



# NEWCASTLE·UNDER·LYME

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### **The Charter Grievance Procedure**

**If the Charter Grievance Procedure is being implemented; the Council's Grievance Procedure must be completed first.**

Any form of service failure during a funeral can have a traumatic effect. The Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management recognises this fact and the Charter was conceived as a means of reducing and addressing failures. Sadly, things do go wrong or are misinterpreted, and we recognise the importance of taking these instances seriously.

If you have a grievance, we ask you to take the following action:

- **Stage 1**  
Always complain "on the spot" if you have the opportunity. If you cannot do this yourself, you may be able to use your minister or Funeral Director as your advocate. If you fail to obtain a satisfactory response, move to the next stage.
- **Stage 2**  
Contact your Charter member, either by telephone or in writing, and describe your grievance. If you fail to obtain a satisfactory response, move to the next stage. Most local authorities will have a formal written complaints procedure.
- **Stage 3**  
Put your grievance in writing to the Chief Executive (address in Appendix C), who will send an acknowledgement within 7 days. Your grievance will be investigated, by reference to your Charter member or any other relevant person, and a written reply will be sent to you within 4 weeks of the date of acknowledgement. Where the matter is urgent, the response will be immediate, either by telephone or by fax.
- **Stage 4**  
If you continue to feel aggrieved, the Chief Executive may offer to refer your complaint to an arbitrator. The arbitrator will be appointed by agreement with you.
- **Stage 5**  
Whether or not arbitration is agreed, if the matter relates to a local authority, you have the right to refer your grievance to the Local Government Ombudsman in England Wales and Scotland (address in Appendix C). The Local Government Ombudsman can look into complaints only about actions taken by a local authority and that authority should first have had the opportunity to investigate and respond to the complaint.