

Press Release

Recycling of Metals passes the £1m mark for donations

The Institute of Cemeteries and Crematorium Management (ICCM) are delighted to announce that the Recycling of Metals scheme in partnership with Orthometals has now donated in excess of £1m to charities in the United Kingdom.

The recycling of metals resulting from cremation is only carried out with the written consent of each bereaved family.

Following a cremation of a deceased person the cremated remains contain metals such as items used in the construction of the coffin and on numerous occasions, orthopaedic implants such as hip and knee replacement joints.

In the past this metal was removed from the cremated remains and buried within the grounds of the crematorium as the bereaved had never expressed any desire for its return to them. With the onset of modern waste management regulations the Environment Agency indicated that once the metal is removed from the cremated remains it becomes waste albeit very sensitive material.

Irrespective of the terms used and legal status of the metals it is considered that the Environment Agency would not challenge an authority that continued to bury the metals within its grounds, a finite resource.

The Institute consulted with the Royal Dutch Cremation Federation, which has a metals recycling scheme currently in operation in the Netherlands, and decided to model the UK scheme on its experiences. A specialist company called Orthometals has been contracted to provide special containers to UK scheme members and to carry out periodic collections.

In 2005/6, ICCM embarked on the first national recycling of metals scheme with Orthometals and the first collection yielded a return of £14,993.

This was presented in early 2007, to 5 different charities after 10 nominations were received from scheme members. The scheme was launched and money from recycled metal limbs, which couldn't be disposed off in another effective, clean or friendly way, had been awarded – effectively money from waste.

National charities were required to be nominated with a death related link.

The need for a National charity to be nominated was relaxed in 2011 and this resulted in a massive increase in nominations. Only scheme members are eligible to nominate.



It is the consent of the bereaved and the hard work of the Managers of these Crematoria; that has enabled the scheme to grow and help the communities/areas that are members of the scheme. Currently 133 crematoria are part of ICCM/Orthometal recycling initiative.

The £1million mark for donations was passed in October 2013, when the Scunthorpe branch of CRUSE, were awarded a cheque for £3472.

Since the scheme began, **£1,214,356** has been awarded to charities.

274 individual nominations have been successful, to award 136 different charities.

ICCM would like to thank each scheme member, but most of all the bereaved themselves, who have given consent for waste metal to be recycled and help charities.

Waste that would have been illegal buried, has instead helped the lives of countless people all over the United Kingdom.

Pictures and testimony from charities that have received funds are available on the ICCM website.