

*Do you agree with the proposal that Local Authorities should have a legal duty to ensure that their up-to-date burial and cremation costs are published on their website in clear and accessible way?*

-Yes

Funerals are a very stressful and upsetting time for friends and family of the deceased. Anything which can be done to reduce the burden on people at this difficult time should be welcomed.

Normally when a family engage a funeral director the staff will contact a celebrant on their behalf but they are free to contact the Society themselves, or a known celebrant. Where families ask their funeral director to find a celebrant they should specify that they wish to have one from the Humanist Society Scotland.

HSS published it's recommended fees on our website, and makes it clear that each HSS Registered Celebrant is free to negotiate a change in fees. We believe local authorities should also have the flexibility to provide reduced fees to people in financial hardship.

*Should Local Authorities be required by law to charge funeral costs on a cost-recovery basis only?*

-Yes

As a charity all of our activities are not-for-profit. The HSS is transparent about the fees charged by our celebrants, which cover the time to arrange the ceremony, a meeting to discuss it, and its preparation, which includes all correspondence and communication, and of course its delivery on the day.

HSS celebrants make no charge for funeral ceremonies for young people under the age of sixteen, or in cases of financial hardship. They also donate 10% of their fee to the society, to support our campaigning on issues of equality and social justice.

A humanist celebrant will spend time with the bereaved family gathering information on the life and personality of the deceased before writing a tribute to the life that was lived.

This will be the centrepiece of the ceremony at which family and friends are invited and encouraged to read personal tributes or choose other readings and secular music. Our fees represent the time HSS Registered Celebrants spend with families, providing assistance and comfort and making sure that the funeral ceremony reflects the wishes of the family. All of our fees are recommended, and HSS Registered Celebrants are free to alter fees as they deem appropriate.