



A monthly review of news and events from within the bereavement sector



We are pleased to bring you this month's news review which we hope you will find of interest.

We are about to publish the 2022 statistics issue of Pharos International which includes the annual table of cremations, progress of cremation since 1990 (our website provides figures dating back to 1885), as well as our annual survey of crematoria. Thank you to all those crematoria who provided their information.

The statistics issue is available as part of a subscription to Pharos International which you can order via our website.

**Wendy Buchan**  
**Executive Officer & Secretary to**  
**The Cremation Society**



## CREMATORIA NEWS

**Dunmow Crematorium** has officially opened and is ready to serve the community. The crematorium can seat over 140 people in comfort and uses the latest technology, with two hours between services to give families more time. Services can also be held at other venues and churches, with families saying goodbye at the hearse as the coffin is taken to Dunmow Crematorium for cremation overnight. **David Walsh**, one of the building's designers, said "It is a historic moment for the Dunmow area. The beautiful rural crematorium is very different to other crematoriums in its natural setting." For more details on this story, please visit the [Dunmow Broadcast website](#).

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**East Cambridgeshire District Council** has again been obliged to postpone a decision on building a crematorium on the site of the former outdoor centre at **Mepal**. The council wants to build a crematorium at Mepal together with "administration building, function building, memorial garden, natural burial areas, pet cemetery and car parking". Planning manager **Rebecca Saunt** said the latest target date for a decision had been June 13th, but is now hopeful that a decision by September 9th is possible, with the time extension allowing a "full assessment of the application". Recent comments from the **Environment Agency** says although it has received an updated groundwater risk assessment, more information is needed, whilst **Cambridgeshire County Council**, the lead flood authority, says it is now happy with the crematorium proposals. The County Council says information provided to them "demonstrate that surface water from the proposed development can be managed through the use of cellular storage crates discharging via infiltration, or if proven unviable, restricting to QBAR" QBAR is short for qbarrural which is the mean annual flood flow from a rural catchment. When a final paper is produced by East Cambs planners it will assess some of the issues raised during the consultation period and it will also include a response to Fenland Council who raised questions about the need for a new crematorium. It will be less than 10 miles from **March**, where a crematorium opened 12 years ago. For the full article, please visit the [Ely Standard website](#).



## NEWS REVIEW

### CREMATORIA NEWS

A hearing has been held into plans for new crematorium near **Caersws**, with one opponent of the scheme stating that plans "lack a proper paper trail". On July 5th, Welsh Government planning inspector **Tony Thickett** held a hearing into the plans for the new site between **Caersws** and **Aberhafesp**. The hearing was told that mid Wales needs a new mortuary more than another crematorium. The application, which was lodged by **Powys County Councillor for Abermule**, Cllr Gareth Pugh's firm, had been approved by the council's planning committee in May 2021 but was called in by a Government Minister last year. Mr Thickett looked at three issues – local need for a crematorium, the site's location and highway safety. Two Powys County councillors, former cabinet member **Cllr Heulwen Hulme** and planning committee chairman **Cllr Karl Lewis** - spoke in favour of the development, but **Janet Mackinnon**, who opposed the application, said "It worries me that there's all this informal background, but it lacks a substantial paper trail leading to a site selection." At the end of the hearing, Mr Thickett said that he would visit the site to see the lie of the land for himself and that he had seven weeks to write his report and provide his recommendation to the Welsh Government minister in the autumn. For the full article, please visit: the [Powys County Times website](#).

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Construction is expected to be completed on **Hemel Hempstead's** new crematorium in March 2023. The crematorium at **Bunkers Park** will be a sister site to the current **West Herts Crematorium** in Garston, Watford and is being developed to provide additional capacity in the West Hertfordshire region. Featuring a remembrance chapel that sits within extensive landscaped grounds, the new crematorium will reduce the time that families have to wait during peak winter months to schedule a funeral for a loved one. Service times will also increase from 40 to 60 minutes so there is more time for individual ceremonies. Leader of **Dacorum Borough Council**, Cllr Andrew Williams, said: "This facility will be a valuable community asset that local people will be proud of. We cannot remove the pain of bereavement, but we hope that by offering a tranquil and serene place to commemorate loved ones it will help make the process a little less stressful." The crematorium will operate on the same basis as the existing crematorium providing the same high-quality service with funerals running Monday to Friday, and general enquiries on Saturdays. For the full article, please visit: the [Hemel Today article](#).

## NEWS REVIEW

### CREMATORIA NEWS

Developers behind a proposed crematorium in the **Maldon district** say there are plans in place to make the site carbon neutral. The new crematorium for the Maldon district could be built off the A414 Maldon Road near Woodham Mortimer and is set to be the greenest in the UK according to developer Elegy. The plans are for it to be fitted with the latest filtration equipment to make sure processes are clean to the air and the developer also plans to recycle energy from the process to heat the buildings and so reduce its carbon footprint. The facility, which Elegy claims nine out of ten Maldon residents voted in favour of, will mean that long journeys to other crematoriums will be reduced. The planning application is yet to be approved by **Maldon District Council**, but should be heard by the planning committee this month. Elegy director **Richard Evans** said: "We want to create a beautiful, natural setting for each funeral and this also helps to keep our environmental impact to a minimum." If the plans are approved, the crematorium will seat 100 people and hold four funerals a day. For more on this story please visit: the [Maldon Standard's article](#).

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It would appear the long-running saga over the plan to build a crematorium on the site of the former **Duhallow Park Hotel** has finally been laid to rest following the latest ruling against the plan by **An Bord Pleanála**. Last December, it emerged that Classic Lodges (Ireland) Ltd had lodged an appeal against a decision by **Cork County Council** to refuse planning permission for the facility. This was after the authority had already refused a previous application. That decision was upheld by the Appeals Board, which cited the potential for pollution to the River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation (SAC). As with the initial application, the second one once again galvanised the local community into action, with more than 40 submissions lodged against the proposal. **Cllr John Paul O'Shea**, who was among those to lodge an observation against the crematorium plan, said he hoped the latest ruling meant the proposal was now "dead in the water". While at the time of going to press An Bord Pleanála had yet to publish the reasoning behind their latest decision, **The Corkman** understands it was based on both environmental and road-safety grounds. To read the full article, please visit the [Corkman website](#)



## CREMATORIA NEWS

Plans for a multi-million crematorium for a **Derbyshire** town have been officially submitted to the local council, revealing features of the new project which will allow local families to say their goodbyes to loved ones much closer to home. The new crematorium is planned for the town of **Shirebrook**, and would be built on land adjacent to the current Shirebrook Cemetery. It was announced at the end of March 2022 that **Bolsover District Council** (BDC) and **Shirebrook Town Council** had secured approval for the £9 million project which will give grieving families a place to say their goodbyes. Currently, people in and around Shirebrook have to travel to either Chesterfield or Mansfield to visit their nearest crematorium. Planned for an area the size of four football pitches, the project will include a chapel which can seat 120 people, as well as a crematory hall with one electric cremator, which has space for two people. Exterior features include a court garden, tranquillity and memory garden, parkland to spread ashes and a 168-space car park. Specialist crematorium designers **CDS Group** is aiming to have plans approved by September. Construction would then begin in March 2023 and the facility would open in April 2024. For more on this story, please read: the [Derbyshire Telegraph's article](#).



(Image: CDS Group & Bolsover District Council)



## CREMATION SOCIETY NEWS

### CREMATORIUM - COVID-19 PROJECT UPDATE

‘Many thanks to those of you in crematorium management who have already sent back responses to the questionnaire regarding the ‘Crematoria and Covid-19 Project’ (funded by The Cremation Society).

Much valuable information has already been gained but it would be valuable to have still more responses, and it is not too late to do so. Please, then, if you have a minute or two, could you return questionnaires via The Cremation Society at [info@cremation.org.uk](mailto:info@cremation.org.uk) who are kindly forwarding them to me at Durham University’s Centre for Death-Life Studies.

I will be working on these over August and the more the merrier and the more informative.

Many thanks, Professor Douglas Davies FBA  
(Director - Centre for Death-Life Studies)



#### COVID-19 and UK Crematoria

Working in collaboration with the Cremation Society of Great Britain, Professor Douglas Davies and Georgina Robinson of Durham University’s Centre for Death-Life Studies invite you to share your experiences and the work of your crematorium over the COVID-19 crisis period.

1. What was the biggest challenge you faced during the COVID-19 crisis period?
  - a. Was it a specific moment or single event? ☐
  - Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Staff illness due to COVID-19. ☐
  - c. Staff illness due to something else. ☐
  - d. Something else? ☐
  - Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
2. How would you compare your experiences during the first wave with the second wave?
3. How, if at all, did COVID-19 change your typical daily operations?
  - a. Did you have cremators running for longer than usual during the pandemic? ☐
  - b. Did you have to work longer hours during the pandemic? ☐
  - c. Did you have to utilise any extra storage space during the pandemic? ☐
  - d. Was it difficult to manage mourners and distancing during services? ☐

Please add any specific details below:
4. Have you seen a rise in direct cremations, both during the COVID-19 crisis period and since? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Principal Researcher  
Professor Douglas Davies

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Associate Researcher  
Georgina Robinson MA

## SECTOR NEWS

Royal Voluntary Service have operated industry leading retail & catering solutions since 1938, operating over 200 cafes and shops across the UK.

We have a broad portfolio of cafes operating across hospitals, surgeries, courts, fire brigade HQ, crematoria & cemeteries, community centres and sport & leisure centres. All of our profits go back to supporting our services within communities and the NHS across Britain.

In the summer of 2021, we entered a contract with the City of London Cemetery & Crematorium to provide a compassionate, comforting and high-quality café provision at the main entrance. We serve a broad range of customers from visitors, funeral staff and bereaved individuals. We are also able to support with catering requirements for funeral receptions & other events.

Our services are run by dedicated staff and local volunteers, who go the extra mile to provide sensitive and comforting service. They offer a welcoming, high quality cafe environment whilst serving a fantastic range of hot and cold meals, freshly baked pastries, cakes, great barista style coffee and of course tea! We are interested to explore further opportunities to support cemeteries and crematoria with café and catering services. Please get in touch with **Olly Young**, Business Development Lead to find out more information: [olly.young@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk](mailto:olly.young@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk) / 07584 217 136



NEW eBook FROM PLOTBOX: Risks for deathcare providers - what they are and how to mitigate them.

What does risk look like for deathcare providers, what are the potential impacts, and what can you do to avoid them?

Read the Plotbox blog and download the free eBook at the link below:

<https://blog.plotbox.io/risks-for-deathcare-providers-what-they-are-and-how-to-mitigate-them>



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**Capital Refractories** is a leading manufacturer and supplier of refractory materials offering bespoke design and installation solutions for cremation and incineration systems.



**The CDS Group** offer our clients a complete solution of in-house environmental, design and planning services covering Cemeteries and Crematoria, Parks and Leisure, and Environmental Solutions



**The Columbaria Company** - specialists in the production of personalised memorial artwork and after cremation memorials.



**EDGE IT Systems** are market leaders in the supply of cloud based software solutions. Our Epitaph software with digital mapping is specifically designed for cemetery and crematorium facilities management.

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**F G Marshall** supplied the very first Book of Remembrance to Woking Crematorium in 1938. To this day technology still hasn't replaced the precision, skill and touch of the human hand.



**Facultative Technologies** - over 140 years of experience in the design, construction and maintenance of cremation and filtration equipment.



**Fordingbridge** - designers, manufacturers and installers of innovative canopies and walkways.



**Greenbridge Designs** - from individual memorials to complete garden schemes, Greenbridge produce a range of memorials that will seamlessly fit into existing schemes as well as some that will create a stunning alternative.



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**Obitus** - provider of bereavement technology services, delivering music, webcast and tributes for families, funeral directors and leading funeral venues throughout the UK.



**OrthoMetals** - a family owned and operated business, recycling metals remaining after cremation.



**PlotBox** is an international death care management solution that facilitates cemeteries and crematoria in operating to world-class standards through integrated software and georectified mapping modules.



**Treske** - one of the UK's leading makers and suppliers of bespoke crematorium furniture and soft furnishings.



**Welters** - interment and memorial specialists.

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If you have any news you would like us to consider for future newsletters, please do contact us at [info@cremation.org.uk](mailto:info@cremation.org.uk)



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You can contact us at:

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