

regulars

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editorial

Are we ready for change?

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Journal. As things have gone back to some sort of “new normal”, one thing the past couple of years has taught us is how quickly we can respond and adapt to change. That being said, it's human nature to revert back to our comfort zones and what is familiar. It still surprises me to see how many people have stopped washing their hands, using hand sanitiser or cleaning down gym equipment (particular bug bear of mine!) given what we have just lived through these past couple of years. Perhaps the introduction of the vaccines and the decline in the level of severe cases of COVID, has led us into a false sense of security. However, I had hoped at the very least, that an awareness of personal space and basic hygiene would be something that would continue going forwards but alas this has not been my experience so far!

We are in a state of calm at the moment, but there are changes that are coming for the funeral sector in the next few years. On 25th March, we saw the introduction of legislation to remove cremation form 5, in readiness for the medical examiner scheme to be implemented. Acute trusts in England and local health boards in Wales were asked to set up medical examiner offices to initially focus on the certification of all deaths that occur in their own organisation on a non-statutory basis. In February 2021, the government published “Working together to improve health and social care for all” the white paper which includes provisions for medical examiners to be put on a statutory footing. During 2021/22, the role of these offices is being extended to include all non-coronial deaths, wherever they occur. Implementation of this next phase will take place incrementally, to allow time for capacity and processes to be put in place.

The introduction of the medical examiner will remove the requirement to complete cremation form 4 and eventually the need for a medical referee, although I understand they will be retained for a transitional period once the statutory medical examiner scheme has been implemented. The government are working towards starting this from April 2023, so we will have to wait and see. This is a major change to our working practices, and we need to be prepared as much as practicably possible.

The CMA (Competition and Markets Authority) investigation into our sector, which started pre- pandemic, will continue, I am sure. We saw many changes to funeral practices during this time, like the increase in direct cremations and the option to have a more basic funeral. This trend seems to have continued post pandemic and there has been a significant rise in numbers for direct cremations. I hope the CMA take into account these market changes when reviewing our sector and therefore any further requirements that may be introduced are relevant to our current working practices.

On the 29th July pre-paid funeral plans will become FCA regulated (Financial Conduct Authority). This means all funeral plan providers and intermediaries must have appropriate authorisation to continue funeral plan activities. If they are not authorised (or exempt) by this date, they must stop selling and administering funeral plans. The aim is of course to protect the consumer and to make sure that firms look after consumers' money and use it to deliver funeral services. This comes after the collapse of plan provider “Safe Hands” which went into administration leading to concerns that pre-bought funerals may not be honoured.

As I mentioned in a previous editorial, the introduction of new disposal methods is already being researched. Resomation (water cremation) is fast becoming a real option as planning has been approved for the first facility in Darlington.

We must also consider that the public expectation and needs have changed over the years, as well as generationally. We are more aware of environmental issues and there is an increasing demand to deliver our services in a more green and sustainable way.

Generally, as humans we don't like change and can be resistant to it. The effects of not managing change effectively can be damaging and have long lasting effects, so it's important that professionals understand the issues and equip themselves with techniques to support change management initiatives.

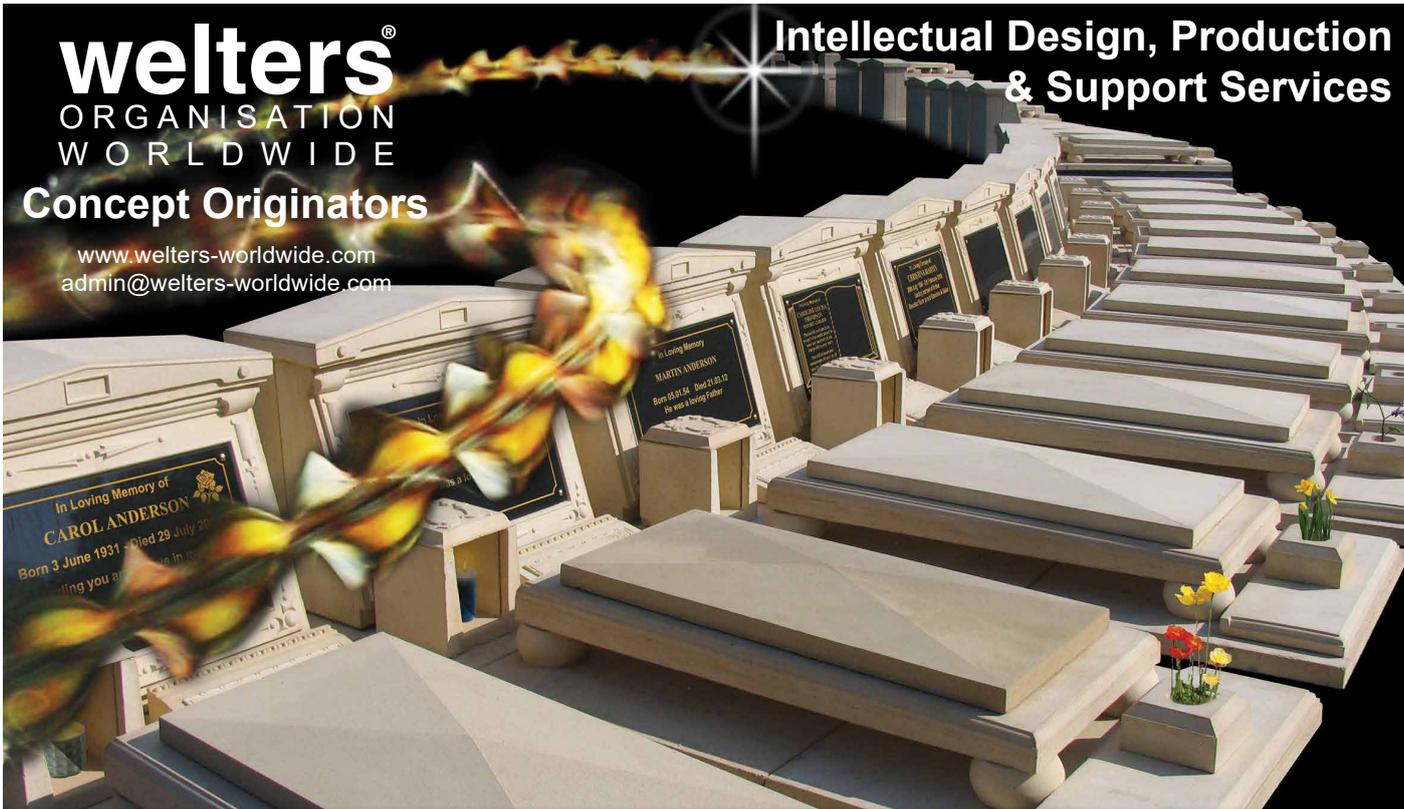
Don't be afraid of it – as Franklin D Roosevelt once said, “There is nothing to fear but fear itself.”

Sofia Allana
Editor

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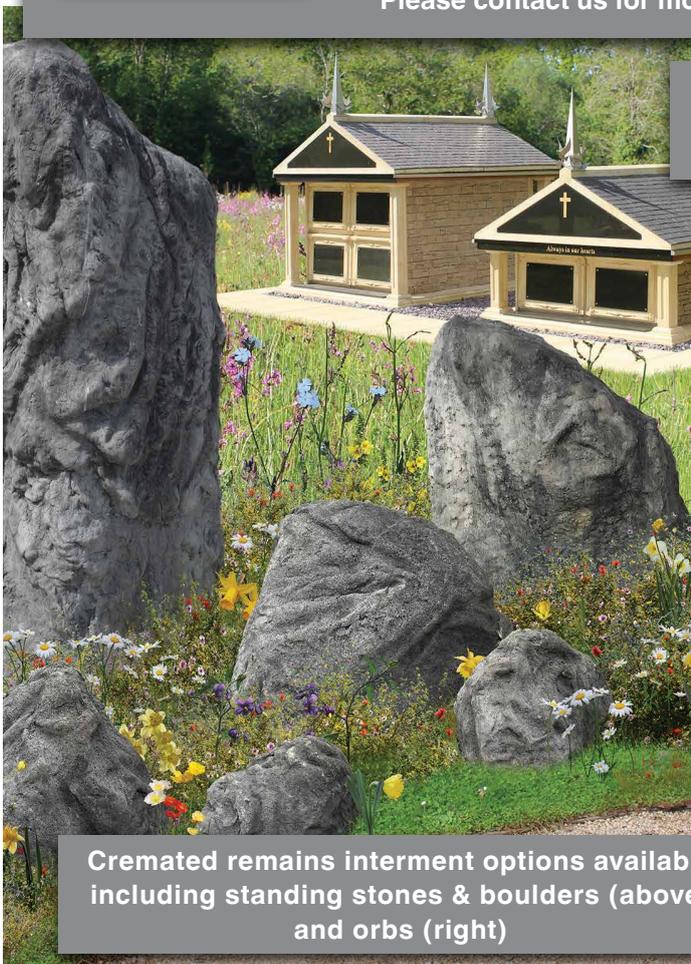
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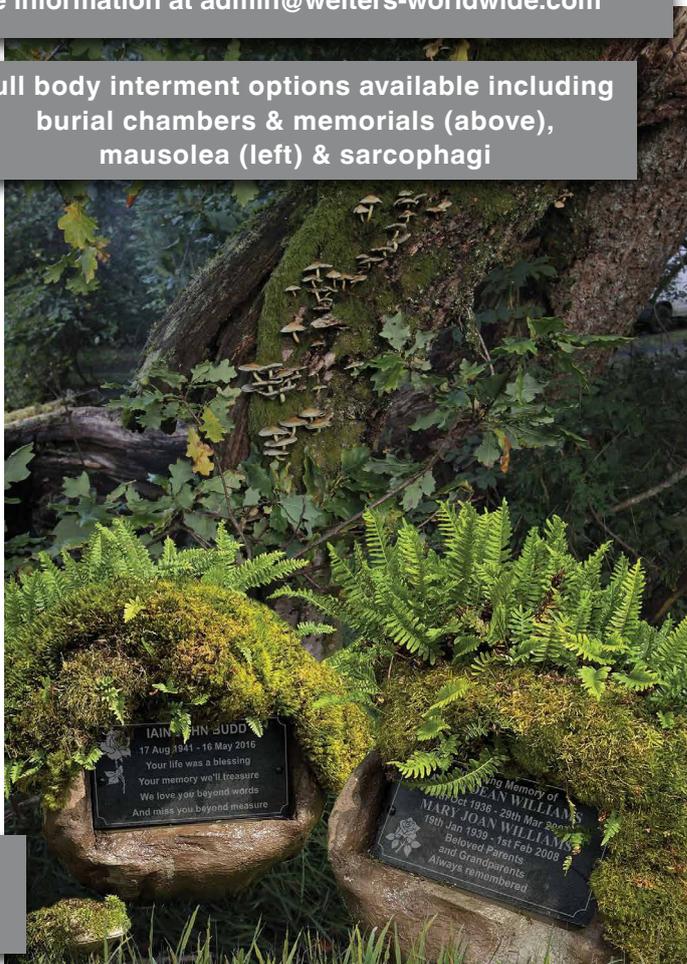


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Cremated remains interment options available including standing stones & boulders (above) and orbs (right)



Full body interment options available including burial chambers & memorials (above), mausolea (left) & sarcophagi

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president's page

Hello Everyone.

As I write this the Met Office have issued a red extreme heat warning for Monday 18 July and Tuesday 19th July in much of England, from London and the South East up to York and Manchester. We are set to be one of the hottest places in the world, with temperatures soaring above the Western Sahara and the Caribbean. So, we must say a huge thank you to all our cemetery and crematorium operatives/staff who have continued to work through this unusual weather to ensure that our families have the funeral services their loved ones deserve. I am sure by the time you read my article we will be back in our winter woollies.



Please remember that Covid is still with us with figures rising again, so please ensure that you all continue to stay safe.

After the Easter break, I attended the British Institute of Embalmers banquet with Claire, my colleague from Southampton crematorium at the Ramside Hall hotel in Durham where we said a fond farewell to Bobby Hopkin-Hoggarth after her two years as President and welcomed Richard Van Nes. It was a long journey for us there and back, consisting of several train rides and a slight detour on the tubes when one of the lines was closed and we got slightly confused which direction we needed to travel 😊

"Where was Codge?" I hear you say, he was having some father and 'son' time with our gorgeous golden retriever Barney and finishing off a spot of DIY.

I know you are all waiting for an update on the food well it was one of the best I have to say and below is a cheeky pic of the delicious desert

We attended the beautiful service on the Sunday morning, when we had the chance to light a candle in memory of a loved ones, it was very emotional and very well attended.

Two weeks later and I was off again to attend the National Association of Funeral Directors President's banquet with my friend Mandy at the gorgeous Celtic Manor Resort in South Wales with its stunning views of the Usk Valley. Kate Edwards chosen charity was Ty Hafan Children's Hospice and a lovely amount was raised for such a worthy cause after a wonderful meal 😊 with dancing to the fabulous live band, Soul Lotta Funk. On Sunday morning we welcomed John Adams as the new president for the following year.



Then things went a little downhill for me. I unfortunately was unable to attend the Cremation Society and FBCA annual banquet at the Ageas Bowl, which is literally down the road for me, very disappointing and I hope those who managed to attend enjoyed themselves. I went into hospital to have a total hip replacement 4 days before and as I write this I am currently recuperating, unable to get around without the help of the crutches or "crunches" as my granddaughter Elsie-Mae calls them. However, once I have fully recovered, I am sure I will be up and dancing 😊 and I have to say a massive thank you to my husband Codge and daughter Fern without their constant help and support I would be stuck inside alone with "cabin fever".

On the plus side, one day, not too soon, I will be able to contribute to the ICCM/OrthoMetals recycling of Metals Scheme!! Talking of which the board were delighted to announce that the latest round (December 2021 – July 2022) ensured that an extra £1,776,000 was donated to good causes with 152 separate nominations. A massive £15,262,00 being donated since the scheme started – absolutely amazing and we really have to thank the families of those who have participated.

The ICCM officers continue to work hard answering all our questions and ensuring that we are kept up to date with the latest regulations and training opportunities, I am sure you will all want to join me in saying that on behalf of the board and all ICCM members we thank you very much for all your assistance and support to the industry.

I will leave you with something I found written by Jessica Watson – "Four Plus an Angel", as I felt that it really does reflect how my family feel as time moves on and we entered our second year and whilst families continue to grieve the loss of their loved one -



Grief is Like Carrying a Stone in Your Pocket

The best way I can describe grief as the years go by is to say it's similar to carrying a stone in your pocket.

When you walk, the stone brushes against your skin. You feel it. You always feel it. But depending on the way you stand or the way your body moves, the smooth edges might barely graze your body.

Sometimes you lean the wrong way, or you turn too quickly and a sharp edge pokes you. Your eyes water and you rub your wound, but you have to keep going because not everyone knows about your stone, or if they do, they don't realise it can still bring this much pain.

There are days you are simply happy now, smiling comes easy and you laugh without thinking. You slap your leg during that laughter, and you feel your stone and aren't sure whether you should be laughing still. The stone still hurts.

Once in a while you can't take your hand off that stone. You run it over your fingers and roll it in your palm and are so preoccupied by its weight, you forget things like your car keys and home address. You try to leave it alone, but you just can't. You want to take a nap, but it's been so many years since you've called in "sad" you're not sure anyone would understand anymore or if they ever did.

But most days you can take your hand in and out of your pocket, feel your stone and even smile at its unwavering presence. You've accepted this stone as your own, crossing your hands over it, saying "mine" as children do.

You rest more peacefully than you once did, you've learned to move forward the best you can. Some days you want to show the world what a beautiful memory you're holding. But most days you twirl it through your fingers, smile and look to the sky.

You squeeze your hands together and hope you are living in a way that honours the missing piece you carry, until your arms are full again.

Sending you all my love as always and again I thank you for your valued support and friendship it means so very much to me, and I look forward to seeing as many of you as I can very soon.

**Heather White,
ICCM President**

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in touch



We are currently seeing a number of records being broken, some welcome, some not so much

The World Athletics Championships held in Oregon in July, saw three world records broken, in men's pole vault, women's 400 metres hurdles and women's 100 metres hurdles. Fantastic achievements.

Also in July, the highest ever temperature in Britain was recorded, with the 40C (104F) mark being broken for the first time. At Heathrow, a temperature of 40.2C was recorded. Not a fantastic achievement.

The first example of broken records demonstrates what can be achieved through hard work, dedication, commitment, training and teamwork. Nobody is born a world champion. Although some natural talent or inclination towards a particular discipline helps, it requires a huge effort to turn that into world-beating form. There will be setbacks along the way, such as injuries, or global pandemics that interfere with the training regime. There will be trying times. There will be successes. And there will be failures. It will require huge personal and team effort to keep going and face those challenges. But how good must it feel to reap the reward of being the best of the best?

There is a parallel here with the work that we do. None of us started in our roles full of the necessary knowledge and skills. We've had to work hard to achieve those, through education, training and experience. I'm sure we have all made mistakes along the way. There will no doubt have been times when we have questioned whether we are doing the right thing. But with our teams around us, and the support of our colleagues in the bereavement sector, we can overcome. We can offer the best possible service to bereaved people. Ok, we're not out to break any records, and we don't do it for personal glory, but there is a huge sense of satisfaction in knowing that you have given your all to help others. When a family is enabled to have the funeral service they want, you have done your job well and you are a champion. It doesn't matter which role you play in the team, continue to do it to the best of your ability to keep that winning feeling going.

The ICCM is part of your team. We can give you knowledge through our education programme. We can give you skills through our training programmes. We can give you targets to achieve through our best practice guidance. We can give you support through our online, email and telephone technical advice. We can give you encouragement and make sure you are noticed through our work with allied organisations and government departments. And we can be there to listen should things not go quite so well, or you are facing a personal crisis. We have broad shoulders, and over 80 years' worth of combined experience and can normally help find a solution to any problem. We are always cheering for you from the stands and like to celebrate your successes through our own awards and support for others such as the Cemetery of the Year Awards. We like to think we make pretty good teammates, and help you to achieve your goals of providing the best services for bereaved people.

The second example of a broken record is very concerning. We've all known about global warming for some time, and various governments have flapped around the edges of a solution. Targets have been set and initiatives introduced to try and slow down the rise in temperature to avoid catastrophe. That may seem excessive, but if temperatures continue to rise at their current rates, we will be facing the potential end to life on earth. Or at least human life as we know it. There will be droughts, floods, tsunamis, loss of habitats, loss of species, spread of diseases, failed crops and other food production, to name a few potential consequences. We are already seeing some of these consequences; the highest recorded temperature in Great Britain in July was very unpleasant and contributed to several deaths. It also saw several largescale fires, which were able to spread easily due to extremely dry conditions. This type of event will happen more and more unless global warming can be slowed done, and ideally reversed.

As with everything that we do, teamwork and collaboration are essential to help tackle the climate crisis. We can take individual actions, which together can make a big difference – no initiative is too small, eg making sure you don't leave your printer on stand-by, or turning off the tap when you brush your teeth, are both small in themselves but if the entire population did that the impact would be large. But to effect the huge changes required to slow down global warming, we all have to work together, both within and outside of the bereavement sector.

The ICCM will continue to work with allied organisations, and others, to ascertain what steps can be taken to minimise the impact of burial and cremation on the environment. I really hope that the only records that I report on in future Journals are of the good variety.

Julie Dunk
ICCM Chief Executive

Ian Quance legacy

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Edge IT Systems Ltd have agreed to a package of sponsorships in memory of former ICCM President and Edge employee, Ian Quance

Ian served on the ICCM Board from 2009, and became President in 2010, a role he took great pride in. Ian contributed much to the ICCM, including rewriting the HNC accredited cemetery management course, and developing a similar course for natural burial ground management. Ian also took on the role of tutor and helped and supported many students in their studies. He also promoted the natural burial charter and was a real champion of environmental issues within the bereavement sector. The ICCM awarded Ian a Fellowship in 2013 in recognition of his many and varied contributions.

Unfortunately, Ian died earlier this year, leaving a large hole in so many lives. The Board and Edge wanted to honour Ian's memory and his legacy in an appropriate way, reflecting his interests and passions. As a result, three initiatives have been agreed:

1. Ian Quance Award for Outstanding Environmental Improvement

This will be a prestigious award for ICCM members on behalf of their cemetery or crematorium. It will be given to those who develop and introduce initiatives and improvements that have a real and positive impact on the environment. The Board of Directors will publish the relevant criteria and will act as the judges.

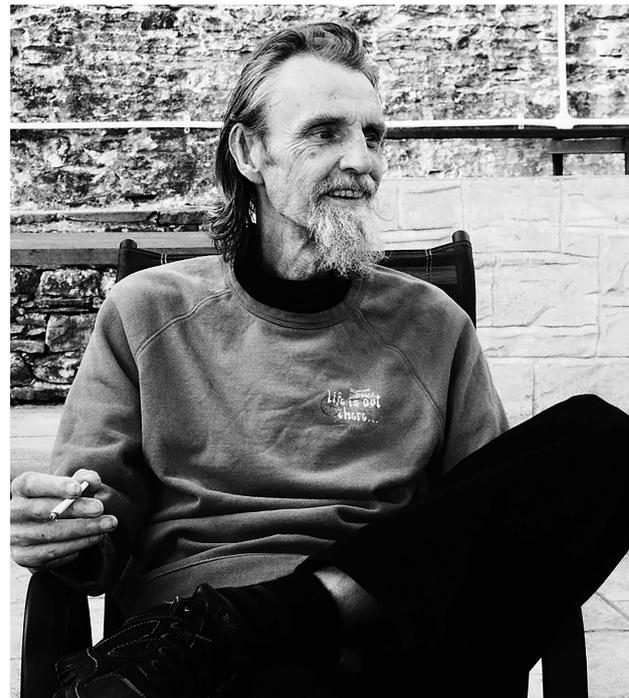
2. ICCM Environmental Toolbox

The ICCM will create and maintain an Environmental Toolbox for members to use. The Toolbox will contain practical tips for cemeteries and crematoria to use to reduce their impact on the environment. Edge will contribute to the costs involved in creating and maintaining the Toolbox so that members can access it for free.

3. ICCM Photographic Competition

Edge will sponsor the annual ICCM photographic competition. This has in fact started, with the prize for the best photograph in the 2022 competition rising from £50.00 to £100.00. For future years, a new category relating to the environment will be introduced to honour Ian Quance.

Ian was a great character, who loved nature and cared passionately about his chosen work sector. He contributed a lot to the ICCM and the wider bereavement sector, and through the sponsorship arrangements with Edge his memory will live on.



Peter Gitsham : an obituary



Peter Gitsham, 7th November 1948 - 21st April 2022.

Peter was born on 7th November 1948 in Bromley Kent, now in the London Borough of Bromley.

Peter's father was appointed to a new job and the family moved to Bristol where they lived until Peter was ten years old when once again his father obtained another new job, and the family moved this time to Wolverhampton. Peter went to one of the earliest comprehensive schools to be opened in England, the Regis Comprehensive School Wolverhampton which he really enjoyed and where he thrived. Peter maintained a great fondness for his school and the opportunities that his education had afforded him throughout his life.

Peter's first job on leaving school was with the engineers' department at the local authority at Wolverhampton who, at that time, were responsible for among other things, the crematorium and cemeteries. Peter evidently very much enjoyed his first role which involved driving a Ford transit van around the borough on various errands.

Like so many people who join our profession, Peter had not set out to have a career working in cemeteries and crematoria, it just happened. Peter enjoyed the work and he was encouraged to join the Institute of Burial and Cremation Administration (now the Institute of Cemeteries and Crematorium Management - ICCM) and begin studying for his diploma.

Peter's next job was at Swindon, following his father's example of moving around the country for a new job and the experience that he gained at Kingsdown crematorium along with his studies with the ICCM, led to Peter's next job (and another move) to the Woodvale crematorium in Brighton where he was appointed assistant superintendent to David Smale.

David Smale was a highly respected figure within the small world of burial and cremation and he encouraged Peter to complete his diploma and take on additional responsibilities thereby widening his experience and putting him in a strong position to apply for promotion. Peter really enjoyed his time in Brighton but in 1978 when he was just 30 years old, he was appointed to the position of superintendent and registrar to Middlesbrough crematorium and cemeteries, a big and challenging job with Middlesbrough borough council.

Peter really settled in Middlesbrough and in 1982 married his second wife Jackie and was soon a proud father of Matthew and Sarah.

Peter was always an enthusiastic supporter of the ICCM and went to most of the branch meetings that were held and encouraged others to attend as well. I first met Peter in around 1975 at a branch meeting in Brighton and he was very welcoming, and we continued as friends and colleagues until he retired in 2010. Peter became a course tutor for the ICCM and became a very active board director leading to his election as President for 1995 / 1996.

It was Peter who drew to the board's attention a Dutch metal recycling scheme that sowed the seed for the very successful ICCM Metal Recycling scheme that has to date raised in excess of £10 million for charity since it was adopted. Quite a legacy for Peter and one we can all be proud of.

Peter faced a particularly challenging period in early 2002 when there was a massive outcry in the Middlesbrough gazette concerning the whereabouts of babies who died at birth or were stillborn at Parkside maternity hospital in Middlesbrough.

Peter researched where the babies were buried from the late 1940's onwards and discovered that mostly they had been interred in Linthorpe cemetery. Peter organised the building of two memorial walls with plaques for families to remember their lost babies and arranged for granite markers for the graves of babies not buried in the main area. Peter organised a memorial service led by the chaplain of James Cook University Hospital for the parents and other relatives of these children and this service has been held annually ever since.

Peter retired from Middlesbrough in 2010 after a distinguished career which he had loved but vowed that he would not be tempted out of retirement by anyone! Peter kept to this promise although he did keep a huge number of bereavement industry related files on his computer to the end of his life.

Peter and Jackie moved soon after his retirement to Thornbury near Bristol and they settled into a happy life in the local community, joining and getting involved with U3A, Peter finding time to take up playing musical instruments in a wind-band, especially the bassoon, walking and enjoying their two dogs and continuing to enjoy caravanning and especially holiday trips in the Lake District and of course his grandchildren. Despite this busy retirement Peter still managed not one but two allotments which he also enjoyed.

Peter was out walking with their dogs when he had a sudden stroke and sadly died a few days later in hospital with his family by his side. Peter was 73.

He will be missed.



Alan José
Group Ambassador
Westerleigh Group Ltd

tales of a cemetery registrar

It's not just a job

You see him sat alone,
On that seat in a quiet place.
Take time out to say hello,
He might not want the lonely space.

A smile, a wave or a chat,
Do look - as he has seen you there.
It can mean the world,
It shows him you care.

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By Anita Fish

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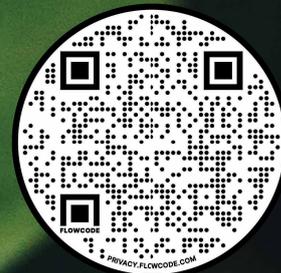


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book review

The Searchers. The Quest for the Lost of the First World War by Robert Sackville-West

The Searchers by Robert Sackville-West takes the reader into the previously unexplored territory of the locating and reburying the dead of the First World War (1914-1918). This huge task which was commenced in the days immediately after the end of hostilities involved disinterring then identifying the body – which was not always possible – followed by interment in the newly created war cemeteries. Taking some years to complete, and despite initial thorough scrutiny of the battlefields bodies continue to emerge.

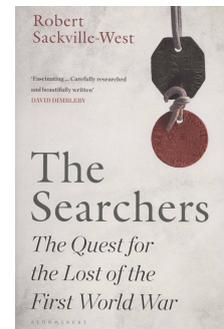
This book is not just about exhumation as it also examines the colossal administration behind documenting and recording the dead (in which the writer EM Forster was involved), not to mention answering the thousands of enquiry letters from the bereaved. In some cases, those with financial means conducted their own enquiries. Whilst it was prohibited to transport the battle-dead back to the UK, this did not prevent the occasional occurrence.

The war cemeteries gave rise to the visits by the bereaved, in some cases funded by charities, perhaps the earliest example of what would today be called 'necro-tourism'. For those whose sons or husbands could not be found, a measure of solace was provided by the unveiling of the Cenotaph and burial of the Unknown Warrior.

Sackville-West also covers the attempts to contact the war dead through spiritualism, especially by establishment figures such as Sir Arthur Conan-Doyle and the physicist, Sir Oliver Lodge. The final pages look at the reburial of the recently recovered while the Epilogue discusses the re-emergence of interest in the rituals of remembrance.

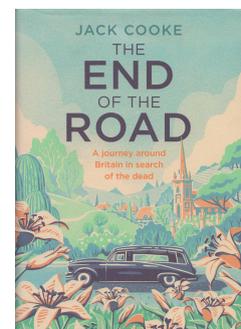
This engagingly written and thoroughly researched book provides a unique insight for those interested in not only the task of large-scale exhumations and subsequent reburials, but the needs of those grieving.

The author's trawls of the files in the National Archive along with newspapers and biographies is impressive. In addition, personal correspondence has been examined from which a number of heart-felt quotes have been extracted in this moving and exhaustive study. A highly recommended book.



The End of the Road. A journey around Britain in search of the dead By Jack Cooke

The subtitle of this book more than adequately sums up its contents, although it is only the selected dead that the author searches out. Jack Cooke is a writer whose track record is literally that – recording encounters on journeys with a purpose. In this case he is driving around Britain in an old Daimler hearse visiting places where the dead are (or have been) interred or cremated. Sites include the chattri on the South Downs where Sikh soldiers were cremated during WWI; Thomas Hardy's grave in Dorset; Llantrisant where Dr Price cremated his young son; Charles Thompson's grave in Sherwood Forest; a desolate mausoleum on the island of Rum; the Lakeland Fells where Alfred Wainwright's ashes rest; a coffin perched in the loft rafters of a bank in Stevenage, and so the list continues. In fact, nearly forty places are mentioned. On the journey the writer treats the hearse as a caravan by sleeping on the adapted bier (in the interests of modesty, curtains are provided in the side windows); a spider called Enfield is his only travelling companion.



Readers of this publication will be aware that a hearse, whether containing a coffin or not, attracts attention and this vehicle was no exception, although the staff at a drive-thru McDonald's made no reaction. After some 2,000 miles the hearse comes to the end of its life in Scotland before being taken back to a neighbour's cow shed and sold for parts; Enfield was rescued and duly released.

This is an engaging, gentle and at times amusingly written travelogue, and it's probably the first of its kind involving a funeral vehicle as the means of transport. Clearly the writer has done his research and mapped out his route accordingly, but there is no bibliography and only a modest list of names of those who have helped with information.

Those working in this occupation will no doubt also visit similar locations when touring around the country or going further afield on holiday, but the means of transport will undoubtedly be a private car. It's often an occasion when spouses or partners groan and comments are made along the lines of 'Don't you have enough of this at work?'

What this book confirms is that the dead are around us everywhere, whether commemorated or not and there's a story to be told about many of them. This is a compendium of those tales commentating that life is a journey to the end of the road.

Brian Parsons, www.brianparsons.org.uk

maple park crematorium opens its doors

In a wet and cold field in the middle of the North Yorkshire countryside in November 2020, the first machine engines spluttered to an early morning start, and the creation of Maple Park began.

Fast forward two and a half years, we are now in our fourth month of opening and Maple Park is positively impacting those recently bereaved, fuelled by a team of incredibly passionate staff.



Maple Park came to fruition through the vision of a council that understood their residents. They recognised the need to break the cycle of travelling long distances to say goodbye to their loved ones. Reducing lengthy waiting times, which caused added strain at an already difficult time, was equally a key requirement that needed to be resolved.

In May 2019 Hambleton District Council appointed the CDS Group, to develop the business case to create Maple Park. Following a feasibility study, a site between Thirsk and the A1 was selected based on various criteria, including its great accessibility from various directions. Once the 22 acre site was acquired the vision of agricultural-looking buildings, within extensive landscaping was developed. The visualisation centred around providing a peaceful experience for mourners and developing an estate that provided bereavement services, as well as becoming an asset for the

community. The former Skipton-on-Swale RAF base nearby was a base for the Royal Canadian Air Force, in recognition of this the landscaping includes the planting of 98 Maple trees to commemorate the lives lost in the Royal Canadian Air Force. As well as acknowledging the site's past the Council sought to consider its future. This led to the purchase of an electric cremator, only the third in the country, in a move towards a greener future in the industry. Community consultation took place via a drop-in event and an online survey, there was significant support for the development and in April 2020 the full planning application was submitted.

The support and experience of Henry Riley, who acted as Employer's Agent, cost consultant and project manager, combined with the vision of CDS Group and Benchmark architects, has ensured that Maple Park has been designed and created with care and attention to detail.



The experienced contractor Willmott Dixon was appointed, and the project completed in February 2022, with the total build taking approximately 15 months. The team had to battle difficult weather and several storms but are rightly proud of the end product. The collaborative nature of Willmott Dixon and the attention to detail by all those involved, including the beautifully hand crafted furniture by Treske, has meant Maple Park has been completed to the highest standard and continues to flourish. The passion exuberated by all parties is visible in the beauty of the memorial garden and the large airy service hall to the staff that comfort and help families and friends through some of their most difficult times.

At the heart of Maple Park is the desire to ensure that families have a space in which they can say goodbye to loved ones and the time they need to do so. Maple Park's aesthetics and



natural feel contributes to the sense of reflection and calmness felt throughout the site. The programming of one hour services, with gaps in-between, allows families to connect with friends and family without feeling rushed.

The team at Maple Park understand the importance of local community. As local residents themselves, they share personal links with the communities near to Maple Park. Their fresh outlook from previous backgrounds outside of the bereavement industry means new, unique and community centred ideas are constantly being developed. Several unique, British made memorials that are based on and around the landscape in the local area to Maple Park are currently being developed by the team. To continue to support the bereaved

families and friends we work with we hope to develop connections with community groups, establishing Maple Park as a community hub where people can come for further support. We look forward to opening the café and wake facility in Autumn to enable families to host wakes at Maple Park, as well as opening the café to all visitors and community groups.

Phillippa O'Brien
Crematorium Business Manager

talbot house, belgium visit

On 11th June, Bob Coates, previous editor of this magazine, was the guest of Dr Ian Hussein (ICCM President 2000/2001) at a garden party in the grounds of this famous house to commemorate the opening of its new permanent exhibition. Pictured here receiving a first edition (1929), 'Plain Tales From Flanders' by the founder, Padre Philip 'Tubby' Clayton entitled'.

Ian's association, rather passion, for this place began in his youth helping out at a subsidiary of the House (Toc-H) in London. When Ian moved to Belgium as a Director for the CWGC (2009-2016) he joined the Association's committee and was subsequently appointed its President. Ian is also a trustee of the Old Talbot House Foundation.

Opened in 1915, it's described as an 'oasis of serenity in a world gone mad' indeed, it served as just that for hundreds of thousands of soldiers, of any rank, during both WWI and WWII - a 'home from home' where they could find a library, a concert hall and a magnificent chapel in the upper room. Here they would find comfort, humanity and peace.

It is a must visit, even stay, next time you are in the area discovering the immaculately kept CWGC cemeteries or attending the daily service of remembrance at the Menin Gate, in nearby Ypres, sounded by the Last Post Association (of which our Past President is a Patron).

Visit their website <https://www.talbothouse.be/en/> and experience a virtual tour of the house.



Bob Coates

YOU MAY THINK THERE'S NO ONE. WE'LL FIND SOMEONE.

Next-of-kin enquiries for Public Health Funeral Officers

At Fraser and Fraser we know that when you arrange a funeral under **s.46** of the **Public Health Act** you may need help tracing the family of the deceased. Whether or not they want to take on the funeral arrangements themselves, they'll have the opportunity to attend and pay their respects.

Fraser and Fraser traces family members all over the UK and the rest of the world and has been working with the Public Sector for more than 50 years. Whenever you ask for help, we become temporary custodians of your reputation and, as you'd expect, we conduct all our enquiries with **tact, discretion** and **sensitivity**.

All our tracing services are free of charge to Local Authorities. To find out more contact Nick Beetham on **020 7832 1400 or **nickbeetham@fraserandfraser.co.uk****

are you ready to raise your profile in 2022?

Raising your profile could be easier than you think. Here are five practical tips

Create a marketing plan

First things, first, creating a marketing plan is a good first step to ensuring that your efforts are clearly focused on realising what you set out to achieve. Put simply - it's a way for you to define where you want to be (your goals), and how you're going to get there (your tactics). Essentially...what you want to do and how you're going to do it.

There are a myriad of different ways of putting a marketing plan together - it doesn't need to be overly complicated, but by way of structure, try asking yourself some basic questions:

What are our core values and messages? What are our goals? Who is our target audience? Who or what is competing for our audience's attention (and what are they doing)? What are our assets and how can we utilise them to best effect? What resources and budget do we have? What tactics, methods and channels will we use? How will we know if we've been successful?



Save the date!

When it comes to raising your profile, you can never underestimate the value of the physical space you occupy, the people you have, and the rich history you possess. Being creative in how you use these can help you to attract more visitors and showcase what you have to offer.

Much of what you may choose to do will be dependent on your space, available resources and what feels appropriate, but you may want to consider events such as: picnics, theatre performances, movie nights or even stargazing!

Then it's time to create your calendar of events - this will help you to schedule, organise and share details of upcoming activities.

Build relationships

Building relationships within your local community should be a key element of any profile-raising strategy - and is something you are uniquely positioned to do as a place of cultural significance.

Think of local groups or organisations as external stakeholders or potential partners and consider what shared interests could form the basis of joint activities, events or initiatives.

Historical societies, community groups, schools, universities or museums, for example, may all be open to exploring what you can do together to develop unique activities that will help to make a real cultural impact.

Get social

Haven't got a Facebook page? Now's the time to set one up. Your twitter feed feeling a little empty? Now's the time to give it some attention.

Your social media channels are a great way to shout about what you have to offer, and they're of greatest value if you're making them a place for fresh and interesting content.

Think of everything you have to say - your upcoming events, your latest news, your history, your buildings, your people...the more you have to say, the more engagement you're likely to get.

A simple social media plan will help keep you on the right track. Create a weekly calendar and start filling it with ideas for content. You may be surprised at just how much you have to say!

Create a newsletter

A newsletter is a great way of sharing information directly into the inboxes (or letterboxes) of your mailing list. Rather than a 'hard sell', they're a means of providing important news or updates, while giving a broader picture and understanding of who you are - allowing you to connect and communicate directly with your audience in a meaningful way.

In terms of format - keep it clean and simple. Too much going on and readers may disengage, meaning that your message is lost. Your most important, headline piece of content - let's say, your exciting upcoming event - should be the first thing they read. And always remember to provide a call to action - ensuring they sign up to that event or go to your website to learn more.

Graeme Arthur, Content Specialist, PlotBox



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Facultatieve Technologies gives advice and support on the whole cremation process. Our product range is extensive and we are therefore able to supply the ideal product in any situation. Facultatieve Technologies provides excellent support and maintenance services anywhere in the world.

FT is part of 'the Facultatieve Group' and benefits from knowledge and experience of cremation dating back to 1874.

Feel free to contact us:

T: +44(0)113 276 88 88 E: info@facultatieve-technologies.co.uk



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TGMS offers an extensive range of services to support Cemetery Managers from inception of a cemetery development project through to practical completion.

Stage 1

Feasibility study

- EA Tier 1, 2 or 3 risk assessment
- Site survey
- Development recommendations
- Liaison with the Environment Agency/SEPA



Stage 2

Design

- Development of conceptual designs
- Detailed designs, specification and drawings
- Assistance with a planning application



Stage 3

Tender process

- Production of contractual documentation
- Despatch of tender packs
- Analysis of tender returns
- Appointment of contractor



Stage 4

Project management

- Management of construction works
- Construction materials testing
- Interim and final valuation certificates
- Quality control throughout the project



Contact us:

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- Tel. +44 (0) 1525 307060
- richard.earl@tgms.co.uk
- www.tgms.co.uk

the return of the busman's holiday...

ICCM Deputy President Marian Millington visits a beautiful crematorium in Barbados



The one thing we all missed with the pandemic was the ability to travel, something I certainly did! So finally, a holiday is booked - off to Barbados for a well-earned rest. Time to switch off, you promise yourself you won't look at emails, work is not on the agenda for two whole weeks!

You promise yourself that this time you will;

- Sit on the beach with a pina colada
- Relax by the pool with a good book
- Snorkel in the sea, swim with the turtles
- Visit the sites and learn about its culture.
- Followed by more food and drink and repeat!

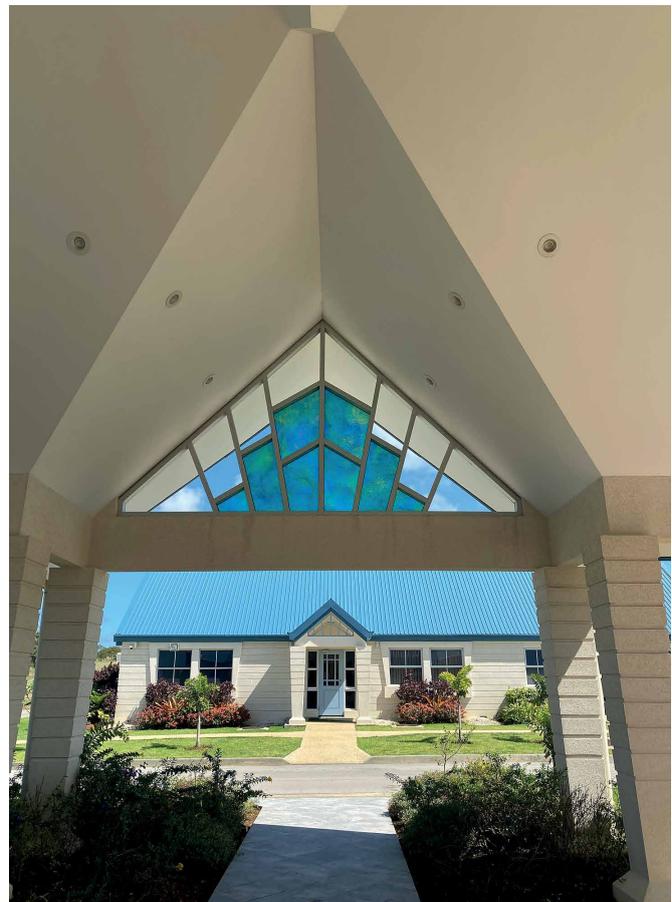
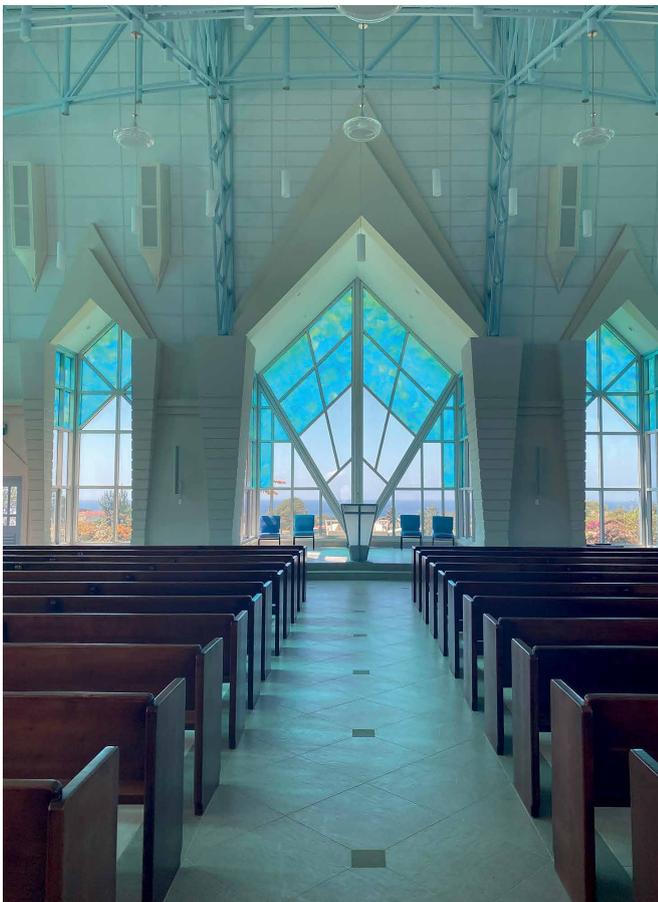
The week starts off well, we are sticking to the list: the Pina colada was nice and cold, the sea was blue, and sand was white. The book was opened, we snorkelled in the sea and saw a few turtles!

Then the inevitable happens. as we are taking a tour visiting sites and learning about the culture, what do we see a beautiful building sitting on the horizon. After a chat with our taxi driver, we learnt it was the new crematorium. Well, old habits die hard ... we just had to have a closer look. The poor taxi driver was certainly shocked and bemused!

We were lucky to meet the manager of the new site who gave us a tour of the new facility. The 26 acre cemetery was opened a few years earlier, and a decision was made to build the chapel to accommodate a crematorium. Barbados has one other crematorium in the south which does approx. 300 cremations a year. She explained that whilst burial is still the majority choice for many, cremations has started to become a consideration for the younger generations.

The conversation turned to memorials, and she explained at the moment that as cremation is new to the island there are limited options. We could have kept talking all day if it wasn't for our driver reminding us that we were on holiday!

An absolutely stunning building, what a joy and honour to visit. Oh well, I promise our next holiday, I will keep work at home.



Marian Millington
ICCM Deputy President

news from child funeral charity



The trustees of the Child Funeral Charity are very sad to report the death of the charity's patron Baroness Sally Greengross OBE, member of the House of Lords since 2000, who died in June 2022 aged 86. Her work as a campaigner was remarkable and we were very proud that she supported our work as a patron of our Charity. Obituaries to her have included the words 'Inspirational, popular and determined' and recognition has been given to the many roles where she made such a difference with her passionate commitment to ageing and demographic change issues.



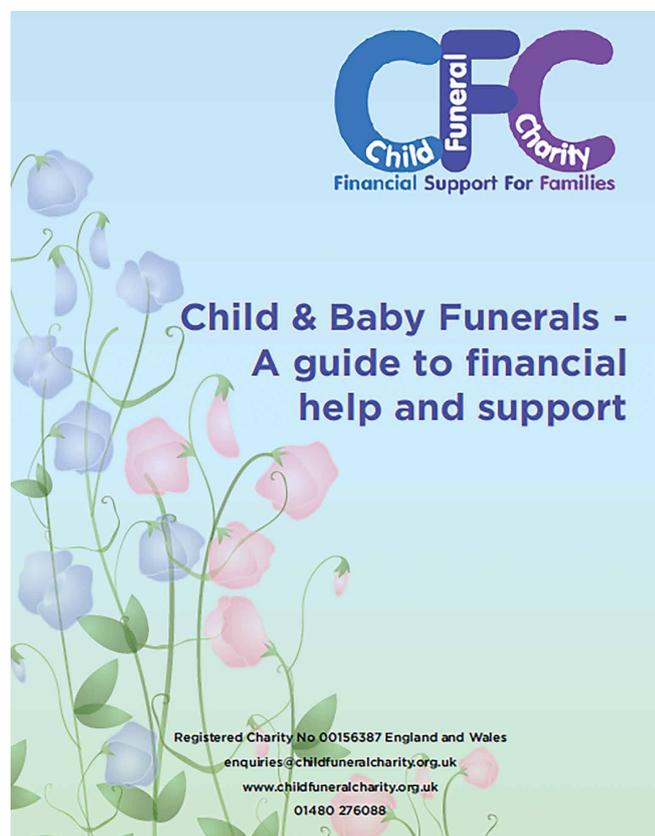
As Director General of Age Concern from 1987, a position she held until 2000. She founded the International Longevity Centre in 1997 and was its Chief Executive until shortly before her death.

FREE Guide to Funding for Child and Baby Funerals

The Child Funeral Charity is pleased to have published a new 'Guide to Funding for Child and Baby Funerals' which is free on request.

The booklet covers, in-depth, all aspects of the Children's Funeral Fund, what it pays for and how to apply. It also gives links to other charities and details how the Child Funeral Charity can help when bereaved parents are arranging a funeral for their child or baby.

If you would like a copy for your offices so that all staff have access to this then please contact us on 01480 276088 or email enquiries@childfuneralcharity.org.uk.



Anne Barber
Child Funeral Charity

ICCM

HERE FOR YOU

For information and enquiries please contact:

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City of London Cemetery
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Manor Park
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E12 5DQ

T 020 8989 4661

E julie.callender@iccm-uk.com

www.iccm-uk.com



Crematorium Technicians' Training Scheme (CTTS)

During the Coronavirus pandemic, the ICCM has continued to provide CTTS training and examinations to the same high quality levels as before. This was vital to maintain our BTEC accredited status. To assist crematoria to gain CTTS qualifications for their teams, we introduced online practical assessments using video technology. Since the 23rd March 2020 when lockdown was enforced, over 120 online assessments have been successfully completed. The successful candidates have commented:

'It's been a pleasure working with you'

'I appreciate your support'

'Your help and guidance have been invaluable'

'I was very nervous prior to the test and you made me feel as relaxed as anyone possibly could have'

- ✓ CTTS is the only cremator technician qualification accredited to BTEC standard
- ✓ Successful completion leads to a BTEC Certificate for Crematorium Technical Operations
- ✓ Pearson (formerly Edexcel) accredits the course and validates its contents on an annual basis
- ✓ The course notes are regularly reviewed by ICCM Officers to ensure they remain up to date and fit for purpose, taking into account changes in legislation, guidance and best practice
- ✓ Training is on-site under a mentor, working through a comprehensive workbook covering all aspects of cremating, including baby and infant cremations, abatement equipment and customer care
- ✓ Training is at the candidate's own pace, giving flexibility and building confidence before final assessment
- ✓ CTTS conforms with the Process Guidance Notes for Crematoria - PG 5/2 (12) requirements
- ✓ CTTS be studied as a prelude to the Crematorium Management unit of the ICCM Diploma
- ✓ Qualification is by assessment of the completed workbook plus a practical assessment
- ✓ Support of ICCM Officers during training

For further information about CTTS, or any other ICCM course, please contact the ICCM National Office.



iccm recycling of metals scheme



Press releases and information from charities that received funds in the December 2021 recycling of metals nominations round



July 2022 Recycling update – now worth more than Shearer

After a very busy time again, ICCM/Orthometals recycling of metals scheme finished its latest round of nominations and awards in July 2022.

The consent of the bereaved and participation by UK Crematorium meant that BACS payments for **£1,776,000** were issued from July into September 2022 – our banks online payments thing really loves me when I stack them up for 3 months.

It also means the partnership with Orthometals and with the bereaved and their families has now donated a total of **£15,262,000** since it started. Which in old/less silly football terms does mean its passed Alan Shearer's then world record move to Newcastle in 1996.



Sadly, we can't get Ant and Dec to pose to celebrate, but many images of the success and delight from charities will be shared in due course and there's a nice one below too.

In July we were able to make 152 separate awards to charities. Which also for the grand totals means that since we started, we have made 2,205 separate payments.

We've also paid out to 614 different charities and 57% of all the funds have gone to a single charity donation so far.

While this is not always the case the new charities for this round are: -

#willdoes, Blackpool Carers Centre, Bridgeend Carers Centre

Childrens Cancer North, Daft as a brush cancer patient care, Focres Support Limited

Freddie's Wish, Friends of Linthorpe Cemetery, Friends of Thorntree Cemetery

Herriot Hospice Homecare, Hunts Community Cancer Network, In Sue's Name

Kilbryde Hospice, Lighthouse, Natasha Allergy Research Foundation

Ottery Help Scheme, Pancreatic Cancer UK, Pied Piper Appeal

Pulmonary Fibrosis Trust, Ripple, Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation

Shine Youth, St Joseph's Hospice, Suffolk Family Carers Ltd

Sunflowers Suicide Support, The Anne Robson Trust, The Firgrove Centre

The Harbour, Tynedale Hospice at Home, Wandsworth Bereavement Services

And We mind and Kelly Matter

That's quite a range of causes some I'd heard of some I hadn't but importantly ones that scheme members had and knew needed support.

Another first has also been broken this round.

Since the scheme began CRUSE has been the biggest receipt of funds, the latest top 10 is below, however, scheme members have now ensured that over £1 million has gone to CRUSE and its local branches across the whole of the UK. This is a fantastic achievement by all parties for care towards the bereaved.

The to date July 2022 top 10 table also reads very impressively for how help has been provided to the bereaved.

Charity	Amount donated	Number of donations
CRUSE	£ 1,088,078	161
Macmillan cancer care	£ 925,962	125
SANDS	£ 563,383	104
Marie Curie	£ 345,068	56
Samaritans	£ 228,628	31
Mayor's Appeal causes	£ 214,228	38
Alzheimer's society	£ 187,630	29
Air Ambulance services England	£ 172,145	20
Young lives Vs Cancer	£ 168,000	18
Survivors of Bereavement by suicide	£ 166,873	21

While we celebrate the work of the biggest causes, we also celebrate the work of all the causes nominated across the United Kingdom, big or small the funds are vital to them and your work and support is also vital to the bereaved.

Any crematoria that are not members and wish to sign up can contact – trevor.robson@iccm-uk.com for an information pack and all current scheme members will be informed about the next round of nominations when it has opened, for a few months I'm not looking at forms amazingly.

ICCM believes that Orthometals remain our chosen partner due to their ethics and experience; they now recycle metals from 1250 crematoria around the world. They have state of the art facilities and have conducted research in their 25 years' experience in the metals sector to find the most efficient way of extracting and recycling the metals from cremation.

They have sophisticated software to plan and track their collections to make sure they are carried out in the most efficient way. Financial and environmental costs are kept as low as possible through bulk collection and shipping. Once recycled, the metals are already in Europe so can be sold to a wider market and the best price fetched.

Othometals keep very detailed records of all the metals recycled, so if you need information about how much you have submitted and how much you have received in return, please let me know and I will ask them to produce that for you.

We know there are other companies in the market, however, £15 million and 2,205 donations, so far, support that something is working well, and we hope you think that too.

Again, thank you for your help to make a difference.

Trevor Robson
ICCM Finance and IT Manager

Final presentations from December 2021 round

Croydon

Memorial garden to be built at hospital thanks to £15k charity donation – Croydon Borough Council

A new memorial garden will be built at a hospital thanks to a £15,000 charity donation.

The money, from Croydon Crematorium, will fund the Crocus Garden of Remembrance at Croydon University Hospital, a new mortuary memorial garden which will support families affected by the loss of a child.

It will give families a peaceful place to walk, sit and reflect.

The garden will feature a paving area, stepping stones, green living walls and benches.

The donation was made via The Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management’s metal recycling initiative to Croydon Health Charity, the dedicated charity for Croydon Health Services NHS Trust.

Elaine Clancy, joint chief nurse at Croydon Health Services NHS Trust, said: “We are very grateful for this donation which will support many bereaved families during a difficult, challenging, and often traumatic time.

“These projects will help to provide a compassionate, effective, and sensitive bereavement service at Croydon University Hospital to local people.”

Croydon Health Charity raises money for Croydon Health Services NHS Trust to enable the hospital to provide the best possible care for its patients and the local community.



Pictured: Elaine Clancy, chief nurse (middle) with Kevin Pilkington (right) and Eddie Ranger (left) from Croydon Crematorium.

Hereford Crematorium

Herefordshire Mind has been presented with a cheque for £15,000 from Hereford Crematorium.



The crematorium has been part of a national metal recycling scheme since 2011, which has allowed it to donate over £120,000 (and counting) to local charities.

The Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) launched their metal recycling scheme in 2005 as a way to recycle the metal recovered from cremated remains instead of burying them. Participating crematoria are asked to nominate a local bereavement charity to be given a share of surplus monies from the recycling process each year.

The service is provided at no cost to crematoria who have signed up to the scheme and metals are not recycled without the next of kin’s permission, which is sought at the time of the funeral arrangements.

David Harding, Development Manager at Herefordshire Mind, said: "On behalf of everyone at Herefordshire Mind, a massive thank you to the ICCM recycling programme, Herefordshire Council and Hereford Crematorium. Most importantly, heartfelt thanks to all of the families who have supported this scheme. We are humbled and incredibly grateful to you all. The funds will be used to continue our support of some of the most vulnerable members of communities across our wonderful county of Herefordshire."

are you on course?



When the pandemic hit, we were all forced to look at the way we deliver our services. For us at the ICCM, training is an important and large part of the services we provide.

With that in mind, we wanted to find a way to continue to deliver the much-needed training that was being requested by members. The use of media platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Skype kept us all connected during this time, and we all became familiar and more comfortable communicating in a virtual world. So, like the rest of the world we were forced to adapt. We took our training courses (most of them anyway) to your living rooms, your workspaces, or anywhere you could get an internet connection!

The course trainers and ICCM officers worked hard in ensuring that the level of training was to the same high standard that would normally have been delivered face to face, on sites. Without the need to travel or wait for a course to be held at a venue in a local area, we saw an increase in the number of members that booked on to our online training.

Overall, the training has been very successful – albeit with a few technical errors with the internet! So, when we emerged from the pandemic and things started getting back to “normal” we decided to continue to offer online training courses.

We have also developed a new course called **‘Establishing & Managing Gardens of Remembrance’** which has also proved to be popular. Some comments from attendees include:

“Clear and concise very easy to understand. Delivered well and kept interesting.”

“Very informative for someone who isn’t familiar with garden of remembrance.”

“The course was very helpful as we have an existing Garden of Remembrance. We wanted to know more about them and what we can plan for the future.”

Courses containing a practical element that can’t be delivered online such as COTS (Cemetery Operative Training Scheme) and Management of Memorials have now recommenced on sites. Anyone wanting more information on these please email trevor.robson@iccm-uk.com.

We of course continue to offer the Crematorium Technicians Training Scheme (CTTS) and are currently looking to recruit additional assessors across the country. During the pandemic all assessments were carried out online as the country locked down. This proved to be very successful in helping crematoria gain CTTS qualifications for their teams and ensuring business continuity. Taking this on board we have now adopted a hybrid approach with online and on-site assessments being undertaken since March of this year.

In addition, we also saw a rise in memberships. It was very clear that many members, especially in smaller town and parish councils, simply do not have the bereavement support or infrastructure where staff can get advice or help within their own organisations. There are many benefits of becoming an ICCM member which are shown later. However, the main benefit that is fed back to us is the guidance and advice that we offer on a daily basis, which has been invaluable to those using our services.

We have received such positive feedback from members, Zoe Porter, Assistant Parish Clerk at Caister Parish Council Cemetery said

“Since joining the ICCM as a Corporate Member on 30 April 2021, I have found their help, advice and support to be invaluable to me with the responsibilities and challenges that I face in my part time (12 hours per week) position.

As well as helping me with general enquiries regarding our small village cemetery, I have found the ICCM’s help to be inestimable with transferring Exclusive Rights of Burial. They have dealt with my queries in a most professional and timely manner. They are extremely helpful and often provide “real life” examples to clarify a point.

I recently attended an ICCM online training course: Exclusive Rights of Burial. This course was a great opportunity to reinforce my knowledge, learn new things and (as a lone worker) to listen and appreciate what other people are experiencing in similar situations. I would highly recommend joining the ICCM.”

If you would like more information on memberships, please contact Trevor Robson on trevor.robson@iccm-uk.com

Sofia Allana
Editor

It's time to change...

We're **100% committed** to producing **UK manufactured memorials** alongside our existing granite memorials.

We're committed to using **local companies** and **UK sourced materials**, including **Cornish Granite** and **Westmoreland Slate**, as well as porcelain and natural materials.

Our in-house design and creative team can provide options to suit all budgets to enhance any **Garden Of Remembrance**.



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Epilog Sequel's comprehensive core system caters for every task - with Epilog Sequel installed, you won't need to use another program. Send headed letters from its Word Processor, send emails, make bookings in its diary, generate reports for financial audit, create work orders; manage all your day to day tasks in one place.

Support for our users, support for our system - our experienced, helpful, and professional technical staff are available to support you throughout the working day, contactable by phone and by email. Our developers are constantly improving Epilog Sequel and our system is regularly updated and patched.

Backed up and secure - whether you choose to host your system internally or whether you host with us, your data is always backed up and kept secure.

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Technical Support: 01273 204 646
sales@manuscripti.net

The following courses are being run online and anyone wishing to attend should email trevor.robson@iccm-uk.com and register your interest. There are some dates listed on the website but if we get a high demand for a particular course we will endeavour to put on some additional dates.



Loss and Bereavement Awareness



The ICCM and Cruse have developed this training course specifically for anyone involved in working with bereaved people, The course provides an invaluable introduction to how grief can affect people, and how you can use that understanding to better help them.

Course overview

- Understanding loss and its impact
- Grief – understanding theories of grief
- Communication
- Complicated grief
- Putting it all into practice
- Applying to situations
- Self-care and supporting the team
- Agencies who can help
- Covid-19 – understanding our responses

Granting, Exercising & Transferring Exclusive Rights of Burial (EROB)



Learn about the benefits of having a proper, legally compliant EROB system.

Suitable for anyone involved in cemetery administration.

Course overview

- Putting things in context
- Benefits of having a proper system
- Does the funeral director need to be involved?
- Background and research findings
- Legal documents – wills, grant of probate, letters of administration
- Memorial rights
- Statutory declarations – how to gain information and draft the declaration
- Questions and answers

Cemetery Management and Compliance



Learn about the legal and practical aspects of cemetery management.

Suitable for cemetery staff at all levels, and those with a responsibility for cemeteries but who are not involved in their day-to-day management.

Course overview

- Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO)
- General powers of management
- Compliance
- Registers and records
- Granting and extending exclusive rights of burial
- Consent
- Avoiding disputes
- Burials; depth, shallow graves
- Administration processes
- Grave digging – procedures, preparations, backfilling
- Memorials
- Creating burial space
- Exhumation
- Transfer of exclusive rights of burial

Exhumation of Human Remains



Learn about the legal and practical aspects of exhumation.

Suitable for: anyone involved in planning for or undertaking exhumations of human remains (full body and ashes).

Course overview

- Legal background
- Preparing for the exhumation
- Health and safety and risk assessments
- Risk of infection
- Safe working practices
- Sensitivities of handling human remains
- Post exhumation registration
- Questions and answers

Public Health Act Funerals



Learn about the legal and practical aspects of public health act funerals.

Suitable for anyone involved in making arrangements for public health act funerals under S46 of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984.

Course overview

- Legal and ethical framework
- Referral of cases
- Conducting a search
- Tracing next of kin
- Registration
- The funeral service
- Dealing with the estate
- Record keeping
- Questions and answers

Sexton Duties



Learn about the benefits of having legally compliant systems and procedures.

Suitable for anyone involved in managing or working in a cemetery.

Course overview

- Grave identification and cemetery plans
- Instructions to gravediggers
- Checking procedures -verification of location, depth, size
- Memorials removed from graves
- Preparation for interment
- Legal requirements and implications
- Adjacent unstable memorials
- Dealing with families, funeral directors and officiants
- The funeral service
- Identification of the coffin
- Backfilling
- Inclement weather
- Health and safety
- Customer care
- Problem solving
- Questions and answers



Establishing & Managing Gardens of Remembrance



Course overview

Understanding what constitutes a Garden of Remembrance

Who can establish a Garden of Remembrance?

General powers of management

Options for the dispersal of cremated remains

Compliance

Registers and records

Exploring memorialization options

Considerations for design and maintenance

Managing memorial lease periods

Engaging with the community to provide a bespoke service

Rules and regulations

Long term management of Gardens of Remembrance

Avoiding disputes

Suitable for: cemetery and crematorium staff at all levels, and those looking to improve the choices available to bereaved persons within their community.

**Details of all our courses can be found on our
website www.iccm-uk.com**



cemetery waste

An issue not to be buried

Introduction

Operational burial facilities across the UK all have one thing in common, they produce excess burial arisings during their operational processes, which requires temporary storage on site prior to subsequent offsite disposal to a licensed landfill site.

Many burial sites across the UK treat burial arisings as a material to be 'lost' on site in order to reduce operating costs and help to reduce the cost of burial plots to the wider public. However, the construction/formation of mounds/bunds or the infilling of areas on the site, without an approved material management plan, is considered to be illegal landfilling and sites could be prosecuted by the Environment Agency and fined by HMRC.

Excess burial arisings need to be disposed of in line with the current guidance, as part of this, it is the waste producer's responsibility to appropriately classify the material prior to offsite disposal to ensure the material is sent to an appropriately licensed landfill. Alternatively, if the burial arisings can be used for a valid purpose within the grounds on the existing cemetery, then the works can be managed under an approved material management plan.

Waste Classification for offsite disposal

The current relevant waste legislation and technical guidance (WM3 1st edition version 1.2 GB, 2021) provides details for the assessment and classification of hazardous waste and sets out the requirements for classification and provides the methodology employed to ensure compliance with the regulations.

The purpose of waste classification is to indicate whether a material, in this case excess soil arisings from burial excavations, would be hazardous or non-hazardous. Following which additional WAC analysis can be used to determine which landfill would be appropriate to receive the waste material.

Should the material be classified as non-hazardous, then this could either be non-hazardous or Inert. Whilst if the material is classified as hazardous, further assessment would be required to assess whether any pre-treatment would be necessary for the material to be accepted at landfill.

Cemeteries are listed in Section 20 of the List of Wastes (England) Regulations 2005 and are indicated to be an Absolute Non-Hazardous Entry. This means that any waste soil, assuming the site is situated on natural ground rather than made ground, originating from a cemetery can be disposed of as non-hazardous. However, additional WAC testing would be required to determine if the material could be sent to an inert landfill, which would have significant cost savings to the waste producer.

The main issue with the Absolute Non-Hazardous Entry is that it does not consider the sites historical usage or setting, for example, a cemetery constructed on a former brownfield site could include a significant covering of made ground, which could potentially include hazardous concentrations of certain contaminants, including asbestos in either bulk form or loose fibres. Another example would be a former agricultural field which has been historically used for farming, in this instance, due to the historical use of pesticides and/or herbicides, there is a risk of residual contamination associated with the break-down of the chemicals used. This could lead to increased concentrations of heavy metals, notably lead and arsenic, which would potentially affect the classification of the waste soils.

As a waste producer you have a duty of care to ensure that the material you send off site has been correctly classified and is being sent to the correct waste facility. Therefore, even though the list entry for cemetery soil arisings is Absolute Non-Hazardous, due diligence is required on your behalf to ensure that the non-hazardous classification is actually the correct one.

The underlying soils should be screened for a 'full suite' of chemical components, the composition of this suite and number of samples required will depend on a number of factors, including site size and site history. These results can be used to classify the soils as non-hazardous /hazardous. Following which WAC analysis can be undertaken to determine the final waste facility.

Material Management Plan and Onsite Re-use of Waste Material

The waste classification of excess burial arisings is only the first part of the issues associated with excess cemetery soil waste. Based on our experience, it is apparent that there is an industry wide issue with regards to the storage of waste materials on site and the mixing of soil groups and vegetation.

As discussed above, any natural strata could be disposed of as Inert (subject to confirmatory WAC analysis). However, the inclusion of organic materials, such as roots, clippings or topsoil, will mean that the mixed waste would need to be disposed of as non-hazardous, which is a significant uplift in disposal costs.

This mixing of materials leads to an increased cost for disposal, so not only is correct waste classification essential from a legal standpoint, but the correct management of the material on site is essential to ensure that the disposal of waste material off site is financially feasible.

An alternative option to the offsite disposal of excess arisings which could be explored is the re-use of clean site won burial arising for defined purposes on site. The creation of a detailed materials management plan would enable the site to clearly define how site won arising would be re-used on site for a clear and defined purpose. Under a material management plan, the site would then be legally able to re-use burial arisings for a defined purpose on site, reducing the cost to dispose of arisings.

The creation of landscaped mounds, or infill of areas to make them suitable for future burial would be considered appropriate, however some uses may be subject to planning consent.

For more information and advice please contact the CDS group.

<https://www.thecdsgroup.co.uk/>

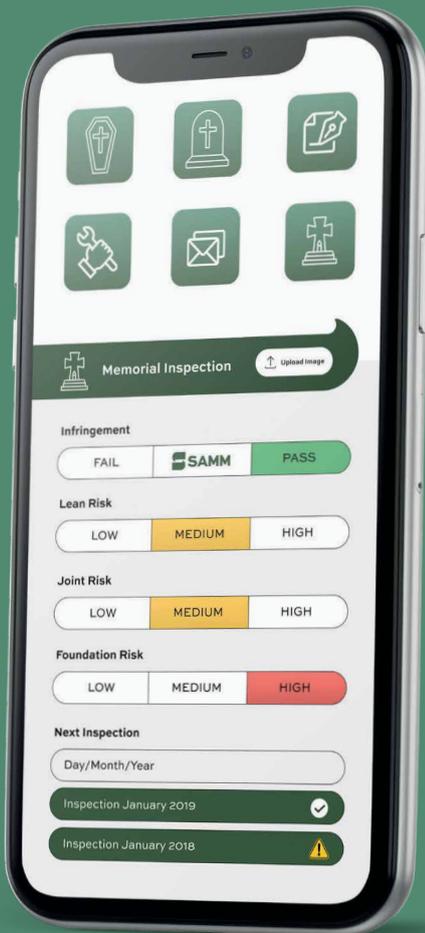
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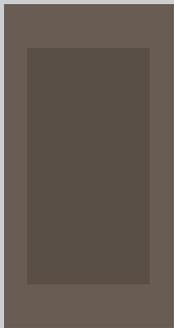
HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU WHEN PICKING THE CORRECT SHORING FOR THE GROUND CONDITIONS?

TODAY?
TOMORROW?
WHEN IT RAINS?

 **TELESHORE**
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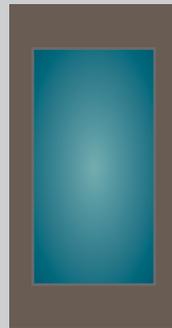

THE UK'S LEADING SUPPLIERS TO THE BEREAVEMENT SERVICES INDUSTRY

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE GRAVE SHOULD BE SHORED IN THE BELOW CONDITIONS?



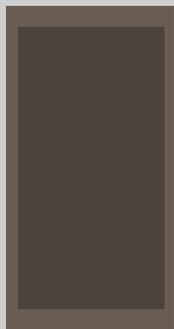
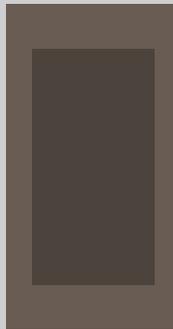
Scenario 1

It's a nice day, the soil is smooth and cohesive.



Scenario 2

It's the same site as 1, but it starts to rain and the grave fills 1/3 with water.



Scenario 3

You are digging the centre plot. The plot to the left is occupied and was dug to the same depth. The plot to the right is also occupied, but at 1/2 the depth of your current excavation.

There is 8-12" between each plot.



Scenario 4

The soil has stone or shale in it and shows signs of instability when they are removed.



Scenario 4

Soil conditions are smooth and cohesive, but as you dig, you discover an old bike hanging out of the wall that must be removed.

Find the answers on our website, where you can also find information on our market-leading grave shoring and safety solutions.

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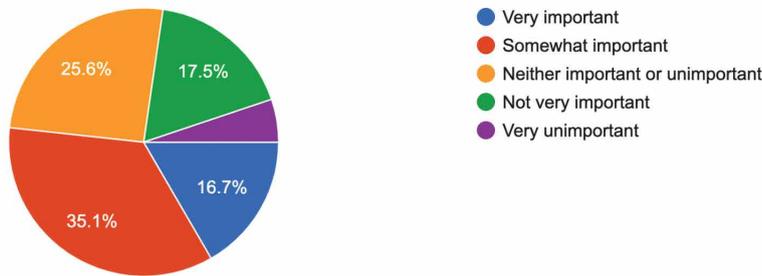
our digital legacy and using technology to remember our loved ones after they have died

Over the last 10 years the importance of our digital footprint (the trail of digital content and interactions we have online) has increased. The importance has increased both in life and death

Some of our digital footprint will remain after we die. It will remain on the devices, websites and social networks that we used. The content that remains available will become part of our 'digital legacy'. In a similar way to how our interactions in life informs our legacy, the interactions we have online will help inform our digital legacy. We can positively influence our own digital legacy or the digital legacy of a loved one.

If someone you care about dies, how important would it be for you to be able to view their social media profile(s)?

348 responses

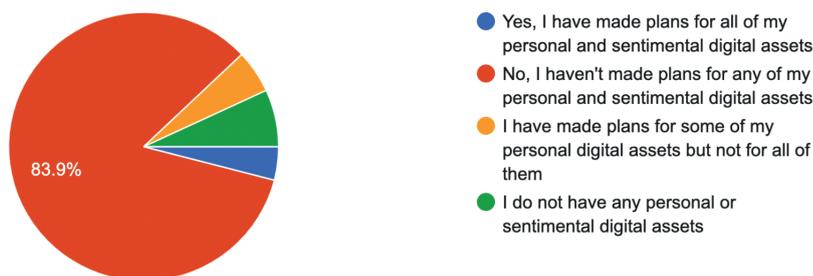


The assets we create, purchase and save online and on digital devices are often called 'digital assets'. These might consist of sentimental digital photos taken on a smartphone, purchased movies, shopping credits and cryptocurrencies (like Bitcoin).

These digital assets might be saved across a variety of online websites, social networks and online wallets. They might also be saved on different computers, mobile phones, tablets and hard drives. Access to each might require a password.

Have you made any plans for your personal and sentimental digital assets in the event of your death?

348 responses



The segmentation of our digital assets and accessing them after someone dies can be problematic. The inability to access the deceased's digital assets can cause distress, feelings of 'secondary loss' and leave beneficiaries the deceased's estate financially worse off. The Digital Legacy Association was launched at Hospice UK's conference in 2015 to help the general public and professionals with this increasingly important area. This is achieved through ongoing research, campaigning, training and innovation.

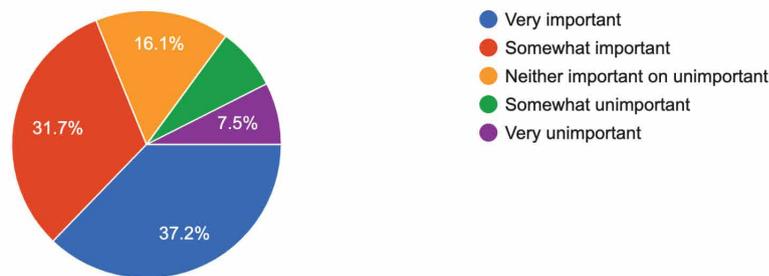
Digital Legacy, Funerals and bereavement

The internet is changing many aspects of funerals, memorialisation and bereavement. When someone for example shares information about a terminal prognosis on Facebook or Twitter it will inform their digital legacy. When someone dies and a family member crowdfunds to help pay for their funeral or live streams the person's funeral it will inform their digital legacy. The norms and values around death, technology and the internet have changed. The speed of change was accelerated during

the pandemic. One example is due to social distancing guidelines streaming funerals have become commonplace and normalised. With societal changes in attitudes and behaviour we recommend that funeral associations update their duty of care to include signposting and supporting those planning a funeral in this area.

If you were unable to attend the funeral of a close friend or family member, how important would it be for you to watch a live video stream of the ceremony?

347 responses



There are many ways in which the bereaved can use technology to remember their loved ones and create more personal funerals. The bereaved might for example use Spotify to decide which songs should be played at someone's funeral, share a post about them on Facebook or create an online memorial. After the death of my housemate from university a mutual friend created a fantasy football league that only friends of Ben can join. This allows us to continue bonds with Ben and our wider friendship group in a way that is relevant to the person Ben was and the people we are today. I still have Ben as a Facebook friend and this is his main online memorial page. The fantasy football league however allows us to be active in Ben's digital legacy rather than passive viewers.

Funeral, cemetery and other end of life professionals should think about how technology can be used to better support the dying and bereaved. It is very important to understand how people engage with others online and consume media. Learning how to arrange a funeral on Facebook is important for members of the general public who use Facebook but also for professionals supporting them. Many people are more likely to read a social media post about the date and place of someone's funeral than they are in the local newspaper.

Third party streaming platforms like Zoom can be used for funeral streams however they do not contain an existing community of friends and family members. There isn't a right or wrong way to die and there isn't a right or wrong way to use technology when remembering a loved one.

Resources and empowerment

A range of public facing, digital legacy tutorials can be found in the 'For the Public' section. These have been created to help each person take time to understand the devices and services that they use and how to make plans for each.

A range of free to use leaflets and posters can be downloaded from <https://ditallegacyassociation.org/frameworkfree-inpatient-resource-for-hospices/> and to learn more about this area we recommend listening to Jane Bakewell's 'We need to talk about death - My Digital legacy'. Separately people can create 'social media will' for their online accounts on MyWishes for free.



About the author

James is the founder of the Digital Legacy Association and MyWishes. He has spent the last 10 years raising awareness about the importance of this area and empowering people to make plans for their digital death. He trains professionals to better understand aspects relating to the internet and death in relation to their practice and responsibilities.

James Norris



Development in Progress – March 2021

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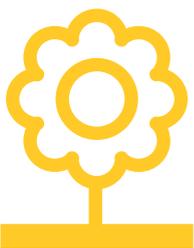
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Discover what's beneath.

20 year celebrations for civil ceremonies

Civil Ceremonies was founded on 1st May 2002 and is now celebrating 20 years in business

At the Kettering Park Hotel on 4th May, Anne Barber, Managing Director, joined with past and present staff, tutors, assessors and many friends and supporters of the business to celebrate the success of the company, and a glass was raised to the next 20!

The Ofsted Outstanding rated company delivers the Level 3 national qualification Diploma in Funeral Celebrancy and additional specialist Level 4 training in Child and Baby Funerals and Advanced Tribute Writing. In 2013 Civil Ceremonies also launched the website www.celebrantsupplies.co.uk offering ceremony related products.

John Valentine, a long-standing tutor with the company spoke of the impact that Civil Ceremonies had made over the years to the growth and increasing popularity of secular funeral ceremonies. Anne described how the success of the business was down to the staff and tutors who had worked so very hard over the years, thanking them and the many loyal suppliers and supporters who had become friends.

Describing the highlights of the last 20 years, Anne listed many key achievements, including: an Ofsted Outstanding grading on the very first inspection, receiving a national training award and Matrix accreditation, achieving national qualification status for the diploma training courses, obtaining a government contract to offer Advanced Learner Loans for the training, and establishing the Celebrant Supplies mail order service, the Celebrants' Convention and the National Celebrant Awards.

The funeral celebrants trained over the years have gone on to create and deliver professional, unique, and highly personal funeral ceremonies for thousands of bereaved families, a great source of pride for the company.



Anne Barber, Managing Director of Civil Ceremonies Ltd



A celebration of twenty years of CCL

Anne Barber
Civil Ceremonies Ltd



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dedication service at stirlingshire crematorium

Funeral directors, celebrants, members of the clergy and senior representatives from many organisations within the bereavement sector came together for a Service of Dedication at Stirlingshire Crematorium



Stirlingshire Crematorium is part of Westerleigh Group, the UK's largest independent owner and operator of crematoria and cemeteries, with 36 other sites across England, Scotland and Wales, all set within beautifully-landscaped gardens of remembrance which provide pleasant, peaceful places for people to visit and reflect.

It is Westerleigh Group's tradition to dedicate a new crematorium to its community, an occasion which usually takes place approximately 12 months after its opening.

Stirlingshire Crematorium was opened on 30 May 2019 and its service of dedication was originally planned for the spring of 2020 but had to be postponed because of the pandemic.

The service was led by Reverend Colin Renwick, Minister of Dunblane Cathedral and Moderator of the Presbytery of Stirling. He was joined by Jean Porter, Deacon for the Church of Scotland, and Irene Gardner a Civil Celebrant, who both regularly officiate at Funeral Services at Stirlingshire Crematorium.

Moderator Colin said: "A crematorium in Stirlingshire was long overdue and, very quickly, the community has grown to value this facility, the staff, and the service it offers."

Jean Porter agreed with the words of Moderator Colin, and expressed her appreciation of the crematorium, which conducted its first service in May 2019.

She spoke warmly about the exemplary care provided by the dedicated team at Stirlingshire Crematorium, led by Site Manager Donnie Connor, and thanked them for the valuable contribution they make to those who mourn within the surrounding communities.

Donnie Connor said: "We're very pleased to be able to finally host this special event.

"It's been a very challenging time, going into lockdown just 10 months after our crematorium opened.

"We've stood by and supported our community, both before and during the pandemic and it will be our honour to continue to serve local families at such difficult times, when they lose loved ones.

"We're grateful to everyone who joined us for our dedication service and who has supported us in any way during the first few years of our crematorium establishing itself in the community."

To find out more about Stirlingshire Crematorium, visit www.stirlingshirecrematorium.co.uk

Darren Bane, PR Manager, Empica

memoria celebration

Remembering 40th anniversary of the Falkland's war

At Memoria North Oxfordshire on May 14th the Military wives' choir performed to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Falkland's conflict where 255 British servicemen lost their lives.

A wreath of poppies symbolic of this was poignantly carried in as heads were bowed and placed on the catafalque.

His Grace Rt. Revd. Gavin Collins Bishop of Dorchester, superbly aided by Rev (Sqn Ldr) Philip Craven oversaw an emotional evening as the wreath was taken through a guard of honour which included WO1 Sam Martin, Capt Steve McLaughlin and Sqn Ldr Sue Williams, as standard bearers flanked the rear of the chapel.

As the lights were lowered there was a very moving video tribute from the period and the names of those lost were seen on a scroll, which was followed by a period of reflection.

As the choir sang, we are sailing, a bagpiper led a soldier out carrying the wreath which was laid by the fallen soldier against the silhouette of the evening sunset.

The procession ended as a lone bugler played the last post, flags were lowered, and the congregation remembered. The event was repeated at Memoria Barnby Moor in North Nottinghamshire on 21st May, which was the exact date in 1982 when our troops landed in San Carlos Bay. Here over 120 people attended and an avenue of remembrance which had 255 individual poppy crosses was created for the wreath to be carried down before again, being laid to rest in the sunset.

RAFA, the RAF, Defence Academy and Royal British Legion branches in Oxfordshire, Retford and Worksop all combined to ensure two very moving and reflective evenings were staged to ensure that the families affected by the war in 1982 were not forgotten.

Memoria's Community Engagement Director Frank Meilack said "I was eighteen at the time of this conflict and I know families around me at the time who lost son's and brothers, the areas where our beautiful memorial parks are based are also very close to the regiments and military bases that were directly affected". Whilst our memorial parks are in the main for funerals it is part of the community infrastructure, and I am eternally grateful for all of the veterans that combined with us at Memoria to produce two incredibly memorable evenings".



A Military Wives Choir soloist salutes a silhouette of a fallen soldier.



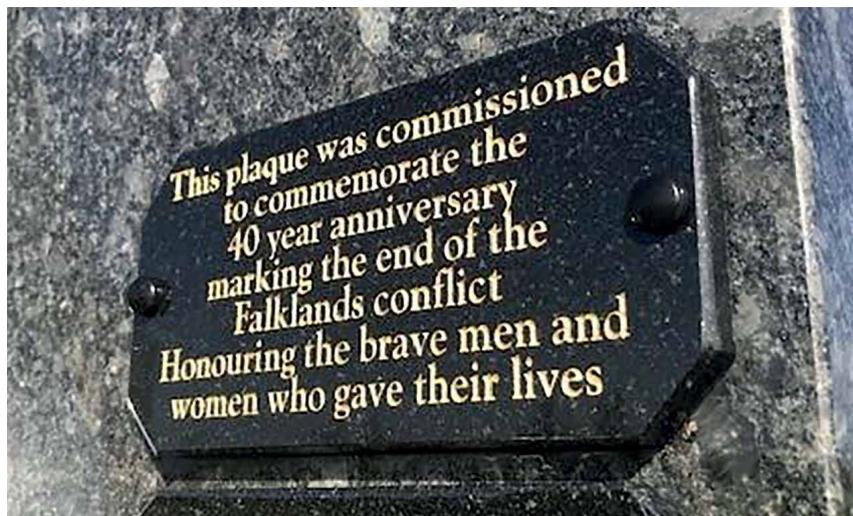
The procession of dignitaries.



Military dignitaries.



The Military Wives Choir perform during the commemoration service.



A plaque was unveiled to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Falklands War

Frank Meilack
Community Engagement Director, Memoria



Greenbridge Bespoke Mausolea

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nw branch meeting

A report into the recent meeting hosted by Salford Bereavement Services

Our branch meeting was hosted by Salford Bereavement Services at Worsley Court House and was well attended. Sponsored by Columbaria and F G Marshall we were set for an interesting morning.

Having completed the introductions and established the time lunch was being served (a very important part of our meetings) Mike Gurney took the opportunity to congratulate Barry Ellis (Bereavement Service Manager at Salford) on the completion of his diploma.

Next up we gave our sponsors the opportunity to address the group.

First up Peter Roper and Nikki Easby from Columbaria. There has been major changes in all walks of life following COVID and the supply of granite is one of those items that has been hit hard both with the availability and the transport costs. Therefore the team at Columbaria looked at the idea of celebrating a life rather than commemorating it and have reviewed all their options. They have looked to materials such as slate, ceramics and acrylics that are more sustainable and sourced within the UK. An invitation was made to the group to visit them in Hull on 14th June to see all the new products before they were unveiled at the CBCE the following week.

Next up was Daniel Dunn, the general manager at F G Marshall. Having taken over in June 2021 Daniel took the time to understand the business and then look at how to bring it up to date without losing the values and reputation on which the company was built on. This included utilising technology to update the touch screen books that are now internet based so can be updated automatically rather than by adding discs. I am sure there are plenty of other opportunities on the horizon to explore. It was also good to understand the difference between the various types of pages available from vellum to vegan options and their properties. Another new option of having inscriptions mounted in frames was displayed.

Having learned about how these companies are looking to adapt to the changing market we moved on to how someone has been tasked with implementing change. Margaret Butler who is the North West Regional Medical Examiner Officer took to the floor to update us on the progress of the implementation of the medical examiners scheme across the region. After many years of trials and numerous implementation dates we are slowly reaching the culmination of the process and the talk becomes real as it is integrated and put into practice.

Having explained the system and how it is working within the Manchester hospitals discussion moved on to the community deaths and how that was to be implemented. A Q&A session highlighted an issue with communication as nothing seemed to filter down beyond the registrars so we were unaware of a lot of the processes. We fed back on the points we needed answers for so we could put plans in place and it was felt that progress was being made.

Mat Crawley was in attendance representing the ICCM so we turned the spotlight on him by thanking him for coming and then asked for an update on what was happening within the Institute. He started by explaining the position with Pearson's and the accreditation for the diploma and what it means moving forward. Then moved on to confirm the dates for this year's conference and that there would be an update of the charter which would be announced at conference.



Questions were then asked about apprenticeships as this is something we have been discussing within Greater Manchester for some time. It is so difficult to try and get someone to come in and be able to cover all aspects of the service. Courses seem to be focused on administration and customer service. It does make succession planning harder and also in trying to attract people to come into the industry. Ideally we need the government to recognise grave digging should be awarded recognised training so we can access funds similar to those apprenticeships that attract funding for NVQ levels e.g. horticulture. It was asked if the ICCM could assist with an apprentice scheme.

Any other business brought up the topic of Children's Funeral Fund claims and discrepancies between claims especially around items that are seen as cultural requirements rather than religious requirements. Items such as chambers within graves have been refused under this heading.

The request for the same provision for things as in different authorities was raised and how we look at it. Do we look at putting in things as a general standard where possible or stick to our rules and regulations that are in place for the cemetery and families abide by what is there?

Also, one authority was looking into the option of having their flower beds sponsored by FD's or local companies who would have their name in the location and asking if anyone else had done this.

All options have to be considered especially as we are all subject to higher levels of scrutiny on our budgets and sharing of any ideas is always welcome.

Our next meeting will probably take place in October. We have a number of options also available for site visits (see JCB in a previous edition and also Columbaria in this one) and welcome any suggestions and welcome authorities in the general North West area to join us. Please email me at dave.jennings@trafford.gov.uk and I will add you to our mailing list.

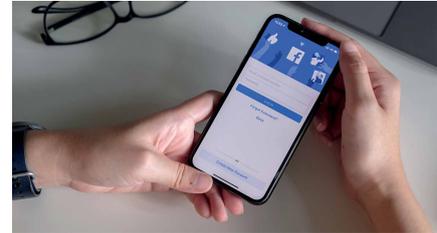
Dave Jennings (Trafford)

What to include in a facebook post for your cemetery or crematorium?

When writing posts for Facebook on a cemetery or crematorium Facebook page, the goal is to increase traffic to your website. However, not everyone is going to visit your website after seeing your post. To get even more visitors and visitors who are more likely to go find out more about how you can help them, you'll need to think about what goes into a Facebook post.

There are three things you need to pay attention to:

- First, you should make sure your posts are captivating and relatable.
- Second, you should always include useful information about your services that is educational for your audience. Making sure that your posts are unique and creative so people will want to engage with them.
- Lastly, adding a creative aspect such as an image, video or a LIVE video.



The Caption

It is always best practise to have a caption when posting on Facebook:

- **Engaging Text:** It is important to note that the more engaging your Facebook post is, the more reach it will have. This will allow you to reach more people who might be interested in what you have to offer. As long as you post content that your customers are interested in, you're on the right track to getting exposure for your funeral home or cemetery.
- **Emojis:** These are really important as they give your caption a tone of voice. People skim social media posts and if you include emojis that give that reader context such as a coloured heart emoji, a sad emoji, a flower emoji etc...
- **Tagging:** This is where you tag another Facebook account such as a Funeral Home if required using @__ (their account username).
- **Call To Action:** This gives your audience guidance on what to do next. Do you want them to comment below your Facebook post? Would you like them to click the link in your post and go through to your website to find out more information? How about getting them to tag someone who finds this interesting (and this then invites more people to view your post and widen your reach).
- **Links:** Having shortened trackable links looks best rather than a long website (URL) link especially if an image or video you have posted is not linked to the website. For shortening, customising and tracking long links - using www.bit.ly is a great free tool to use. Easy to shorten that long link and have your Facebook post looking well. Oh, and one tip I wish to share is when you paste a long link into your Facebook page and an image appears that is linked to that website page, then delete the long link and your image is clickable and your Facebook caption looks more professional.
- **Hashtags:** Adding around 8 hashtags is best, including your cemetery or crematorium name as a hashtag and your location, the service you have provided and if you need more guidance on that I have a hashtag handbook you can download for free on my website. Go to www.fitsocialmedia.ie and download your very own copy and it has a wide range of hashtags and a guide on how to use them.

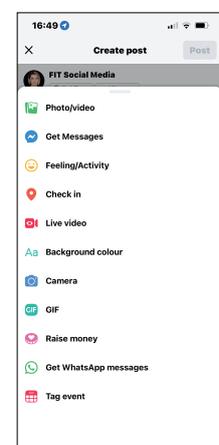
What to add to your Facebook post after the caption?

There are a number of things you can add to your Facebook post such as a photo, graphic, video, LIVE video and here are some more ideas:

To Conclude

Always try to include as many elements (as mentioned earlier) in your Facebook posts, so that you create a scroll stopping post. People like posts that are interesting and eye-catching. Try and mix up your posts, there is nothing worse than posting the same thing. Think of your Facebook page as a magazine and keep your audience interested and attract more followers.

If you have any questions or would like some help with your Facebook page, please do get in touch. You can find me, Eimer Duffy at www.fitsocialmedia.ie, organise a zoom call there and you can email me on eimer@fitsocialmedia.ie. And do follow me on Facebook - find me there under FIT Social Media for more ideas and updates regarding Facebook and other social channels.



Eimer Duffy, FIT Social Media

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- Deceased Online works with data from any information management system.
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in touch - up north



Ironic

It's like rain on your wedding day

It's a free ride when you've already paid

It's the good advice that you just didn't take

And who would've thought it, it figures

Songwriters: Ballard Glen / Morissette Alanis Nadine

Possibly I mentioned it before, however, the most Ironic thing about the very good song Ironic is that – well it isn't ironic at all, its typical or just bad luck.

We all have those days and sometimes things just seem to stretch out, for example trying to get a physical ICCM Board meeting. So, what should have happened, if things hadn't gone wrong, was that we would have had an article about the first face to face ICCM Board meeting since late 2019, however, it's ironic don't you think...

In early March 2020 we had a meeting scheduled, however, a few directors suddenly couldn't make it, so at short notice it was delayed – the idea being, well we'll get it sorted – in true Grand Designs fashion... then COVID-19 arrived and delayed the project.

Like everything else, physical meetings became successful virtual ones, however, it's always nice to actually see a person, isn't it? So, in late 2021 dates were scheduled and an actual in person meeting was planned for late June 2022.

To scupper this plan, it emerged that after we'd made the date the CBCE event occurred at the same time, taking a couple of directors out of it – not good, so then it became a virtual one again reluctantly. However, even if it hadn't then it would have done when the trains went on strike the same day! So even if the first thing hadn't taken it out then the second one would have done.

Then another director had surgery so wouldn't have been able to get there and I got COVID, obviously, it just wasn't meant to be. Really, we could ask Ms Morissette to give us a chorus we were there.

So, if you're having one of those days, please always remember that it happens to all of us and in increasingly more random and bizarre ways, just to be Ironic...

Going electronic

In late 2021/early 2022 ICCM launched its Journal magazine as an electronic publication to members, with the option of receiving both physical and electronic or just an electronic or e-journal.

To date 7% of all members now receive just an e-journal, which whilst small is an encouraging take up for people who wish to be more environmentally friendly and it's a lot more than this time last year.

What is interesting is that we know from 30-days' worth of statistics for the published Journals and that from late June to July 2022, 234 people looked at the Summer edition, 878 people the older Spring edition, 110 Winter 2021 and 85 the Autumn one.

While these are huge numbers it still is a positive message as we could never know how many people are even glancing at the printed ones.

For all the publications 1,960 people have a glance at them and 83% of them from their PC's rather than phones. The UK is still our biggest interest area, but we've also got interest in Italy, Sweden, USA and Australia, spreading your views and industry worldwide.

Our Facebook posts also have a steady stream of about 100 – 300 people looking at them and sometimes interacting. For their 28-day figures we're reaching 1.6K people, not bad either. 96% of them in the UK which we'd expect but still some that aren't.

Finally, long removed from the days of posting lots of letters out, we're sending stuff which hundreds of you like to read. So maybe all this on-line meeting and communication stuff isn't so bad – however, are we missing anything?

There's always something else and people always have a good idea and then hopefully remember it! So, if there is something more we can do to help you keep informed or a new channel to do it, then please get in touch with us and help us improve our service to you.

If you want to make the switch to just an electronic Journal, or have moved house or updated any membership details, then please email trevor.robson@iccm-uk.com so your membership records can be corrected.

Trevor Robson
ICCM Finance and IT Manager

Member interaction is the Institute's lifeblood. Why not facilitate a branch meeting?

iccm branch secretaries, contact details

Northern: Graham Harrison

Email: Graham.Harrison@durham.gov.uk

T: 03000 265 606

Eastern: Tracy Lawrence

Email: TLawrence@nenevalleycrematorium.co.uk

T: 01933 229 660 or 07904 457 372

South East: Heather White

Email: heather.white@southampton.gov.uk

T: 023 8076 6405

Midlands and Mid Wales: Michael Birkinshaw

Email: bereavement@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

T: 01527 62174

North West and North Wales: Dave Jennings

Email: Dave.jennings@trafford.gov.uk

T: 0161 912 1515

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extending your existing site?

Have you introduced any environmental initiatives?

Have you introduced a new service or new
ways of working?

Have you held any virtual events?

Are you doing something that others
should know about?

Why not write an article for the journal?

We would be delighted to include any articles
from anyone that would like to share their
experiences with other members.

Need help? We are here to offer you any assistance
or guidance with putting your article together.

Please contact Sofia Allana on
sofia.allana@iccm-uk.com or phone 07502 627521

visit to columbaria ltd, hull

Following our recent NW branch meeting in April, an invite was offered by Peter Roper to members of the group to venture up to Hull and visit them and see all the new products before they were unveiled at the CBCE the following week

Now any meeting which says "meet in the pub" is a sure-fire winner and although there could have been problems getting people out of there it certainly was a bonus. The hospitality of the staff at the Ship Inn was excellent. Drinks and breakfast were rudely interrupted by Peter Roper and Nikki Easby asking if we wanted to go on a tour of the factory. Donned in appropriate PPE we set off for our tour.

With Columbaria sitting under the umbrella of Odgings, the size of the operation on site was impressive. Huge chunks of stone were being moved and cut down to more manageable sizes, the large gantry cranes moving across the yard. We moved on through the workshops and followed the process of stone being cut to size, polished and inscribed. The skill of the artists in creating the designs was impressive enough, but when they showed us the sublime competition pieces that the artists prepare in their own time, we were transfixed.

It is moments like this that make these visits special, and you see what goes into making the product but also to be able to tell customers about what is involved and the levels of artistic endeavour that goes into them.

Going into the completed items/packing area was like entering a sweet shop as there were so many different products on view. You looked at them wondering which one's families would want and where they would fit into your crematorium.

Finally, the time had come to venture in to see the new products. The team at Columbaria have reviewed all their options looking at alternative materials and products preferably sourced from within the UK and ideally, close to Hull. It is surprising what is on your doorstep that you overlook.

On a personal level how many of you venture to local attractions such as museums and historical houses etc which you would visit if on holiday? We all tend to do what we have always done and not sit back and look at what we have around us. Different materials such as slate, ceramics and acrylics that are more sustainable and all sourced within the UK have been incorporated into the range of memorials on offer.

This gives different options on the trees and in being able to do friezes in different shapes and designs. It started us thinking of how we could incorporate or develop the ideas for our own sites. I am sure those that saw the display at the CBCE might have had a similar reaction. With carbon footprints and the green agenda being thrown at us from all directions I am sure the memorial market will change to enable both suppliers and us to achieve targets and meet the increasing demand from our clients in this line.

We were also joined by Managing Director Duncan Reynolds checking that we were being looked after and answered questions which was appreciated.

And now was time to head back to The Ship Inn and enjoy a superb spread and discuss what we had seen. Other members of the office team came across to say hello, or rather help themselves to food, and it was good to be able to put faces to the people who answer our calls.

Lunch devoured we spent time doing what some call networking but in reality, is catching up and having a whinge about everything, which we all seem to be good at.



Most of the issues we were highlighting seemed to be the same across the board which made us feel better. The knowledge that you are not facing things alone and people are there to help and share experiences, is the fundamental basis of our group.

We headed back out to the yard so we could appease Andy Bond and let him play with his latest toy. Always the one we can rely on to take photos at our events, Andy has upgraded his much-insulted selfie stick to a drone and proceeded to show off his flying skills whilst taking photos of the group.

After thanking Peter and Nikki we then set off for home and a chance to digest what we had seen.

A big thank you to all at Columbaria company for their hospitality, it was really appreciated. I encourage anyone who has not had the opportunity to see the work they do to take the time to do so.



David Jennings
Bereavement Services Manager
Altrincham Crematorium

company news

Plotbox

Pre-Need Cremation Plans for Huntingdon as they Partner with PlotBox

Huntingdon Town Council recently opened the UK's second purpose-built, environmentally friendly crematorium. Encapsulating the council's focus on sustainability and the environment, the 120-seater crematorium houses 2 electric cremators, with excess energy produced from the operation of the cremators being recycled to reheat the crematorium building.

As a brand new facility with no legacy systems, the Huntingdon team were looking for a software partner with whom they could work with from the ground up.

With PlotBox, the Huntingdon team are able to manage and schedule cremations, appointments and services, as well as manage work permits for memorial masons to carry out work on site.

PlotBox's Funeral Director Portal also provides funeral directors with 24/7 online access to view and provisionally book slots with the crematorium - as well as the crematorium's unique Prepayment of Cremation Scheme, as General Manager, Samantha Smith explains,

"It was during our discussions with the PlotBox team that we began to see its fullest potential in helping us to reach our broader goals. While we didn't initially have the contracts module, we soon realised that it would give us the functionality to effectively manage our pre-paid cremations, which is a key element of our service delivery model." **To learn more, visit www.plotbox.io**

PLOTBOX



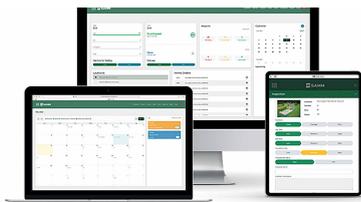
Greenbridge Designs

Greenbridge Designs continue to look for innovative solutions to the memorial, burial vault and mausoleum needs of cemeteries and crematoria in this post-pandemic era. One of the key outcomes of the challenges we have all faced over the past two years has been the accelerated focus on sustainable alternatives to reduce the environmental impact of the work we do. Supply chain delays and increased shipping costs have reinforced our endeavour to find alternatives to traditional granite supplies from India and China.

After 18 months of research and testing, Greenbridge Designs will soon be launching a range of products that are locally made, using materials that have all originated here in the United Kingdom.

For pre-launch information, please contact Dennis Millington on 07792 805731; dennis@greenbridgedesigns.com

SAMM Memorial Inspections



Earlier this year, we launched SAMM Safety, a risk-based memorial inspection system designed for use across cemeteries of all sizes. We are pleased to announce that the functionality of SAMM Safety has now been extended beyond just memorials. Any asset or premise can now be inspected within SAMM Safety. This fully configurable tool provides the perfect solution for inspecting buildings, roads, trees, bins or taps. In fact, no matter what assessment regime you have, SAMM is the perfect tool for carrying out effective inspections as well as providing the most powerful and comprehensive management system we know of.

SAMM Software together with its parent company Willcox Granite can now offer a full-service memorial inspection service using a network of fully trained inspectors and memorial masons.

For more information, please contact Dennis Millington on 07792 805731; dennis@sammsoftware.co.uk

company news

Edge IT Systems

After detailed discussions over the last few months, EDGE IT Systems and Peter Linsell Management Consultants have agreed to a merger of the two businesses.

Peter Linsell has been working with EDGE IT Systems since September 2021, when Peter took on the part-time role of Product Consultant, providing support to cemeteries and crematorium users of the company's Epitaph bookings administration solution.

During this period, Peter's PLMC has continued to provide a first-class management consultancy service to cemetery and crematorium providers across the UK. At the time of writing, Peter has 18 projects on the go, and the intention will be to build on this solid foundation to further develop opportunities under a new consultancy arm of the EDGE management structure, operating as EDGE PLMC Consultancy.

"This is a real opportunity for two outstanding service providers to work together in making a real difference to the bereavement services industry", said Peter Linsell, formerly Managing Director of PLMC.

Chris Edge, CEO of EDGE IT Systems added, " It soon became clear that Peter and I share the same values as to how we create and build relationships across the industry. This merger will mean that Peter will be charged with developing the management consultancy services to be provided to cemetery and crematoria providers countrywide, while he continues to provide valuable support to our IT team and Epitaph customers new and old.



Does anything change?

"Yes", said Chris, "we simply get better and that is great news for the whole cemetery and crematorium sector".



Tracey Ramster joins Edge IT Systems as Product Support to potential and existing customers using the Epitaph cemeteries and crematoria software solution.

Having worked in the cemeteries and crematoria industry for over 30 years, Tracey worked her way up to deputy manager at Stafford Cemetery and Crematorium before leaving to take on the role of CAMEO administrator for the FBCA.



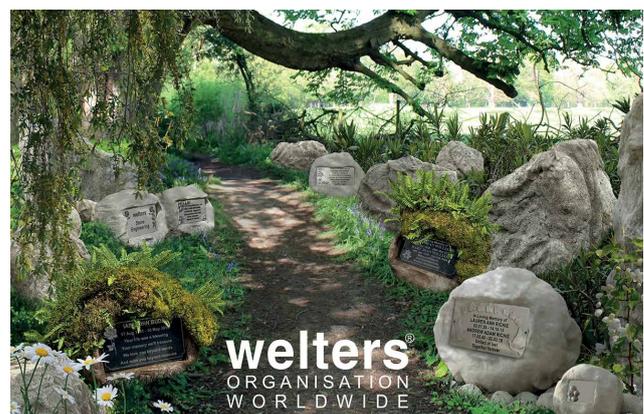
Chris Edge, CEO of Edge IT Systems said: "Tracey brings with her considerable experience in the bereavement services industry. Her appointment continues our key business strategy of recruiting people with specialist knowledge and working experience in the specific services which our software products are designed to serve."

welters® organisation worldwide - Nature & Technology

As has been part of our practise for many years, **welters®** focus with determination to embrace nature, and the environment, in our products and philosophies. This is achieved through the use of UK resources and facilities and includes the use of reconstituted materials within our manufacturing processes. We endeavour to maintain our 'Made in Britain' ethos and develop product designs that are in keeping with our natural habitat.

welters® has always attempted to minimise imports, especially of non-environmentally friendly material, and particularly when exported from the opposite side of the globe and produced by nations which may pay less attention to environmental issues. **Welterstone** was created as a solution to this issue, producing products manufactured locally from indigenous quarried material. As a result of the success of **Welterstone**, **welters®** has not imported any material for several years.

We look forward to the continuation of the development of our range of products and materials and embrace the future wholeheartedly.



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unveiling of new shrine at memoria south leicester

On 14th May this year the Leicestershire Hindu community were a blaze of colour, singing, dancing and kindness as they celebrated the unveiling of a new Shrine to Lord Shiva at Memoria South Leicester.



The statue, weighing over a third of a ton was beautifully hand crafted in India and Memoria installed a plinth of exceptional quality to accommodate the memorial.

Hundreds of local Hindu community members were joined by their leader Sailesh Raja and Hindu priest Hemang Bhatt to baptise the statue and listen to prayers, tributes, Indian poems and live music followed by an amazing array of South Asian cuisine.

Memoria's Director of Community Engagement Frank Meilack said "We are truly honoured and very humbled with the Leicester Hindu community's reaction to this beautiful installation and very proud to be able to add this to our already wonderful facility to create even more diverse and cultural options for the park"



Frank Meilack
Community Engagement Director, Memoria

life planning events at greenacres parks

GreenAcres cemeteries and ceremonial park's aim is to support and connect people through life and loss. The past two years have made many people thoughtful about how prepared they are for the unexpected eventualities that life can bring and whether to consider actively planning for later life. However, many are unsure of what options are available and may not know who to ask.

GreenAcres have held several events in their parks to enable families to find out more information in a relaxed and friendly environment. Invited experts in the fields of finance and law shared their knowledge in a jargon free, interesting, and informative seminar. This was followed by a Q&A session from the audience.

The aim was to provide useful information for families dealing with various end of life situations and to increase people's knowledge of retirement and inheritance tax planning. These valuable sessions have been well received, helping people navigate current regulations on legal and tax issues. Look out on their website and social media for further updates and events in conjunction with their expert partners.



Rebecca James
Greenacre Cemeteries Group

ICCM Membership Benefits



Your ICCM Membership, means you have access to the following benefits:

- 4 issues of the ICCM's high quality publication - The Journal - per year, physically or electronically
- 2 free professional members for every Full corporate membership
- Free attendance at branch meetings, forums and webinars for learning and for discussing common problems
- Free technical and legal advice via telephone or email from a team of fully qualified and experienced Officers
- Discounts on all ICCM 1 day training courses
- Access to the only accredited qualifications specifically designed for cemetery and crematorium staff – ICCM Accredited Diploma; the BTEC Accredited Crematorium Technicians Training Scheme & City and Guilds Accredited Cemetery Operatives Training Scheme.
- Mailchimp e-newsletters and technical updates announcing any new developments or changes that will affect the sector as soon as they happen
- Free access to best practice guidance and information on a range of subjects relating to bereavement services
- Representation at Government level on policy decisions
- Discounted rates for the Annual Learning Convention and Exhibition
- Annual Education Seminar
- Management placement service and staff cover options available

New Corporate members April to June 2022

ICCM are delighted to welcome the following new corporate members for the 1st Quarter of 2022

Parish and Town Councils
Holt Town Council
Broughton Town Council
Doddinghurst Parish Council
Lacey Parish Council
Fletching Parish Council
Everton Parish Council
Mareham le Fen Parish Council
Stilton Parish Council
Bradford upon Avon Town Council
Corfe Castle Parish Council
St Erth Parish Council
Chapel St Leonards Parish Council
Carmarthen Town Council
Oundle Town Council
Compton Parish Council
Highworth Town Council
Wilton Town Council
Chartham Parish Council
Mountsorrel Parish Council
Cuckfield Parish Council
Chiseldon Parish Council

Associates
L A Landscaping Services Limited
West Penwith Grave Care

Councils or private Cemeteries/Crematoria
Middlesbrough Council
Rushcliffe Borough Council
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council
Fenland District Council
Sewardstone Park Cemetery
Tottenham Park Cemetery

Trevor Robson
ICCM Finance and IT Manager

newly reformed garden hosts platinum jubilee celebration

A once forgotten garden at Copeland Borough Council's Distington Crematorium has been transformed by volunteers – making it the ideal venue for a royal garden party

To mark the Queen's platinum jubilee, Copeland's bereavement services and parks and open spaces teams organised a tea party for residents. Scones, jubilee cupcakes, sandwiches, and a celebratory Victoria sponge cake were enjoyed in the rejuvenated space. Glasses were also raised, toasting the Queen's 70-year reign.



Guests help out planting in raised beds

In the 1800s, the garden was part of the nearby mansion – following that it was a working market garden. After a period of neglect, work to restore it to its former glory has been taking place for several months. Thanks to hundreds of hours of work from Copeland's parks and open spaces team, the community payback team and dedicated volunteers, the garden is now a hub for all to gather in nature.

The jubilee party took place on June 4, marking the first day the space was opened to the public since its revamp. More than 60 visitors joined volunteers and staff to enjoy celebrating in the sun. Visitors dropped by throughout the day and were intrigued to see how they could get involved in the development and preservation of this once-lost Victorian garden.

Copeland's mayor Mike Starkie also visited, planting a commemorative oak tree to mark the Queen's 70-year reign. It stands as a centrepiece to the lavender labyrinth and is encased by a bespoke wooden seat, where people can sit and reflect for generations to come. Mayor Mike Starkie said: "Thanks to the hard work from our dedicated staff and volunteers, the

garden made the perfect setting to honour this landmark event.

"We were extremely lucky with the weather, which helped to show off the garden at its finest. The space is thriving with nature - it's something our community should be very proud of."



Guests having fun in the garden

Not only was the garden party an opportunity to enjoy delicious treats and engage in conversations with other visitors – there was also a chance to don some gardening gloves and get involved. Children helped plant dahlias in newly built raised beds, alongside sunflowers that had been sown in May's volunteer session. A lavender hedge was created around the grassed area to increase the number of bees and other pollinators visiting the garden. This complements the existing lavender labyrinth.

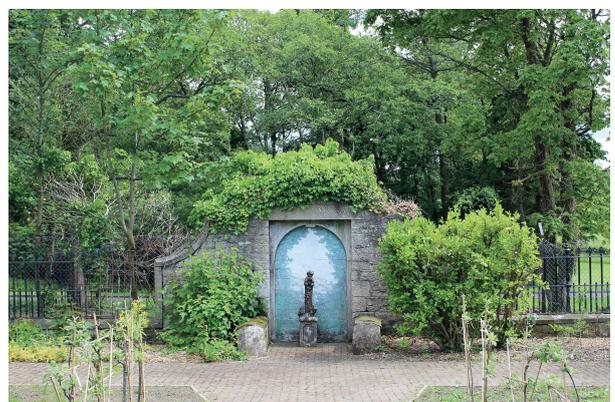
Susan Pringle, head of bereavement services at Copeland borough council, said: "I'm thrilled that we could open the space to the public in time

for the jubilee celebrations.

"We couldn't have picked a better way to celebrate, and it was a fantastic opportunity to show how grateful we are to those who have given up their free time to revitalise the space."



Copeland's Mayor, Mike Starkie plants commemorative oak tree



Transformed garden in the sunshine

Emily Adair
Communications and Engagements Officer

a woman in a man's world

The remarkable story of Jean Mary Ramsden nee Batley

Jean was a female pioneer in the cemetery and cremation industry. This might seem an odd choice of occupation as when she started only men were involved. In fact, she was the first woman member of the Institute of Burial and Cremation Administration (IBCA) joining, probably after being a successful student member, on 10 May 1952. She was also, from 1963-1970, the first female secretary of its Yorkshire Regional Council and its Chairman three times from 1962. She was the first woman to represent Yorkshire on IBCA's National Council, first female Secretary of the National organisation (1971-1980) and the first woman to become its President – a post she held 1976-1977. She was elected a Life member in 1979, meaning she did not have to pay the annual subscription - an honour in recognition of how much she had contributed to the organisation.

The IBCA – “the Institute” changed its name in 2003 to become the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM). It is a membership organisation dating back to 1913 when it was set up to professionalise the sector. Training those in the industry (e.g. by correspondence courses) was and is a key function. Providing updates on new legislation and developments through the Journal is another. Providing a forum...social or educational where one can meet up with others in the industry, ask questions and get answers from those tackling the same issues, is also a great benefit to members. Jean wrote in 1976 “I have found that the friendship and encouragement received from many members has helped me to surmount the difficulties that could have seemed too much if faced alone.” Acting as a body representing the views of the organisation to Government, local authorities and all those proposing changes in the industry is important to ensure that working conditions are as good as they can be.

So why did Jean end up in this career? A simple answer is she was born into it! In 1926 she was born in the Lodge of the Upper and Lower Wortley Cemetery (more commonly known as the Oldfield Lane Cemetery) where her father was superintendent for almost 30 years. She certainly followed in her father's footsteps regarding the Institute – he was Yorkshire Branch Secretary, three times its Chairman, on the National Council for twenty years and was honoured by being given Life Membership too. Her close bond with her father came home to me when I read her Presidential address to branches published in the IBCA Journal in which she quotes from the 1963 Golden Jubilee Brochure outlining the sacrifices of previous officers:

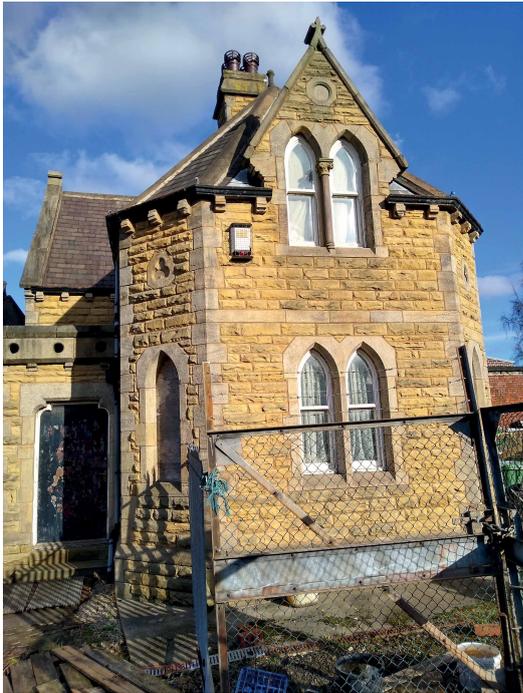
“Officers and members of the National Council travelled the length and breadth of the country completely at their own expense. Many often arrived past midnight at their nearest main line station and had several miles to walk home.” During the war an emergency committee functioned and “they travelled hundreds of miles, in the greatest discomfort under black-out conditions and un-heated trains, often on bitterly cold nights. They arrived at their termini, especially in London and in certain other towns and cities, to the sound of air raid sirens and falling bombs, with the knowledge that the next few miles were to be fraught with danger to life and limb, added to which was the sickening thought of what they might find when they eventually arrived home.” This powerful description was used to exhort members to support their Institute. I felt a strong bond between father and daughter and wondered why. A little basic research showed that Jean was the only surviving child of his second marriage born when he was about 42. He had two young children, a daughter and a son, from his first marriage. His first wife's death is registered in the same quarter as the birth of their son, so I suspect a link. They had previously lost twins and another baby. Jean's younger sibling died as a baby two years later. No doubt the pregnancy, birth and sickly child kept the mother occupied and the two-year-old probably gravitated to “Daddy “. No wonder he had a strong bond with his youngest child! The brother became a joiner, so perhaps did not have the aptitude for a career in administration, having more practical skills and I do not know about the sister, except that she married.

Another strong influence on Jean and no doubt the whole family was Methodism. They attended Tong Road Methodist Church, Mount Pisgah where the young Jean was organist, treasurer and circuit steward. The church had a Girl's Brigade and Jean became its Warrant Officer. No doubt discipline and obeying the rules was well drilled into the girls and I can see traces of that in her later career! But it was not just something she did growing up – when she was in employment, she was inducted in 1951 as a local preacher.



Upper and Lower Wortley Cemetery

This must have boosted her ability to speak in public to large audiences, superb training for being a President of a national organisation! Methodism was an influence throughout her life – her funeral was held in Burton Fleming Methodist Church, East Yorkshire in 2012. A tribute informed us that “it was typical of Jean that she had arranged the order of service, hymns and prayers for her funeral”. (ICCM Journal winter 2012)



Wortley Cemetery Lodge

In 1944 aged 17 she obtained her first job, as office assistant to Walter R. Pearson, superintendent of Lawnswood Cemetery. (The dates, ages and job titles vary according to the account. I quote the facts as reported in the Y.P. 31.1.1964, when she was interviewed on becoming Superintendent of Lawnswood). As the school leaving age was 14 then, one assumes she took her national certificate – a forerunner of “O” levels, said to be harder as one had to gain a pass in six subjects, two of which were English and Maths. As it was a two-year course, it is not impossible she did an extra year on a shorthand typist course at another institution...she is said to have arrived “straight from education” rather than school and one version has her as a short-hand typist to Mr Pearson...afterwards she did become his personal secretary, suggesting some secretarial ability, before becoming Assistant Superintendent in 1960. She took over as Superintendent aged just 37 in 1964 on the death of her boss in post. She was the only woman superintendent of a big cemetery in Britain at that time.

Four years later, in 1968 and aged 43, she married Alan Ramsden, Lawnswood’s Head gardener. He was a great support to her throughout the next 17 years of her career and no doubt afterwards. She paid this tribute to him at the end of her year of National office: “Last year I said it was not an easy thing to be an Institute widower and I honestly thought that the duties of President’s escort would be more arduous still for him for by nature Alan is a shy person and I know he was not particularly looking forward to my year of office. But no one will ever fully know the tower of strength he has been to me”.

Walter Richmond Pearson, N D Hort, F. Inst BCA was another important influence on his young employee. By the time she arrived he would have been in post for about six years, starting in January 1938 from Birmingham. He too was a leading figure in the national cemetery and cremations industry. He worked with NEGAs and Dowson & Mason Engineers in the development of the first Lawnswood cremator, built at Lawnswood – no doubt when the crematorium doubled in size in 1946 and two new incinerators were installed. After this he became the technical advisor to the IBCA and the Federation of British Cremation Authorities (now Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities) – an organisation similar in motives to the Institute but representing the owners of cemeteries and crematoria.

One of the problems she inherited in the cemetery was how to keep it financially viable. A former deputy, Peter Bollard (1968-1971) recalls how publicity was important and that sometimes he and Jean had to wait for money to come in before they got paid. Under this circumstance it is no surprise that the cemetery was taken over in 1972 by Leeds City Council. She was appointed to head up the cemetery and cremation service – with three crematoria and 28 cemeteries. This she did from the Merrion Centre, Leeds city centre to start, before relocating to Lawnswood – probably to the offices in the centre of the cemetery, recently demolished. In 1985 she took early retirement and moved to Wold Newton, East Yorkshire.

She is remembered today with affection. She was a very kind lady devoted to her job. “Our work may be that of burying and cremating the dead, but I do hope that for all of us, officers and councillors, it is a task which above all is ministering to the bereaved. Surely that is the job satisfaction we are all seeking, for to me there is nothing more soul destroying than burying and cremating the dead if through it we are not able to help the living.” She (no doubt aided by the gardening staff under her husband) kept the cemetery immaculate. “No flowers (certainly not plastic ones) were allowed on the grass lawns even at the point of the kerbside memorials” “No cars were allowed except in a cortege, never to come in to park for a funeral”. (M.J. Dodgson, Funeral Director) who used the word “redoubtable” to describe her. I have no doubt that behind that kindly exterior there was a formidable strength of character. She was a trailblazer in the cemetery movement which we should be very proud to have associated with our cemetery and our city, where her whole career was based.

Ann Lightman

lea fields crematorium open day

Intrigued guests describe crematorium as uplifting and welcoming



Lea Fields crematorium opened its doors to guests on the weekend of Sunday 29th May 2022, giving them an opportunity to take an informal look around the facilities.

Beautifully manicured gardens and wild flowers decorated the walkways leading up to and around the whole building, which is situated on Gainsborough Road, Lea.

Guests were greeted by staff who welcomed them into the main chapel and gave them tours around the building, the garden of remembrance and the reflection pool.

Chairman of the Council, Cllr Angela Lawrence attended the event and said:

"It was lovely to see the sun shining on our beautiful garden of remembrance and to see how the gardens are maturing and wild flowers in bloom. It was a welcoming sight for our visitors who were intrigued to look around and talk to our wonderful staff on hand to answer their questions.

Talking about death and dying is still considered a taboo subject for many but we feel it is important to engage the community in conversations, informing them of their choices. I hope everyone who attended found the day to be as interesting as I did."

In the chapel, Stephen Foley, Managing Director and second-generation craftsman of Hilton Studio, awed visitors by demonstrating his skills with his bespoke hand-painted entries in the Books of Remembrance. Stephen is part of a team of 12 craftspeople serving crematoria around the country.

He said: *"The Lea Fields volumes are unique, hand painted, with gold leaf on the outside. I incorporated the Lea Fields branding and used different colours to reflect each season. Inside there is a page for each day of the year. We work with loved ones to create something very individual for them as a lasting memorial."*

One of the questions he is asked a lot is will digital memorials ever replace the painted book?

"Not in my lifetime", said Stephen, who added: "People love the originality, entries are permanent, families have a hand in the creation and messages are as personal as they want them to be."

He described the chapel and surroundings as 'superb'. Stephen added: *"It is a lovely building, contemporary and set in such a beautiful place."*

Carlton Bradley, Senior Director at Cliff Bradley and Sons Funeral Directors Ltd. who also attended said:

"Lea Fields and the surrounding grounds are peaceful and tranquil, the wild flowers which are in bloom are very pretty. It is a fantastic local facility which was long overdue for our area."

"The staff here are second to none and they do as much as possible to make sure the day goes as seamless as possible. Deborah is a fantastic crematorium manager and she has a great team here."

Nicholas Waller (67) from Saxilby saw the open day advertised on the council's website.

He said: *"I saw the advert and I was intrigued. My wife and I have already booked to have our cremation here as we have a funeral plan in place. I always thought crematoriums would be dark and dingy but it is cleaner than a hospital. Many people may think it's depressing to go to a crematorium and look behind the scenes, but this place is uplifting and like a breath of fresh air. With its open gardens this is a place where I would want to be remembered. It has been fascinating, very informative and very helpful staff."*

Doreen Hancock (84) from Sturton by Stow said her husband wants to be cremated at Lea Fields. When asked why she wanted to attend the open day she said to be 'prepared'.

She said: *"I have always been interested in what happens when the curtains are drawn, how it happens and what happens to the artificial hips. Coming here today is helping to prepare me for when I walk through the doors with a coffin. I will know what he is going through and I know it will be tidy. The building is new, pristine and it's clean and airy, which I like."*

Megan Marton (22) of Gainsborough attended the day with her dad Alan.

She said: *"I am considering working as a crematorium officer so I wanted to attend to see how everything is done behind the scenes. The open day was an opportunity for me to do this which I could not pass up. We often see the outside of the building in passing but the inside is also amazing."*

Tom Dolling (28) from Beckingham took part in one of the tours on the day. He said: *"I know one of the crematorium officers and he had spoken to us about the open day. I didn't know anything about the process and I was quite fascinated so I decided to attend the open day. It is a new modern building and it is quite peaceful."*

The facility which is the only one in West Lindsey is located on Gainsborough Road, Lea and includes landscaped grounds, remembrance gardens, a reflection pool, a well-lit car park with CCTV, and ample space for further development if necessary.

This unique facility offers a modern and tranquil setting enabling people to celebrate the lives of their loved ones, making a real difference to the bereaved at a difficult time in their lives.



Julie Heath
Communication Manager

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Alison Beck, Bereavement Services manager,
Hither Green Crematorium

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grave safety

It's time to think inside the box

You may have read the news recently that VolkerRail Ltd – a railway infrastructure contractor – has been fined £550,000 after a trench collapsed onto a worker, resulting in him being placed in a medically-induced coma and leaving him with life-changing injuries (Matt Lamy, IOSH Magazine, Monday 27th June 2022). The incident happened in 2014 and the investigations into the cause and liability have been extensive in the elapsed period to now, culminating in this significant fine.

Without detailing every part of what the investigation found (if you're interested, we suggest looking up the report in IOSH), the overall conclusion is that although trench supports were brought to site, on the night of the incident they weren't being used adequately and other measures such as water pumps were in no way sufficient to prevent a collapse resulting from groundwater conditions and lack of proper shoring. A man's life has been permanently changed, for the sake of not moving trench supports from a store on site to the excavation.

The human impact of this is shocking enough when you consider that it was completely avoidable, but this case also shone a light on the actual liability of the employers in these circumstances. IOSH highlighted this:

"Of note, whilst in many areas of health and safety the law requires what is 'reasonably practicable', in the CDM (Construction, (Design and Management)) Regulations, the requirement for duty holders in relation to excavations is that 'all practicable steps, shall be taken, where necessary to prevent danger to any person'.

This is a higher test than 'reasonably practicable' and reflects the level of risk associated with this type of work.'

Why do we bring this up here? Because the depth of the trench in this incident was 2 metres, the approximate depth of most graves, and the CDM Regulations apply in cemeteries.

Every year, people needlessly die or are seriously injured in excavations as a result of ground collapse, falling material or poorly fenced off sites. The HSE (<https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/excavations.htm>) urges us to remember that "no ground can be relied upon to stand unsupported in all circumstances" and that "a cubic metre of soil can weigh in excess of 1.5 tonnes".

Grave-digging teams often don't have the level of health and safety equipment you'd expect to see on a construction site. Grave-digging is something we've been doing for thousands of years, and it's evident from some of the things that we've probably all spotted, that it can be taken for granted that 'it'll be OK' and the shoring stays tucked away in a shed somewhere or on the back of a truck instead of in the grave. It may be fine today, but will it be tomorrow?

Are you taking all practicable steps to ensure the worker's safety, if the grave shoring isn't on site or isn't in the grave and it collapses? Do you even have enough shoring and support for the ground conditions? What if it changes that day and you need more, can you get it before work continues?

It is extremely frustrating when we see cemetery workers at risk from a completely avoidable accident, but for the use of what can be simple equipment. We cannot ignore responsibility for the safety of grave-digging staff. Responsibility for the safety of coffin bearers to and at the grave side. The safety of mourners attending the funeral.

It's not 'just a grave'. Are you compliant and happy that you've taken all practicable steps to prevent injury or worse in your cemeteries and burial grounds? Do you have sufficient grave shoring and graveside safety stock readily available on site and has it been properly maintained?

We realise how under pressure most local authority teams are and that in the desire to get things done on time and within extremely pressured budgets, sometimes a step gets skipped. Don't let it be safety though, it really isn't worth it.

Let's all be safe and shore.

Peter Smith
Teleshore

back to the future

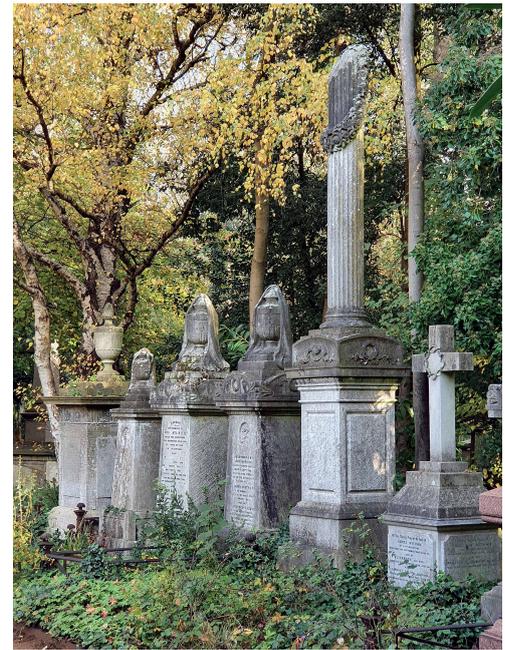
The Highgate Cemetery Act 2022

I remember in my previous job as Director of The Victorian Society, the architectural conservation charity, we became concerned about the state of historic cemetery chapels around the country and did a quick and dirty survey to try to get a picture of the situation. Back then in 2009 it seemed that a smaller number than we expected were still in use for services; others were just used for storage or had been converted into homes or offices. Too many were boarded up and derelict. We had no idea how many had disappeared altogether.

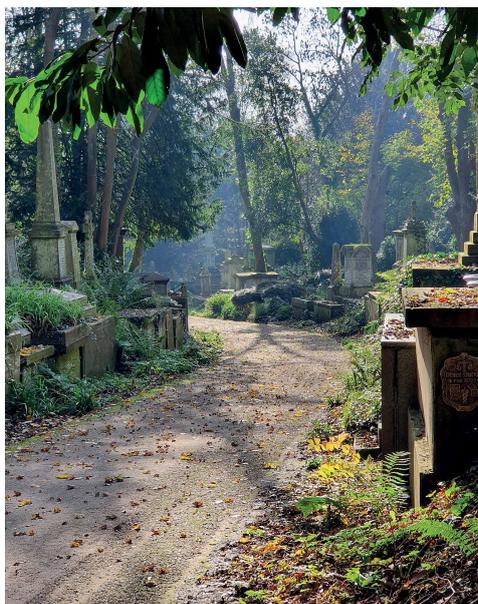
Building conservation has at its core the notion of finding an 'optimum viable use' for a structure, 'viable' meaning a use that would generate sufficient income to ensure that funds were available for future maintenance, and 'optimum' meaning the least-damaging use which would best preserve and enhance its significance. Cemetery chapels presented numerous problems but the bigger problem, we realised, were the cemeteries themselves. The condition of a chapel might be just a warning sign.

Condemned to obsolescence by perpetual grants of burial rights, it was inevitable that cemeteries would fill up, stagnate, and then gradually crumble away. The great cemetery writer John Claudius Loudon envisaged that they would be taken over by local authorities and maintained as pleasure gardens at public expense, but councils understandably have shown little enthusiasm for this. Crammed with often unstable memorials, expensive and difficult to maintain, they offer fewer of the benefits of parks but with higher costs.

So, what is the 'optimum viable use' for a full cemetery? The Act of Parliament which led to the establishment of Highgate Cemetery was curiously silent on what would happen when there was no more room for burials. Such a time seemed so distant that the problem could safely be left to later generations to sort out. But by 2001, the Select Committee on Cemeteries found that many were 'unsafe, littered, vandalised, unkempt' and 'shame[d] all society in their lack of respect for the dead and the bereaved'. Let's not name names, but we've all seen them.



*Highgate Cemetery's historic monuments.
Picture by Friends of Highgate cemetery trust.*



*Pathway through Highgate Cemetery
Picture by Friends of Highgate cemetery trust.*

It has been clear to many that the 'optimum viable use' for a cemetery is to continue as a cemetery, with the selective reuse of graves providing a mechanism by which its sustainability could be ensured, while also protecting the heritage, landscape and biodiversity interest. So have said experts in the field such as Ian Hussein, Julie Rugg, Tim Morris and Julie Dunk.

The selective reuse of graves is not new, but it is not widespread either: the City of London cemetery has been showing how it could be sensitively achieved for many years now, and the New Southgate Cemetery Act 2017 set a very useful precedent in relation to a private cemetery. Brompton cemetery is doing this on consecrated ground with church permission. Many people are surprised to find that the Church of England understands the importance of reusing graves. The chancellor of Southwark Diocese has stated that 'there should be an expectation that grave spaces will in due course be reused, and this is necessary to economise on land-use at a time when grave space is a diminishing resource.'

Over the last two years, the Highgate Cemetery Act 2022 has been making its way through Parliament and was finally granted Royal Assent on 24 March 2022. It provides for the long-term sustainability of Highgate

cemetery by permitting the Friends of Highgate Cemetery Trust to extinguish rights of burial and disturb human remains for the purpose of increasing the space for interments and the improvement of Highgate cemetery. For the future, we have sought inspiration from the past: the Church of England has been re-using graves itself for centuries. The Highgate Cemetery Act provides an acceptable way for such practice to be retrofitted onto the slightly different context of a Victorian cemetery.

The challenge for the Trust was to protect the interests of existing grave owners and relatives of the deceased as well as safeguarding the heritage of the site. We want to ensure that no grave owner would be separated from the ownership of a grave which they value, so graves would only be considered for reuse where the last burial was over 75 years ago or, if the grave is empty, which was sold more than 75 years ago. We would write to the owner at the address recorded in our register and place notices in the press, on the web, at the cemetery entrance, and on the grave itself.

If within six months the owner objected, the renewal would not proceed. If an objection were received from a relative of any person buried in the grave whose remains were proposed to be disturbed, no renewal would be considered for a further period of 25 years. We would also notify the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and Historic England. If they objected, grave renewal could not proceed without the consent of the Secretary of State.



*ivy snaking over a historic monument
in Highgate Cemetery.
Picture by Friends of Highgate cemetery trust.*

As England's best-known historic cemetery, maintaining the special heritage character of the Grade 1-registered landscape is a key charitable purpose of the Trust, especially as around half its income comes from paying visitors. Heritage protections are already strong, and we do not propose to remove as part of the programme of grave renewal any of the significant memorials which make Highgate cemetery such a special place.

There are about eighty memorials protected by listing, and all pre-1925 memorials in Highgate cemetery are protected by conservation area designation. And while Historic England and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission would be notified of all proposals to extinguish rights of burial or disturb remains, it is unlikely that any graves of interest to them would be affected.

Priority graves for renewal would be those with no memorial or where the memorial is extensively damaged. Records would be made of any removed memorial and deposited with the Registrar General. Guidance will be developed to ensure that the design of new memorials on renewed graves would be appropriate to their context.

For historical reasons, to do all this the Friends of Highgate Cemetery Trust required our own private Act of Parliament. We were fortunate to have the necessary resources to promote one. The cost at just over £200,000 has been substantial, but it is a crucial investment in the sustainable future of the cemetery.

Martin Adeney, Chair of the Friends of Highgate Cemetery Trust said: 'The Highgate Cemetery Act is a game changer for Highgate cemetery. It secures our future. It will enable us to keep functioning as a working cemetery. It provides us with the same authority to make use of unused or abandoned graves as local authorities in London already enjoy. It also brings our regulations up to date by replacing the original 1836 Act under which the cemetery was founded.' The parliamentary agents who steered the Bill through were Nick Evans and Mustafa Latif-Aramesh of BDB Pitmans LLP.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if, instead of this piecemeal approach, legislation was brought forward to enable cemeteries across the country to do this as well? Older cemeteries could be reused indefinitely, transforming them into sustainable and valuable community assets.

Ian Dungavell

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the journal

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