure that it is attempting to meet the needs and expectations of the community for cemetery and crematoria services.

Elements:

1. A programme of reviews is developed and documented in order to challenge, review and develop policy and strategy; e.g. Best Value Reviews.
2. Information from the public consultation and research (see Area 2) is used in the reviews.
3. Information from performance measurement, Self Assessment (against these Criteria) and learning activities are used in the reviews.
4. Links to the wider policy and strategy of the organisation and area are considered and developed in the reviews.
5. Links to the national cross-cutting social, economic and environmental agenda are considered and developed in the review; e.g. social inclusion, health, lifelong learning, etc.
6. The stakeholders of the cemetery and crematoria services are clearly established; e.g. the bereaved, funeral directors, stone masons, etc.
7. The reviews identify where the service is now and where it wants to be in the future.

8. The reviews challenge the most effective and efficient way to operate cemetery and crematoria services, including the use of private, public and voluntary partnerships; e.g. operating through Non Profit Distributing Organisations, etc.

Aim B:

The organisation effectively implements and communicates its policy and strategy.

Elements:

1. Specific, measurable and realistic short and long-term targets are developed and reviewed for the identified performance indicators/measures, to focus on development and sustainability.
2. Targets are set with full recognition of best practice, statutory guidance (i.e. Best Value guidance) and the current performance of similar services.
3. The organisation ensures that appropriate resources are allocated to enable policy and strategy to be pursued.
4. Development/improvement plans designed to enable the organisation to pursue policy and strategy are developed.
5. The policy and strategy, targets and plans are documented in a way which meets statutory requirements and guidance and is user-friendly; e.g. "Best Value Plans", "service plans", "business plans", etc
6. Policy and strategy, targets and plans are discussed and communicated throughout the team and the wider organisation in a manner which encourages ownership.
7. Policy and strategy, targets and plans are discussed and communicated with partners, and any strategic conflicts with partners are resolved.
8. Policy and strategy, targets and plans are discussed and communicated with the community; e.g. through open days, public documents, etc.

4. Process Management and Improvement

NOTE:

A process is a sequence of steps, which is designed to generate value for the various stakeholders; e.g. the bereaved, partners, staff, etc. Processes should be considered "through the eyes of the customer", to ensure that the organisation maintains a focus on customer needs and expectations, rather than on traditional organisational issues. Processes should also be considered from "end-to-end", including all of the steps which affect the stakeholder (including the functions of internal and external partners).

All organisations providing cemeteries and crematoria services deliver the service through a number of processes. These include "core processes" which directly deliver the service (e.g. burials, cremations, etc) and "support processes", which provide the platform for the "core processes" (e.g. recruitment, payroll, etc). Different levels of process will exist; e.g. the burial process could be sub-divided into processes for dealing with enquiries, bookings, grave digging, etc. Processes should not be confused with "functions", which are the tasks of the various staff sections; e.g. the gardeners' role, etc.

Areas 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 identify some of the core processes potentially involved in designing and providing burial and cremation services. The Elements in these Areas identify some of the issues to be considered when planning and improving these processes. The ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy should be used to help plan and improve the processes.

Aim A:

The processes involved in providing cemetery and crematoria services are systematically identified and managed to ensure that they are effective and efficient.

Elements:

1. The framework of processes involved in providing effective and efficient cemetery and crematoria services is identified, including "core" and "support" processes".
2. Responsibilities for managing, reviewing and improving processes are clearly defined.
3. The processes are documented from "end-to-end", including responsibilities and interface with partners (e.g. other local authority partners, funeral directors, etc), and these documents are controlled to ensure up-to-date copies are available for staff.
4. Supporting working instructions, documents and forms are clearly documented where necessary to assist communication and training, and these documents are controlled to ensure up-to-date copies are available to relevant staff.

5. Service standards are clearly defined, based upon the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved "Rights" and "Targets".
6. Performance measures and indicators relating to the effectiveness of the processes are identified and documented.
7. The cemetery and crematoria services team is involved in identifying and planning the processes.
8. Staff are trained in the relevant processes.

Aim B:

The processes involved in operating cemetery and crematoria services are improved as required, in order to generate increasing value for the stakeholders, particularly the bereaved.

Elements:

1. Measurement and review activity (see Area 17), using the identified process measures and indicators is used to identify the need for process improvements.
2. Processes are improved to improve their ability to meet the needs, wants and expectations of the bereaved.
3. Non-value adding work is identified and minimised; e.g. unnecessary inspection of work, unnecessary movement of paper, etc.
3. Process/best practice benchmarking is used to assist in improving the processes
4. Techniques are used to stimulate creativity when improving processes.
5. The "Targets" and guidance in the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved and other published best practice are used to improve processes.
6. The cemetery and crematoria services team is involved in improving processes.
7. Where appropriate, partners (including other local authority departments and funeral directors, etc) are involved in improving processes
8. Staff are trained in the improvements.
9. Process documents, supporting documents and forms are updated and reissued as necessary to reflect process improvements.
10. Changes to processes are communicated within the team and with relevant partners.

5. Environmental Performance Planning

NOTE:

The ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy identifies best practice relating to environmental issues in cemetery and crematoria management. This section considers how these issues are considered in the organisation's policy and strategy.

Aim A:

The organisation's formal policy and strategy reflects a commitment to sustaining and improving the environment, particularly relating to bio-diversity, management of waste, pollution, global warming and the use of non-renewable, global resources.

Elements:

1. The organisation should establish environmental impact data for all aspects relating to cemetery and crematoria services.
2. An environmental policy is included in the organisation's formal statements of policy and strategy.
3. Agenda 21 issues should be incorporated in policy and strategy.
4. Targets for environmental sustainability and improvement are incorporated into the organisation's performance targets.

Aim B

The environmental policy and strategy is effectively implemented and communicated.

Elements:

1. Environmental action plans are developed and implemented, including a bio-diversity action plan.
2. Responsibilities for environmental management are clearly established.
3. The organisation ensures that contractors, partners and suppliers contribute in a positive way to environmental performance.
4. The organisation incorporates environmental issues in its planned and documented processes.
5. Environmental issues are included in staff training programmes.

6. Environmental performance is measured and reviewed as part of the organisation's measurement and review processes; e.g. environmental impact assessments, etc.

6. Financial Management

Aim A:

The organisation values the cemeteries and crematoria as assets, and is committed to using financial resources to ensure sustainability and to enhance these assets.

Elements:

1. A pricing strategy is developed and implemented, based on policy and strategy, ensuring that there are no barriers to using the services for parts of the community.
2. Long-term renewal, refurbishment and development plans are developed.
3. The organisation has a strategic approach to attracting sufficient financial resources.

Aim B:

The organisation's financial resources are managed in a way which ensures added value to the community

Element:

1. Income and expenditure budgets are planned, based upon the organisation's policy and strategy and staffing plans.
2. Financial agreements in contractual relationships are clearly defined and implemented as planned.
3. Responsibility for managing budgets is clearly defined and communicated.
4. Responsibility for ordering supplies and services and expenditure is clearly defined and communicated.
5. The process for dealing with variations from planned budget is clearly defined.
6. Regular reviews of financial performance are planned and in operation.

7. Staff Planning, Training and Development

NOTE:

The ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy identifies best practice relating to staff and staff expertise.

Aim A:

Cemetery and crematoria staffing is planned, managed and improved to enable the services to be provided safely, effectively and efficiently

Elements:

1. The organisation's policy and strategy incorporates staffing issues; e.g. equal opportunity policies, staff structure, terms of employment, redundancy, grievance, etc.
2. The organisation plans and reviews the staff needed to design, plan and implement the service, based upon policy and strategy, the identified processes and relevant cemetery and crematoria industry guidelines.
3. Partnerships arrangements and innovative ways of working are considered to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of cemetery and crematoria services; e.g. the use of private contractors, team working, multi-functionalism, etc.
4. Hours and periods of work are planned, based upon the needs of the bereaved and statutory requirements, and these are communicated effectively.
5. Sufficient staff cover for long and short term absences is planned.
6. The organisations ensures fairness in all staffing issues, including equal opportunities.
7. Facilities, services and benefits to support staff are identified, provided and reviewed; e.g. staff areas, flexible hours, counselling services, child care, etc.
8. Remuneration is designed to encourage a sustainable, continuously improving service.
9. Feedback from all staff is used as a means of developing policies, strategy and plans relating to staffing; e.g. through employee surveys, appraisal and development schemes.

Aim B:

The organisation ensures that all staff involved in planning and implementing the service are competent, and that the service is improved continuously through ongoing training and development.

Elements:

1. The competencies required to design, plan and deliver the services are identified, based upon National Occupational Standards and industry guidelines; e.g. the Code of Safe Working Practice in Cemeteries, etc.
2. The recruitment process is planned so that staff are appointed with the required competence or potential competence, ensuring equity; e.g. supporting employment from all ethnic groups, etc.
3. Staff training needs are identified to ensure that staff develop and maintain the required competencies.
4. Personal and/or team targets and projects are agreed, based on the organisation's policy and strategy, performance targets and improvement plans.
5. Personal development plans are developed and implemented to encourage continuous learning and development, in support of policy and strategy (including in-house training, self-learning and development, informal learning and formal training courses).
6. Staff are encouraged to obtain relevant S/NVQs.
7. Individuals are encouraged to pursue appropriate qualifications; e.g. the Diploma of the Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management, the Cemetery Operators Training Scheme, etc.
8. Team skills are developed.
9. Creative and innovative behaviour is encouraged and supported.
10. Individual and/team performance and personal development needs are reviewed on a regular basis.
11. Effective dialogue is achieved within the cemetery and crematoria services team and with partners.
12. The identified training activity is programmed, conducted and reviewed.
13. The organisation encourages continuous staff development.

8. Service Design

NOTE:

The ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy identifies best practice relating to staff and staff expertise.

Aim:

Cemetery and crematoria facilities and services are designed and regularly reviewed and developed, bearing in mind the identified needs, wants and expectations of the community.

Element:

1. Cemetery and crematoria services are designed and developed in line with the organisation's policy and strategy (see Area 3).
2. Public consultation, research and other feedback from the bereaved are used to design, review and develop the services (see Area 2 and Area 14).
3. The "Rights" and "Targets" identified in the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved are considered when designing, reviewing and developing the services available for the bereaved; e.g. the choices of grave available, etc.
4. Partners are involved in designing, reviewing and developing the services.
5. Staff are involved in designing, reviewing and developing the services.
6. Public consultation and research are used to identify and resolve any barriers to locating and accessing cemeteries and crematoria; e.g. for wheelchair users, etc.
7. The facilities and services are designed to reflect cultural needs.
8. The services offered include the opportunity to hold a burial or cremation service at a cemetery or crematorium.
9. The organisation understands and is sensitive to the psychological and therapeutic needs of the bereaved in developing the facilities and services.
10. Services should be introduced which directly enhance the environment; e.g. woodland and wildflower graves, etc.
11. Plans are developed and implemented for improvements to the facilities and the nature of the services offered.

9. Grounds Maintenance

NOTE:

The ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy identifies best practice relating to grounds maintenance.

This Area does not just relate to the work of the grounds maintenance team/contractors. It relates to a range of functions involved in the grounds maintenance process.

Aim A:

Preparation and maintenance of the grounds is planned, based upon the identified needs of the bereaved, and these plans are implemented effectively.

Elements:

1. The specific responsibilities for grounds maintenance are agreed and clearly identified.
2. Specifications for the grounds maintenance are developed based upon the expectations of the bereaved, recognised good practice (e.g. the guidance in the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved), published standards and available financial resources.
3. The grounds are kept tidy and free from litter through regular inspections.
4. Conservation issues are incorporated into the grounds maintenance specifications as applicable.
5. The grounds maintenance specifications are translated into user-friendly work plans.
6. The required level of instructions regarding how to carry out grounds maintenance is evaluated based on staff competencies, and these instructions are produced.
7. The plans for grounds maintenance are designed so that safety risks to the bereaved and staff are minimised.
8. The grounds maintenance staff are trained/briefed on the work plans and the techniques involved in the tasks.
9. Records are completed and maintained of the planned work completed, omitted or re-programmed.
10. The specification/work programmes are evaluated on a regular basis to determine whether items should be re-scheduled or omitted, due to environmental or resource factors.

Aim B:

Grounds maintenance work outside of the planned work is identified and action is taken effectively.

Elements:

1. Grounds maintenance work outside of the planned work is identified on a routine basis and immediate action is taken, ensuring that the area is safe and tidy; e.g. through planned inspections, etc.
2. Responsibilities and suitable deadlines for the remedial work are identified and communicated.
3. Records are completed and maintained of the remedial work completed.
4. The remedial work and action are reviewed to identify trends and to initiate any changes to the planned work.

10. Burials

NOTE:

The ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy identifies best practice relating to the burial process.

Aim A:

Burials are organised and conducted in a dignified manner, to meet the identified needs and expectations of the bereaved, based on the statutory requirements and the standards identified in the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved ("Rights" and "Targets").

Elements:

1. The organisation ensures adherence to statutory requirements for burials.
2. The organisation achieves the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved "Rights" and pursues the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved "Targets" relating to the burial process (including cemetery memorials).
3. The cremation procedure is based on agreed industry best practice; e.g. the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy and the ICCM Guiding Principles for Burial and Cremation Services.
4. A system is in operation to receive provisional bookings at all times.
5. The organisation ensures that all documentation associated with this process is easy to use and understand.
6. Graves are excavated and reinstated as required by the ICCM Code of Safe Working Practice.
7. Excavated graves are regularly inspected to ensure safety
8. The cemetery office maintains contact with the funeral director or person arranging the funeral, to accommodate any changes requested by the bereaved.
9. Inspections of memorials are carried out on a regular basis, and action is taken to ensure that they are safe.
10. The organisation provides a focal point for discussing and dealing with any concerns or queries regarding the grave or burial, after the funeral.

11. Cremations

NOTE:

The ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy identifies best practice relating to the cremation process.

Aim A:

Cremations are organised and conducted in a dignified manner, to meet the identified needs and expectations of the bereaved, based on the statutory requirements and the standards identified in the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved ("Rights" and "Targets").

Elements:

1. The organisation ensures adherence to statutory requirements for cremations, including the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
2. The organisation meets the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved "Rights" and pursues the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved "Targets" relating to the cremation process (including memorials).
3. The cremation procedure is based on agreed industry best practice; e.g. the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy, the FBCA Code of Cremation Practice and the ICCM Guiding Principles for Burial and Cremation Services.
4. A system is in operation to receive provisional bookings at all times.
5. The organisation ensures that all documentation associated with this process is easy to use and understand.
6. The opportunity is provided for people wanting to view the facilities prior to a cremation service.
7. The remains are dealt with according to the instructions of the applicant for cremation.
8. The identity of the deceased is clearly identified throughout the cremation procedure.
9. The organisation provides a focal point for discussing and dealing with any concerns or queries regarding the cremation, after the funeral.
10. Inspections of memorials are carried out on a regular basis, and action is taken to ensure that they are safe.
11. A minimum period for retaining cremated remains which are not taken away is established to enable the bereaved to consider the options available and make an informed decision before the final placement is made.

12. Buildings, Equipment and Consumables

NOTE:

The ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy identifies best practice relating to The negative impact upon the environment arising from buildings, equipment and consumables.

Aim A:

Suitable equipment and consumables are provided to support the provision of the service.

Elements:

1. The provision of suitable equipment and consumables is based on the identified needs of the bereaved and staff.
2. Suppliers of equipment and consumables are selected to ensure that they add value to the service provided.
3. Stock control is managed to ensure that sufficient stock is available and that it is supplied and remains in a suitable condition.
4. Storage space is optimised, and stores are tidy and appropriately secure.

Aim B:

Maintenance of buildings and equipment is planned, based upon the needs of the service and available resources, and these plans are effectively implemented.

Elements:

1. A planned maintenance and inspection schedule is in operation for the equipment.
2. A planned schedule of refurbishment and renewal is in operation for the buildings and equipment.
3. A planned cleaning schedule is in operation for the buildings.
4. External suppliers of planned maintenance services are selected, based upon their competence and their ability to meet the organisation's requirements.
5. External contractors working in the facilities are managed to ensure safety, effective relations with the public and completion of the work in a satisfactory manner.

Aim C:

Repairs to the buildings and equipment are carried out in an effective manner to ensure that any adverse effects are minimised.

Elements:

1. Building and equipment faults are identified on a routine basis, and immediate action is taken, ensuring that the area is safe.
2. Regular housekeeping inspections and remedial action are carried out on a regular basis throughout the day.
3. Responsibilities, action and suitable deadlines for further remedial work are identified and communicated to staff.
4. Details of the identified faults and the remedial work carried out are recorded.
5. The faults and action taken are reviewed to monitor progress, to identify trends and to initiate any changes to the planned work.

Aim D:

The negative impact upon the environment arising from buildings, equipment and consumables is reduced.

Elements:

1. Plans are in place to reduce the negative impact on the environment from pollution.
2. Disposal of waste is managed effectively and recycling systems are in operation.
3. Use of gas, electricity and water is monitored and optimised.
4. Use of non-renewable global resources is reviewed and reduced.
5. Use of pesticides should be reduced.
6. Global warming issues are reviewed and improved.

13. Health and Safety Management

NOTE:

The criteria in this Area are based on the requirements of the management of Health and safety Regulations and the requirements of OHSAS18001 (Occupational Health and Safety Standard).

Aim A:

The organisation implements a planned and proactive approach to the management of health and safety for the bereaved and staff, in conjunction with partners; e.g. Funeral Directors, etc.

Elements:

1. The organisation has developed and implemented an effective health and safety policy and health and safety management system.
2. Responsibilities for health and safety issues within the organisation and amongst partners involved in implementing the services are clearly defined and communicated.
3. The organisations ensure that all staff are trained and competent to carry out their health and safety responsibilities effectively.
4. A formal risk assessment of all hazards to staff and users has been carried out, and risk reduction actions have been planned and implemented; following the guidance in the ICCM Code of Practice for Cemeteries.
5. Assessments of hazardous substances and actions to reduce the risks involved in their use have been carried out, in accordance with the COSHH Regulations.
6. Safe working practices are planned and implemented based on the risk assessment and published industry best practice, involving partners where necessary.
7. Accident and emergency procedures are planned and documented, in conjunction with partners where appropriate.
8. Provision exists to update the organisation on new requirements/developments in health and safety issues.
9. Safety performance information is used to review the effectiveness of health and safety management, and improvements are initiated as a result.

14. Communication with the Bereaved

NOTE:

The ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy identifies best practice relating to the communication with the bereaved.

Aim A:

The organisation manages communication with the bereaved so that all staff deal with users in a sensitive, friendly, professional and informative manner, portraying a suitable image.

Elements:

1. The organisation ensures that all staff have appropriate skills for communicating with the bereaved.
2. The organisation ensures that staff are sensitive to the specific needs of people and groups in the community regarding burial and cremation.
3. Sufficient and prompt information is provided in response to enquiries, without the person making the enquiry being "passed on" to another member of staff.
4. The opportunity is provided to contact the cemetery/crematoria service by telephone at any time on any working day to make a provisional booking or to discuss any issues.
5. The organisation ensures that all staff who come into contact with the bereaved are dressed smartly in an appropriate style.
6. Staff are available at the cemetery/crematorium throughout the day and at weekends to deal with enquiries or queries.
7. The organisation communicates rights and standards to the bereaved, based upon the ICCM Charter of the Bereaved and the Guiding Principles for Burial and Cremation Services.
8. The organisation provides information and advice to the bereaved regarding choices of coffins and containers and promotes greater choice.
9. Written details of regulations and fees are provided for the public.
10. Guidance on the services available, how to use the services and how to handle bereavement is made available to the community.
11. Information regarding the organisation's performance is clearly displayed in public areas.
12. The organisation ensures that the written communication style is appropriate for the needs of the bereaved.

15 Feedback

NOTE:

The ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy identifies some best practice relating to the feedback from the bereaved.

Aim A:

Routine feedback from the bereaved regarding the service is encouraged and dealt with in a manner which attempts to achieve satisfaction, and this feedback is used as a means of improving the service.

Elements:

1. The bereaved are encouraged to give feedback regarding the service received, and it is clear to the bereaved how this feedback can be given.
2. The organisation ensures that feedback is dealt with by staff in a "one-stop" manner, attempting to achieve immediate customer satisfaction.
3. The feedback is recorded whenever practical.
4. The bereaved have the opportunity to provide feedback on a formal form/card.
5. Feedback is responded to after investigation in a manner which provide total satisfaction.
6. The use of an external arbiter is made clearly available if the response to feedback is not thought satisfactory
7. Action is identified as a result of the feedback, and this is implemented and monitored.
8. The feedback is reviewed by the organisation to enable the service to be improved.

16. Public Relations

Aim A:

Cemetery and crematoria services are effectively communicated throughout the community.

Elements:

1. Public relations activities are planned, including advertising and promotional activity, and responsibilities for the activities are clearly defined,
2. Contact details and the location of cemeteries and crematoria are clearly communicated to the public.
3. Cemeteries and crematoria are clearly identified through signs.
4. Information is provided regarding the services, helping people to make informed choices about burial and cremation options.
5. The effectiveness of the public relations activities is reviewed, and improvements made as a result.

17 Measurement and Review

NOTE:

These criteria are based upon the published Best Value requirements and statutory guidance.

Aim A:

The organisation regularly measures and reviews its progress in pursuing its desired outcomes, to enable improvements to be planned and initiated.

Elements:

1. A regular programme of Self Assessment against these "Excellence Criteria" is carried out.
2. The organisation uses the ICCM Best Value Charter Assessment Scheme,
3. Regular performance reviews take place to analyse performance results.
4. A comprehensive range of performance measures/indicators is identified to measure, predict and understand the outputs and outcomes of cemetery and crematoria services (e.g. CIPFA indicators, ICCM Best Value Charter Assessment scores, ICCM Excellence Recognition scores, etc),
5. Perceptions of the service amongst the community, the bereaved (see Area 2) and staff (see Area 7) are included in the performance measures.
6. Performance against the identified performance targets (see Area 3) is considered as part of the reviews/Self Assessments.
7. Trends of results in the identified performance measures/indicators are considered as part of the reviews/Self Assessments.
8. Comparisons of results with similar organisations and best practice for key performance measures/indicators are considered as part of the reviews/Self Assessments; e.g. through CIPFA figures, local benchmarking groups, ICCM Best Value Charter Assessment results, etc.
9. Implementation and effectiveness of planned processes are reviewed on a regular basis, using relevant performance measures and indicators and review techniques (see Area 4); e.g. variation principles, "cost of quality", internal audits, etc.
10. The various measurement and review activities result in plans to improve the organisation's approaches, processes or the services provided.

18 Results Achieved

Aim of this Area:

To analyse how well the organisation is performing in achieving its desired outcomes throughout the community that it serves.

Elements:

Using the methods identified in Area 17, the organisation should analyse the following performance result issues:-

1. What is the perception of the bereaved regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of cemetery and crematoria services?
2. What is the perception of the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation amongst its partners?
3. What is the perception of the effectiveness of the organisation amongst staff?
4. What do the organisation's results for its performance indicators predict and identify regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of the service?
5. What do the results show regarding the achievement of the organisation's planned strategic outcomes?

Section Three

Self Assessment and Improvement Planning

Introduction

This section explains how to carry out Self Assessment against the *ICCM Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria*, and to plan resulting improvements in how the organisation operates. As indicated in the Introduction section, Self Assessment and improvement planning are key elements of improving the service.

This section contains comprehensive advice and guidance regarding Self Assessment and improvement planning. Verbal advice and guidance is available from QLM or ICCM if required (see Contact Details in Appendix Four)..

What is Self Assessment?

Self Assessment is a significant aspect of continuous improvement. Self Assessment is simply a comprehensive, systematic, regular review of the progress of the organisation, carried out by people involved in the organisation, resulting in plans for improvement. Self Assessment is the principal means by which organisations identify the improvements that need to be made in order to deliver value to the customer. It is clear that this needs to be a vital element of the *Best Value Performance Plans*. Self Assessment is also a valuable tool to measure and review progress, enabling further improvement actions to be developed. The Government "welcomes" Self Assessment by local authorities.

Self Assessment should review the organisation's performance in all of the factors involved in providing a best value service, along with the organisation's current results. In this way, a picture is created of the organisation's current and future *health*. This enables the development of plans for improvement to enable the *policy and strategy* to be pursued.

The ICCM Excellence Criteria for *Cemetery and Crematoria* provides a model for Self Assessment. It establishes *excellent* approaches in organisations providing cemetery and crematoria services asks about the results achieved through these approaches. As stated in the Introduction, the *Elements* are linked to the EFQM Excellence Model and can be used as *areas to address* in this Model.

Self Assessment is a popular tool, which is used in many organisations around the world. It is not a new technique – nor particularly complicated. Many organisations are using a structured Self Assessment and many are using aspects of Self Assessment by a different name. However, there are many *stumbling blocks* to carrying out comprehensive and effective Self Assessment. This section will help your organisations avoid these *stumbling blocks*.

Effective Self Assessment provides:-

- ~ Identification of the organisation's strengths;
- ~ Identification of the organisation's areas for improvement;
- ~ Measurement of the organisation's progress (i.e. through scores);
- ~ A basis for the development of plans for improvement.

The process of carrying out Self Assessment can also improve:-

- ~ staff awareness of the organisation;

- ~ staff *ownership* of improvements;
- ~ values of continuous improvement;
- ~ teamwork;
- ~ understanding of what is required to improve the service;
- ~ ability to view the organisation through *customers' eyes*.

Involving a range of staff in the Self Assessment process, and some key partners, will maximise these potential benefits.

For Self Assessment to be effective, the organisation's managers must have adopted the concepts and values of continuous improvement. If this has not happened, it is unlikely that the Self Assessments will add significant value, and could adversely even affect value, through:-

- ~ creating false expectations;
- ~ identifying that the organisation, or part of it, is *falling*;
- ~ *blaming* staff;
- ~ creating a situation in which people *lie*;
- ~ not recognising that all outcomes from effective Self Assessment are positive;
- ~ wasting time with ineffective use of the tool.

What is Assessed?

Self Assessment becomes an extremely effective tool when it is applied in a manner which assesses the value to the user of pursuing organisational improvements. The tendency of organisations is to merely assess whether it has developed an *approach*; e.g. a public consultation programme, a *Performance Plan*, a management style, documented procedures, a staff personal development process, a means of communicating with partners etc. The key to Self Assessment is to ensure that the value provided by these *approaches* is assessed. This requires the organisation to evaluate:-

- ~ whether the approach is really translated into actions;
- ~ the actual outcomes and how they are caused by the approaches;
- ~ how the organisation performs in the *eyes* of the users'.

Organisations, which hold positive values of continuous improvement, will tend to look at themselves in this way. This requires honesty and no fear of failure or blame.

For each Area in the *Excellence Criteria* (other than in **Area 18**), the following needs to be considered:

Does the organisation have initiatives, which cover the *Elements*? e.g.
Is there a planned programme of public consultation?

If not, is there a valid reason?

Are these initiatives well defined and developed, and designed to add value to the customer; e.g.

Does the planned programme of consultation cover all user groups?

**Is it carried out using an accurate and relevant sample?
Are the staff carrying out the surveys competent to do so?**

Are the initiatives being used as planned throughout the organisation in a systematic way, and have they achieved the planned benefits; e.g.

Has the consultation actually been carried out and the results analysed, regardless of who has been managing and implementing the programme? Has the consultation enabled the organisation to identify the needs , wants, expectations of the various parts of the community?

For the "Results" Area of the Criteria (18), the following issues need to be considered:-

Do the organisation's results show positive trends against the internal targets, past figures, competitors and best in class?

Self Assessment Techniques

The organisation should define a Self Assessment programme which suits their needs, bearing in mind the resources available. It is preferable that the programme of Self Assessment is aligned with the organisation's performance review cycle. In this way, Self Assessment can be used as part of the review process and to inform the organisation's *service/performance plans*.

There are a number of techniques which can be used to carry out Self Assessment, including:-

Consensus meetings/workshops

These involve staff meetings to discuss the organisation's performance against the criteria. The objective is to arrive at a consensus agreement on each Standards, and therefore to obtain an accurate picture of the organisation's strengths, areas for improvement and scores.

Pre-printed questionnaires

These are developed to cover the specific criteria, providing a simple basis for Self Assessment. Questions are asked which reveal the organisation's strengths, areas for improvement and scores. The questionnaires can be used to obtain a wide range of feedback from staff. They are often used in conjunction with consensus meetings/workshops. A Self Assessment Questionnaire is included at the back of this Pack for your use.

Written performance information

To assess the *Results* Area of the Criteria, the team will need to collate relevant information regarding their outcomes. This information will need to be analysed at the consensus meeting. The *Useful Notes* in Area 18 identify information which could be used.

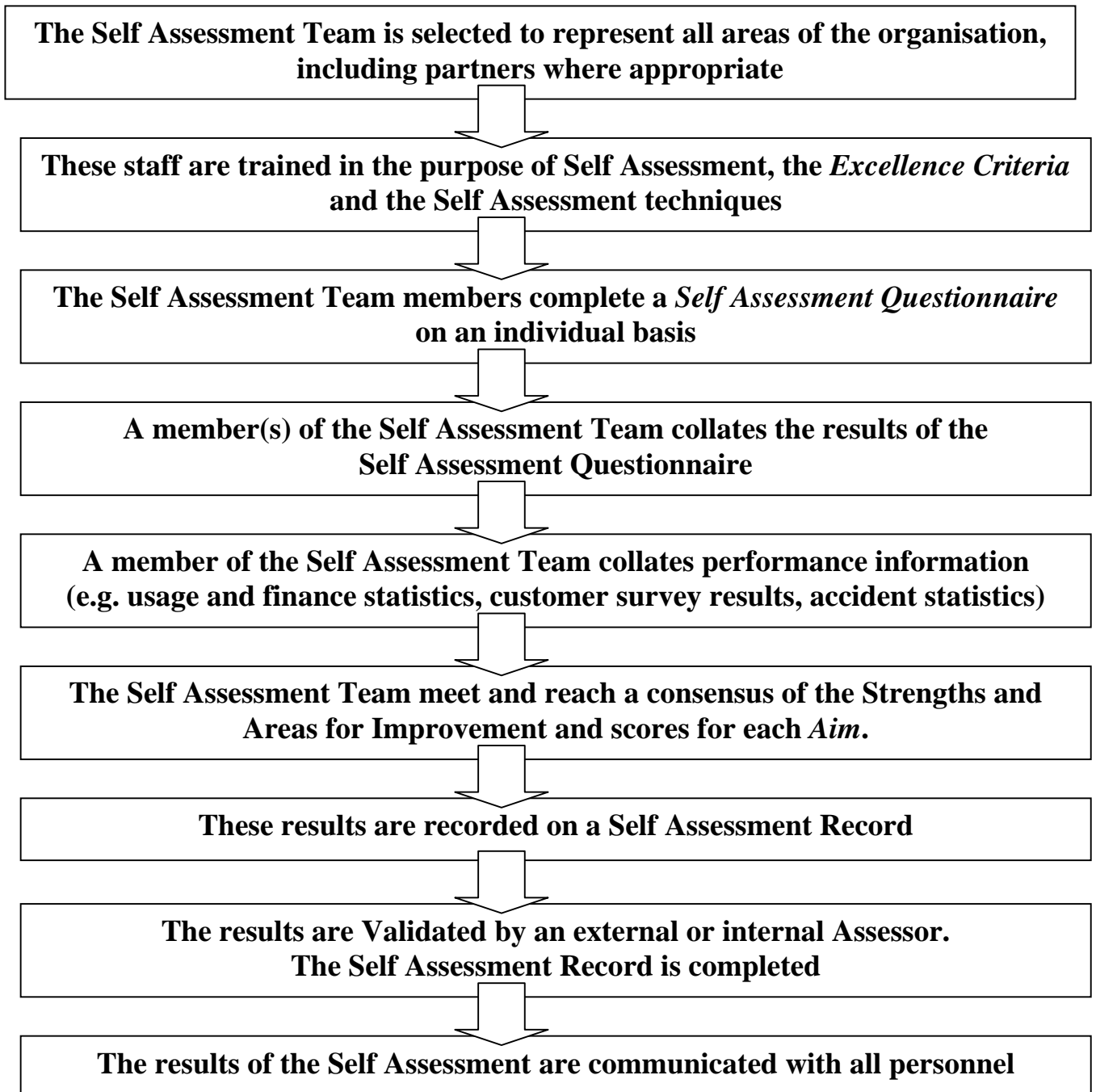
Organisations should concentrate on identifying strengths and areas for improvement. However, scoring the Self Assessment is important as it:

- establishes the benchmarks to enable progress to be measured;
- enables best practice benchmarking.

Organisations should choose their approach to scoring the Self Assessment, based upon the specific nature and requirements of the organisation. The scoring system chosen should reflect the need to assess *approach*, *deployment* and *results*. Self Assessment Questionnaires can incorporate simple, easy-to-use scoring systems.

Many organisations choose to validate their Self Assessment. This can be carried out by a trained *Validator* within the organisation or by an external *Validator*. The formal *ICCM Excellence Recognition Scheme* is in itself a Validation of your Self Assessment. The Validation involves a sample assessment of the organisation against the *Excellence Criteria*, through interviewing staff, observation and review of documentary evidence. This is used to assess the accuracy of the Self Assessment. As a result of the Validation, the organisation adjusts the identified strengths, areas for improvement and Self Assessment scores, without losing *ownership*. The organisation also has an insight into the objectivity of the Self Assessment process and the continuous improvement values held by the team.

An Example of a Self Assessment Process for Cemetery and Crematoria Services



Planning Improvements

It is vital that the findings from the Self Assessment are translated into plans for improvement in the way the organisation operates (i.e. its processes). These plans need to include the actions designed to pursue the necessary improvements, with responsibilities and deadlines identified for these.

To ensure effectiveness of this plan it is important that it is not seen as an “add-on” to the organisation. It must be seen as the integral element of the organisation’s service/performance plan. Therefore it is important that the Self Assessment programme is co-ordinated with the organisation’s business planning cycle.

To identify improvement plans, the areas of improvement need to be considered to identify which improvements are critical to the success of the organisation. Having identified these critical areas, consideration needs to be given to the cause of the need for improvement. For example, the cause of the need to improve communications may be the systems, staff skills, staff values, communication style etc. Having established the cause, possible solutions need to be identified. This needs to include clear and specific actions, responsibilities and appropriate deadlines. The identified actions should include short, medium and long-term deadlines.

Identifying improvement plans requires both an analytical and innovative approach. The guidance in the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy and other published Industry best practice will assist this process.

Best Practice/Process Benchmarking

The tool of *process or best practice benchmarking* plays a significant role in assisting this, and is a key driver of continuous improvement.

Process or best practice benchmarking can be defined as:-

“A continuous, systematic process for evaluating the work practices of an organisation that are recognised as representing best practices, for the purposes of organisational improvement”¹.

We need to carry out benchmarking, because:-

- We all have too much to do and not enough time in which to do it;
- We need to focus on the outside world;
- None of us can keep up with everything.

The tool of *benchmarking*, which is an improvement planning tool should be separated from the important assessment tool of *competitive analysis* or *performance comparison* (see *Measurement and Review*).

Benchmarking could involve the following steps:-

1. Identify the issue which needs to be the subject of benchmarking. This could be carried out using Self Assessment or process measurement and review activity;
2. Establish project team and plan;
3. Clarify the subject to be benchmarked;

¹ Source: M. Spendolini

4. Find suitable internal, external or competitive benchmarking partners. The following tools could be considered:-
 - I Researching Industry media for information on organisations and benchmarks;
 - II The *ICCM* facilitate Benchmarking partnerships through workshops and personal contact, involving organisations which have carried out ICCM Best value Charter Assessment, or have undergone an Excellence Recognition assessment;
 - III Staff networks often identify suitable partners, particularly regional groups;
 - IV Consultants can be used to identify and facilitate suitable partnerships;
 - V Industry networks; through the ICCM, etc.
5. Make contact and establish partnership;
6. Meet, discuss and collect the information;
7. Plan and carry out improvements;
8. Review progress.

Improvement Plan Documentation

The agreed improvement plans should be documented. This document should allow achievements to be added and amendments to be made. It must be a true, working document, which underpins the improvement activities of organisation.

It is vital that *ownership* of the improvements amongst staff is developed. An effective approach is to use the Self Assessment team to plan the improvements. The role of identifying and/or implementing the necessary action may be allocated to an improvement team. Staff could also have an input to the improvement plans through an ideas/suggestion system or the appraisal/personal development programme. Staff should be made aware of the improvement plans and the progress in achieving them. This may involve issuing, or displaying the improvement plan documentation and communicating the plans via staff meetings, workshops or seminars.

The Appendices

Appendix One

Useful Publications

Publication	Useful for the Following Areas:
ICCM Charter for The Bereaved Pub: ICCM March 1996	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18.
ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Reference Copy Pub: ICCM March 1996	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18.
ICCM Best Value Charter Assessment Scheme Pub: ICCM January 2000	17
ICCM Guiding Principles for Burial and Cremation Services Pub: ICCM	10, 11
Code of Cremation Practice Pub: FBCA	11
Code of Safe Working Practice. Pub: ICCM	10, 11, 13
ILAM Parks and Green Space Quality Scheme Guidance Pack	ALL
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Pub: HMSO, 1974, 0105437743	13
Successful Health and Safety Management: H&S Series Booklet HS(G)65 HEALTH & SAFETY EXECUTIVE Pub: HMSO, 1991, 0118859889	13
Five Steps to Successful Health and Safety Management: special help for directors and managers HEALTH & SAFETY EXECUTIVE Pub: Health & Safety Executive, 1992	13
Essentials of Health and Safety at Work HEALTH & SAFETY EXECUTIVE Pub: HMSO, 1992, 0118854453	13
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, Approved Code of Practice HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION Pub: HMSO, 1992, 0118863304	13
First Aid at Work: The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981,	13

Approved Code of Practice 1997 Pub: Health & Safety Commission, 1997, 0717610500	
OHSAS 18001 – Occupational Health and Safety Systems – Specification - British Standards Institution Pub: British Standards Institution	13
The control of legionellosis including legionnaire's disease HEALTH & SAFETY EXECUTIVE Pub: HMSO, 1991, 011885660X	13
Fact Sheet 98/3: Legionellosis Pub: Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management, 1998 AVAILABLE FROM THE ILAM INFORMATION CENTRE (with sae)	13
Environmental Protection Act 1990 Pub: HMSO, 1990, 0105443905	5
Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994 Pub: HMSO, 1994, 0110440560	11
Environmental Law J. THORNTON, S. BECKWITH Pub: Sweet & Maxwell, 1997, 0421571500 AVAILABLE FROM THE ILAM BOOKSHOP	5
Local Government Act 1999 Pub; The Stationery Office, 1999, 0105627992	1, 3, 17
Implementing Best Value: A consultation paper on draft guidance Pub: DETR, 1999, Product Code 99LG0536	2, 3, 17
Performance Indicators for 2000/2001: a joint consultation paper Pub: Audit Commission, DETR, 1999	3, 17
Best Value and Audit Commission Performance Indicators for 2000/2001 Pub: Audit Commission, 1999, Product Code 99LG0110	3, 17
Best Value Performance Plans: Practices and Procedures: A review of early experiences within eight local authorities Pub: DETR, 1999, Product Code 99LG0536	3
Cross-cutting issues in public policy and public service Pub: DETR	3
The EFQM Excellence Model (Public and Voluntary Sector) plus Assessing for Excellence: a practical guide to self-assessment Pub: British Quality Foundation, 9052363692	3, 17

Continuous Improvement Handbook Pub: The Institute of Sport and Recreation Management (UK)	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 14, 17
International Standard for Quality Management Systems – BS EN ISO 9002:1994 Pub: British Standards Institution, 1994, 0580234401	5, 17
The Sustainable Management of Greenspace P. SIBLEY Pub: Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management, 1998, 1873903715	5, 8, 9
Good Conservation Practice for Sport and Recreation: a guide prepared for the Sports Council, Countryside Commission, Nature Conservancy Council, and World Wide Fund for Nature Pub: Sports Council, 1991, 1872158005	5, 8, 9
In Pursuit of Quality: the Case against ISO 9000 John SEDDON Pub: Oaktree Press, 1997, 1860760422	1, 17
National Occupational Standards Pub: Health Education Authority, 1998, 0752113119	7
The Children Act 1989 Pub: HMSO, 1989, 0103156895	7
The Investors in People Standard Pub: Investors in People UK; 1998 1900567016	1, 7, 17
Achieving Excellence Through People: Including Investors in People Standard, How to Become an Investor in People, Business Excellence Model and Self Assessment Techniques for Business Excellence Pub: Investors in People UK; 1997, 1900567083	1, 7, 17
Employment Relations Act 1999 Pub: The Stationery Office; 1999, 0103036997	7
The Working Time Directive: Council Directive 93/104/EC of 23 November 1993 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time Council of the European Union, 1993,	7
Working Time Regulations 1998 Pub: The Stationery Office, 1998, 0110794109	7
The National Minimum Wage (Increase in Development Rate for Young Workers) Regulations 2000 Pub: The Stationery Office, 2000, 0110993233	7
The Balanced Scorecard	17

Pub: Robert S, Kaplan, David P. Norton	
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Appendix 2

Best Value, Continuous Improvement and the EFQM Excellence Model

Best Value:

The pursuit of continuous improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of organisations and their products/services has long been recognised as the key to success for organisations of all types. The rapidly changing expectations and demands of consumers have meant that continuous improvement can now more accurately be described as the key to survival.

The 1999 Local Government Act (Part One) reinforced this situation for local authorities, with the duty of Best Value. The Act requires local authorities to:-

“make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”²

This means that local authorities are required to:-

Identify services which meet the real needs of the communities served by the local authority;

Determine which organisations (or combinations of organisations) are best placed to be providing such services

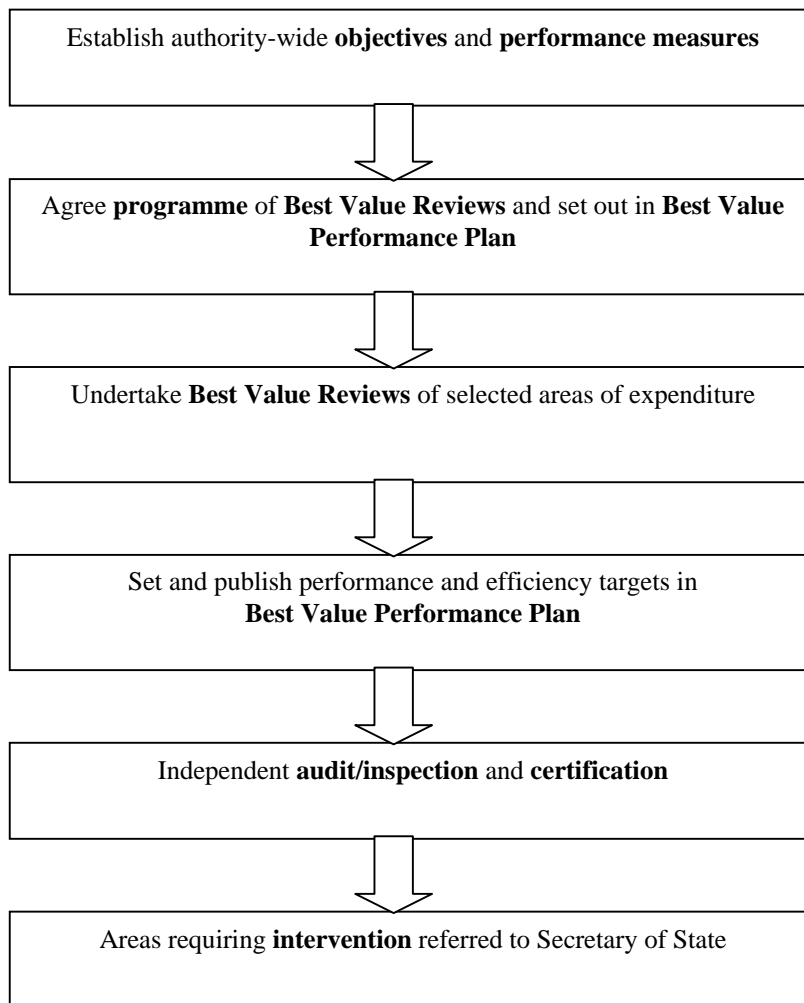
Design and provide the services so that they meet the needs and exceed the expectations of the citizens served by the local authority;

Provide the services in a cost effective, or efficient, way.

The guidance on the implementation of Best Value identifies the following Best Value Performance Management Framework.³

² Local Government Act 1999 (Part One, 3.1)

³ Implementing Best Value Guidance (DETR)



There are two key statutory elements of this framework:-

- The Best Value Review**
- The Best Value Performance Plan**

Best Value Reviews should (not necessarily in this order):-

- Challenge** the purpose of the organisation, using findings from public **consultation**
- Develop the organisation's objectives;
- Challenge** whether the organisation should be exercising its functions, bearing in mind the role of other organisations;
- Assess current performance;
- Compare** performance with other organisations providing similar services;
- Specify performance measures/indicators;
- Set targets for these indicators/measures;
- Set a plan of action designed to meet the targets;
- Challenge** how the services are provided, considering fair **competition** as a means of improving effectiveness and efficiency.

Best Value Performance Plans are the “principal mean by which an authority is held accountable for the efficiency and effectiveness of its services and for its proposals to improve upon them”⁴. These plans are essentially the output of the Best Value Reviews.

Continuous Improvement:

It is clear that there is no *finish line* in the pursuit of best value– it is an ongoing process of improvement, because:-

The needs of citizens change continually;

The expectations of customers change continuously;

and because

There are always ways in which the effectiveness and efficiency of an organisation can improve.

Therefore, organisations need a framework and tools to assist them to make **real improvements** in the value provided to the customer – setting performance targets will reflect this, but alone will not achieve this. The concepts and practices of continuous improvement provide such a framework and tools. Throughout the Best Value section of the Local Government Act and the DETR guidance on the implementation of Best Value, there are references to continuous improvement as a fundamental aspect of best value.

The concepts and techniques of continuous improvement are widely used throughout the world by successful individuals and organisations. The basic belief of continuous improvement is that, in order to achieve your desired results, you need to identify what elements are necessary for success and improve these on a continuous basis. These improvements should be made on a *continuous* (i.e. ongoing) basis.

To pursue continuous improvement on an organisational or individual basis, there has to be a commitment to some fundamental values, e.g:-

Accept the need to improve continuously;

Accept that you can improve continuously;

Commit to regular review and improvement;

Be honest;

Do what you say you are going to do;

Be proactive (i.e. don't let barriers stop your progress);

Remove “*failure*” from your thoughts and vocabulary – concentrate on “*outcomes*” which can be changed if you do things differently;

Focus on “*cause*” not blame;

Commit to learning from others.

The concept of continuous improvement in organisations – whether service or manufacturing - recognises that:-

the design of the product or service needs to improve continually;

⁴ Source: Implementing Best Value Guidance (DETR)

and

how the organisation works in **all** areas of its operation has a significant effect upon the end product/service and these issues need to be improved continuously

How the organisation works includes:-

- how the organisation is led;
- how the organisation's policy and strategy is developed and implemented;
- how the services/products are designed and developed;
- how communication is carried out with the customers;
- how people are managed;
- how resources are used;
- how the customer services are provided;
- how support services are provided;
- how the work practices are planned, implemented and improved;
- how teamwork is developed;
- how the effectiveness of these factors is measured, reviewed and improved;
- etc.

Each of these factors potentially *add* a degree of *value* to the end product or service. For an organisation to be successful in pursuing its desired results (i.e. *best value*), these factors need to be identified, continually reviewed and continuously improved to increase the value which exists within the end service. This value is then *sucked* from the service by the customer.

All organisations have strengths and all have areas where improvement in value is necessary. The acceptance of this, without fear of *failure*, is vital for every organisation.

The EFQM Excellence Model:

The 1990s has seen the growth in Europe of the use of a model to assist continuous value improvement, through providing a structured and organised approach to review and improvement. The EFQM Excellence Model is a non-prescriptive framework for all organisations, containing basic, concepts of organisational *excellence*, and recognising that these need to be pursued if organisational results are to be improved. The Model has been developed through input from organisations throughout Europe, and is based upon similar Models existing throughout the World (e.g. the Deming model). A significantly enhanced version of the Model was published in April 1999. The Model is *owned* by the European Foundation for Quality Management and overseen in the U.K. by the British Quality Foundation (usually known in the U.K. as the Business Excellence Model).

The role of the Excellence Model is:-

To provide an organisational model

Expressing the concepts of continuous improvement and criteria of excellence on which the organisation should be based;

To provide a diagnostic tool

To identify the organisation's strengths and areas for improvement, used in conjunction with Self Assessment;

To provide an measurement tool

To measure an organisation's improvement progress.

The Excellence Model can be used as the framework for generic or organisational, industry-specific *quality standards, initiatives* and *Elements*. **The Aims and Elements in ICCM Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria have been developed so that they relate to the Excellence Model criteria.** Therefore, the *ICCM Excellence Model* can be used as part of an authority-wide Excellence Model programme.

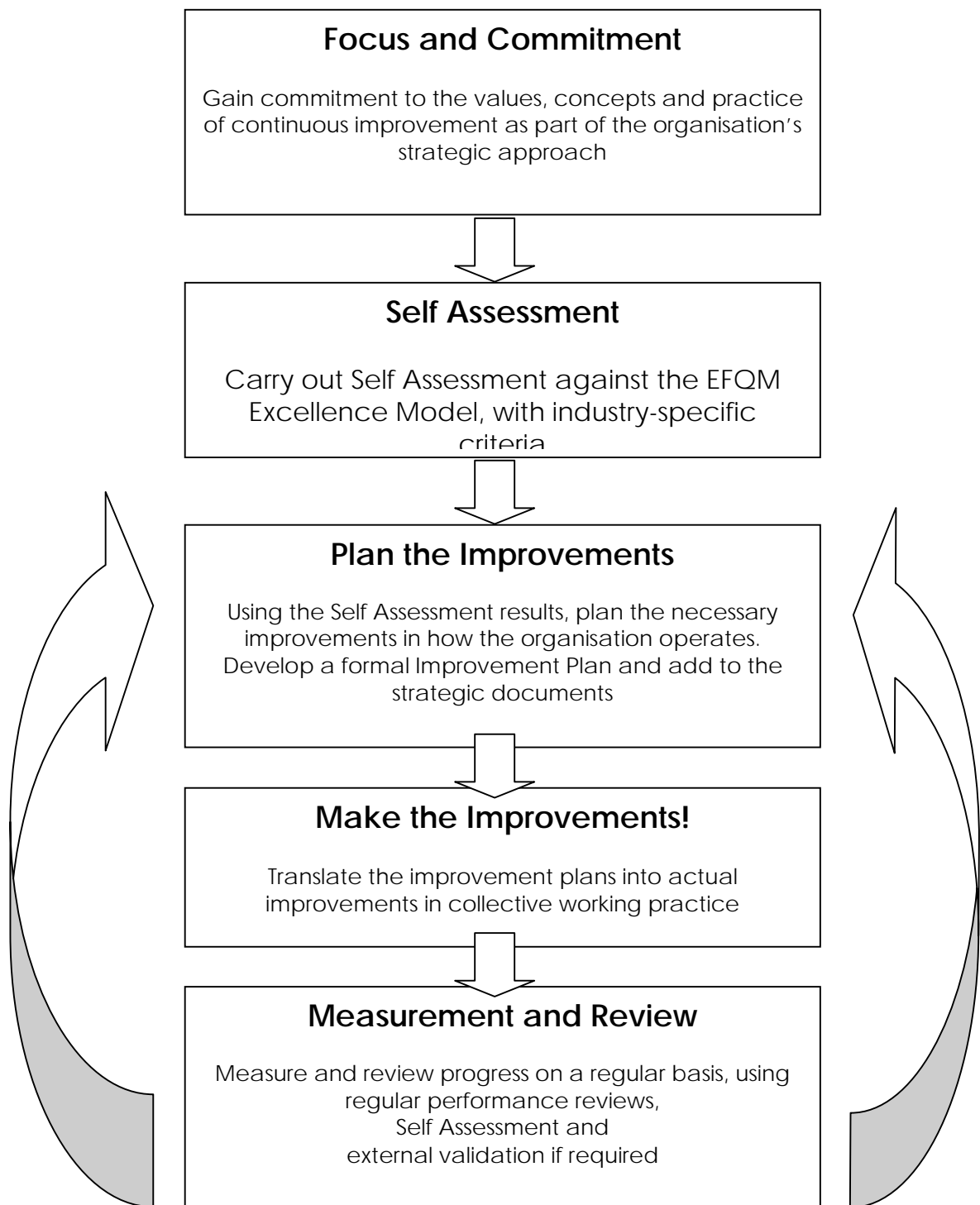
The Excellence Model and its relationship to the *ICCM Excellence Criteria* is shown at Appendix Three.

Throughout the Local Government Act and the Implementing Best Value Guidance from the DETR there are references to continuous improvement and its practices as fundamental aspects of best value. The White Paper specifically draws attention to the use of the Business Excellence Model by local authorities, as a means of strengthening "their capacity for self assessment".⁵ Having reviewed the various *quality initiatives*, the Government recognises the significance of the Business Excellence Model and the role of the other initiatives in measuring performance, identifying improvements and in "helping authorities achieve the cultural changes that are needed under best value".⁶ The awareness and use of the Business Excellence Model in the public sector has developed greatly over the last few years, as a result of the search for helpful improvement tools and the requirements of best value.

A continuous improvement process using the EFQM Excellence Model is shown below. This process is being used by many organisations as a key element of their Best Value performance Management Framework, helping them to make the necessary improvements in effectiveness and efficiency.

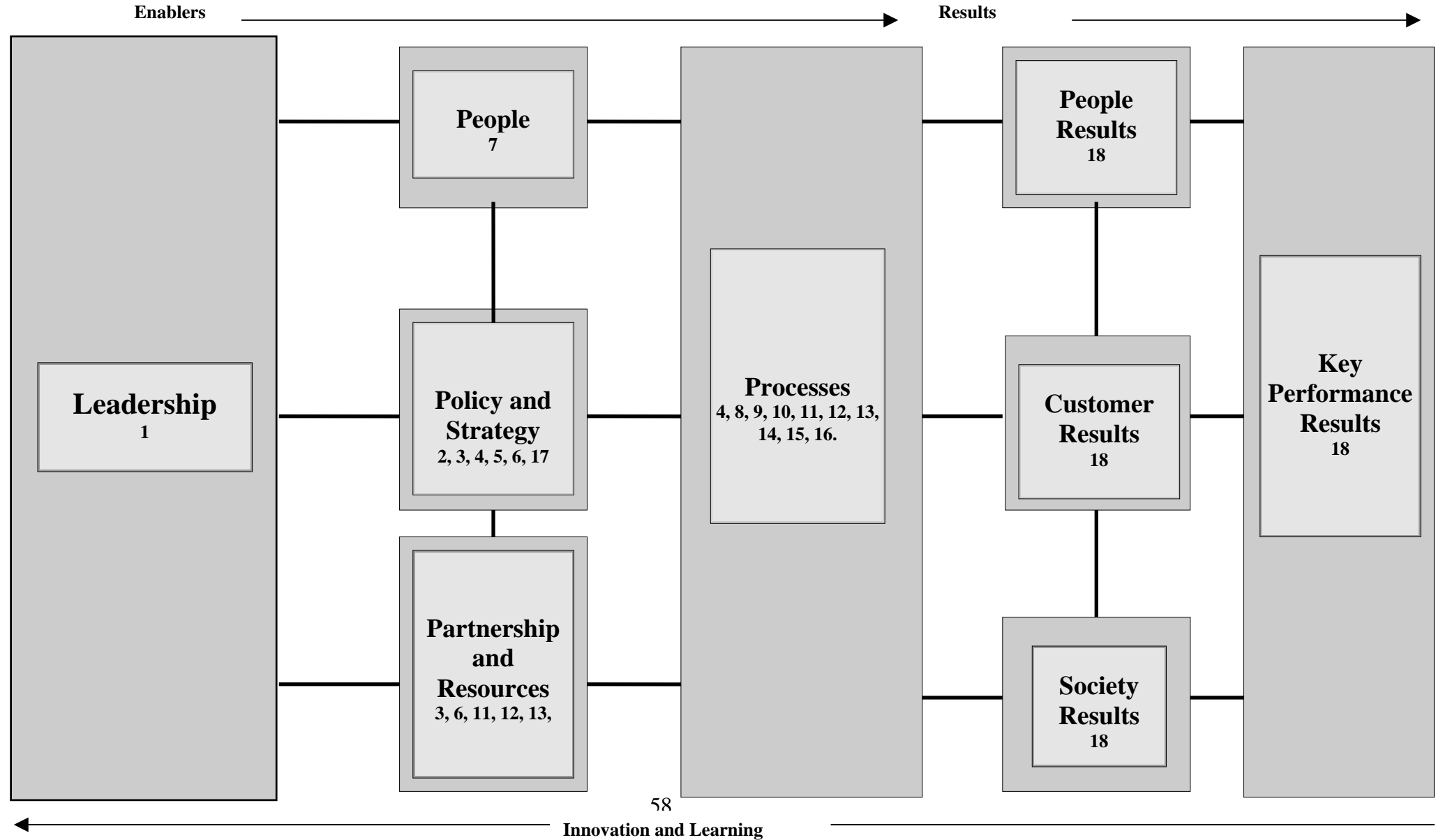
⁵ Source: Modern Local Government In Touch with the People (Government White Paper)

⁶ Source: Modern Local Government In Touch with the People (Government White Paper)



Appendix Three:

The relationship between the 9 Criteria of the EFQM Excellence Model and the 18 Areas of the *ICCM Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria*



Links with Relevant Excellence/Quality Initiatives

ICCM Excellence Criteria Areas	Enhances EFQM Excellence Model Criteria and Sub-Criteria	Linked to ILAM Parks and Green Space Quality Criteria	Incorporates ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Rights and Targets
1 Leadership	Criterion 1	Area 1	All
2 Public Consultation and Research	Criteria 2a, 2b, 5b, 5c, 5e	Area 2	"Communication" "Social and community aspects" "Baby and infant graves"
3...Policy and Strategy	Criteria 2a, 2b, 2c, 2e	Area 3	
4 Process Management and Improvement	Criteria 2d, 5a, 5b	Area 4	All
5 Environmental Performance Planning	Criteria 2, 5a, 5b	Area 5	"Environmental issues"
6 Financial Management	Criterion 4c	Area 6	"Staff and expertise"
7 Staff Planning, Training and Development	Criterion 3	Area 7	"Staff and expertise"
8 Service Design	Criterion 5c	Area 8	All
9 Grounds Maintenance	Criterion 5d	Area 9	"Maintenance of grounds and gravedigging"
10 Burials	Criterion 5d	N/A	"Burial procedure" "Cemetery memorials"
11 Cremations	Criterion 5d	N/A	"Cremation procedure" "
12 Buildings, Equipment and Consumables	Criteria 4b,	Area 12	"Environmental

	5d		issues”
13 Health and Safety Management	Criteria 3e, 4b, 5d	Area 13	
14 Communication with the Bereaved	Criterion 5e	Area 14	“Burial procedure” “Cremation procedure” “Communication”
15..Feedback	Criterion 5c, 5e	Area 14	“Grievance procedure”
16 Public Relations	Criteria 5d	Area 16	
17 Measurement and Review	Criteria 2b, 5b, 5c, 5e	Area 17	“Communication”
18 Results Achieved	Criteria 6, 7, 8, 9	Area 18	

Contact Details

ICCM

CONTACT DETAILS TO BE ADDED:

For information and advice about the ICCM Excellence Criteria, Excellence Recognition Scheme or any other continuous improvement issues, contact Steve Wood on 01451 861084 or e-mail qlmsteve@aol.com

The *ICCM Excellence Criteria for Cemeteries and Crematoria* has been developed through consultation with representatives from a range of organisations involved in cemetery and crematoria services, in particular:-

Kirklees MBC
Warrington BC
Carlisle BC
City of London

These organisations commissioned the initial work

Representatives from other organisations have also been consulted and have contributed to the development of the Scheme.

The ICCM *Excellence Criteria* were piloted at Kirklees MBC Cemetery and crematoria Services.