

Making the case for water cremation



Howard Pickard, MD of Resomation Ltd, the company behind water cremation in the UK, provides an update on the work taking place with the industry, regulators and consumers to introduce this environmentally friendly and sustainable funeral option in the UK.

FSJ readers may be aware of Resomation from our previous articles and raising awareness of water cremation. For those who are yet to hear of this exciting and transformational technology, Resomation is an environmentally responsible alternative to flame cremation and burial that uses water instead of flame to gently return the body to ashes.

The process is quite simple, copying what nature does when the body is buried, by using a gentle solution made from 95% water and 5% alkaline to enable the body to go through the natural process of breaking down to its constituent parts. At the end, you are left with the ashes to return to the family, as with flame cremation.

Water cremation is already permitted in more than 19 US States and four Canadian provinces, and progress is being made in Europe too. Resomation founder Sandy Sullivan recently addressed the Dutch funeral industry at a key event, discussing the progress being made with the Dutch authorities to introduce water cremation. It is expected that within the next year water cremation will become available – a new alternative for Dutch consumers and funeral directors.

In the UK, interest in this funeral option is growing as people increasingly look

for environmental alternatives, both in life and in death. We at Resomation are continuing apace to raise awareness of our technology within the funeral industry, having attended and delivered keynote speeches at industry events across the UK and further afield for several years.

A key appeal of water cremation is its environmental benefits. Independent reports have found that water cremation is environmentally friendlier than other end of life options, including a significantly smaller carbon footprint, less energy consumption, and no airborne release of harmful emissions such as nitrous oxides, mercury from dental amalgam and dioxins.

...attitudes are changing on the environment”

Having toured the UK, welcomed many hundreds of visitors at our successful open days and from daily conversations, we have noticed attitudes are changing on the environment. The headlines over recent months also speak for themselves. With climate emergencies declared in Scotland, London, Manchester and Bath to name a few, consideration of our



environmental impact is a growing issue for many and we believe the funeral industry can react to this changing cultural landscape.

There have been several examples of consumer behaviour changing in recent years with environmental benefits, resulting in reductions in single-use plastic. Consumers are more aware of eco-friendly alternatives and we believe the funeral industry can be pioneers whilst trusting in Resomation, a product already available elsewhere.

FSJ readers may have seen that Washington state has recently legalised human composting, with key reasons including the sustainability and environmental credentials involved. These examples are why we have renewed confidence that our ongoing dialogue with government, regulatory bodies and industry experts will soon see water cremation available in the UK.

So how do we get there?

A key requirement for introducing Resomation in the UK is agreement with water companies over safely allowing the liquid from water cremation to enter the

water cycle. This is an area that we have been working on diligently for the past year to identify the challenges and solutions to introducing this new end of life option into the UK. We have been doing this in association with funeral directors, crematoria operators and the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities (FBCA) as part of the FBCA working group on water cremation.

Encouraging progress is being made to safely introduce water cremation in the UK and we encourage FSJ readers to join us on this journey.

Resomation Ltd welcomes the opportunity to speak with FSJ readers about this new sustainable option and to support those in the industry when it is made available in the UK. Open Days are held regularly: to register your interest please contact us at info@resomation.com.