

News Review



We are pleased to bring you **The Cremation Society's** news review for June.

We hope our newsletter will help you to stay informed of news and developments from across the cremation sector. You can also find The Cremation Society on [BlueSky](#).

THIS ISSUE'S NEWS UPDATES

- CBCE 2025 - that's a wrap!
- £14 million refurbishment planned at Stockport Crematorium and Cemetery.
- Plans advance for solar powered crematorium.
- Temporary arrangements in place during Worcester Crematorium refurbishment.
- Westerleigh Group crematoria praised by industry inspectors.
- Culturally inclusive funerals at Hither Green Crematorium proving popular across London.
- Charing Crematorium's 'secret weapon' for its landscaped grounds

NEWS REVIEW

CBCE 2025

We were delighted to welcome a record number of delegates to this year's sold-out CBCE at the Utilita Bowl, Southampton. A full report to follow but for now, thank you to all sponsors, exhibitors, speakers and delegates for making this year's conference such a huge success!



NEWS REVIEW

CREMATORIA NEWS

The £14m refurbishment planned at Stockport Crematorium and Cemetery.

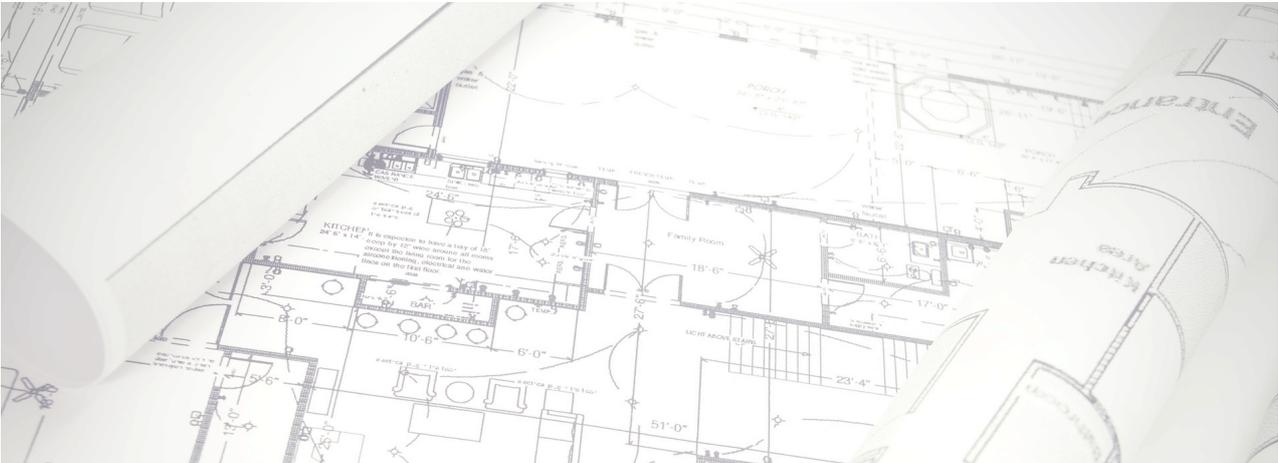
A major refurbishment is planned at Stockport Crematorium and Cemetery, which could cost around £14m. An extensive package of repairs and modernisation has been proposed for the site, including asbestos removal, replacing doors and windows, a new car park to the east, and an extension to the existing crematorium building. This work will focus on the buildings and cremators, rather than the wider grounds. In March 2023, the council was advised that three cremators at the facility were nearing the ‘end of their useful operating capacity’ and needed replacing in the short term. Interim repairs were carried out with two of these in 2024 to extend their lifespan, then in March this year it was decided that the third cremator, after ‘extensive’ use, required repairs too. The plan is to split the works over a three to four year period so the site can stay fully open while the refurbishment takes place. To read the full article, head to: www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk

Temporary arrangements in place during Worcester crematorium refurbishment.

Worcester City Council has announced that from August 4th while the city’s crematorium in Astwood Road is closed for a major refurbishment services will instead be held at the KGV Community Hub in Ash Avenue, off Brickfields Road – just seven minutes’ walk from Astwood Cemetery. After the service, cremations will be carried out at Redditch Crematorium. The ashes will be returned to the KGV Hub for collection, unless the family has made alternative arrangements with their funeral director. During the refurbishment, scheduled to last for nine months, the Astwood Cemetery grounds will remain open. As a result, burials will continue as normal, both there and at St John’s Cemetery. It will also still be possible to scatter ashes in Astwood Cemetery’s garden of remembrance. The refurbishment of Astwood Crematorium will see the existing gas-fired cremators replaced with more efficient electric models, alongside a range of other improvements. To read the full article, head to the: [Worcester Observer website.](http://www.worcesterobserver.co.uk)

NEWS REVIEW

CREMATORIA NEWS



Plans advance for solar powered crematorium.

A new roof to accommodate solar panels to fire the furnaces at a crematorium has been approved. Newport Council manages and is responsible for the building at Gwent Crematorium, which is owned by Torfaen Borough Council, and announced plans in October 2023 to save on energy costs by installing solar panels. However it has required a new roof as the solar panels would be “too heavy” for the existing roof, according to Torfaen Borough Council’s planning department.

It has granted planning permission to change the roof tiles of the main chapel from rosemary tiles to alumasc light weight metal Airtile, along with new roof trusses and beams.

Planning officer Justin Jones said in a report the chapel is an “imposing” building and removal of the existing tiles, and their replacement will “fundamentally alter the appearance from the thicker rustic tiles to a smoother ‘plastic’ looking imprinted tiled sheet”. But Mr Jones said the new material would “cause only minor harm to the character of the area” and be seen in the context of the solar panels, that will be added later under permitted development rights, which will have “a greater impact upon the visual character”. To read the full article, head to the: [nation.cymru website](https://www.nation.cymru).

NEWS REVIEW

CREMATORIA NEWS

Four more Westerleigh Group crematoria have been praised by industry inspectors for providing an “excellent level of service provision.”

Test Valley Crematorium and Wessex Vale Crematorium, both in Hampshire, Charing Crematorium in Kent, and Forest Park Cemetery & Crematorium in Essex, were all inspected by the Federation of Burial & Cremation Authorities (FBCA) earlier in the year. The Crematorium Compliance Scheme involved scrutinising six separate key areas of service delivery, through discussion and viewing of more than 80 points of interest and three crematoria earned top marks in three of those areas; Forest Park scored 100% in all six categories. Westerleigh Group, which runs all three crematoria, is one of the UK’s largest independent owners and operators of crematoria and cemeteries, with 41 sites in England, Scotland, and Wales, all set within beautifully landscaped gardens of remembrance, which provide peaceful places for people to visit and reflect. Westerleigh Group CEO Debbie Smith said: “All four crematoria received very high overall marks, which demonstrates we are consistently delivering exceptional care and standards of service to the families we support. “Forest Park did particularly well, achieving 99.4% in all six key areas of service delivery, which is outstanding. “We are particularly proud of all four crematoria being awarded 100% for Service and Staff by the inspectors, because people are at the heart of everything we do. The inspectors found all four crematoria “...to be operating in accordance with the three key areas of compliance: 1. The Cremation Regulations 2009, relating to statutory documentation; 2. The Defra Process Guidance notes 5/12, relating to cremation; and 3. The Code of Cremation Practice, relating to all aspects of the service.”



NEWS REVIEW

CREMATORIA NEWS

Culturally inclusive funerals at Hither Green Crematorium proving popular across London.

Hither Green Crematorium in Lewisham has introduced a pioneering cremation viewing system, enabling Hindu and Sikh families to observe the moment of cremation in line with their religious traditions. Originally developed during the pandemic, the live-streamed cremation viewing system has since been refined in collaboration with families and funeral directors to support greater cultural inclusion. During the pandemic, when access to the viewing room was restricted for safety reasons, the council installed a discreet camera system that allows the final moments of the cremation process to be live streamed directly to the chapel. This innovation has since become a permanent feature, offering a respectful and culturally sensitive solution for families who require visual confirmation of the coffin entering the cremator. Since the end of the pandemic, Lewisham Council has worked closely with families and funeral directors to co-design improvements, ensuring the system meets the cultural needs of the communities it serves. The system has been widely welcomed by communities across London, with Hither Green Crematorium now seeing an increased use for ceremonies from Hindu and Sikh families across the capital, who are seeking a service that honours their beliefs. This camera viewing system is closed within the Council's audio visual system to ensure the stream is viewed by the family and chosen people only.



NEWS REVIEW

CREMATORIA NEWS

Crematorium's secret weapon to maintain its beautiful grounds

Charing Crematorium has revealed the 'secret weapon' helping to ensure its landscaped grounds look beautiful and welcoming for visitors – some locally-based alpacas! The crematorium has started fertilising its gardens using waste from animals at the nearby Alpaca Annie farm in Romney Marsh. It all came about because the crematorium's memorial advisor Amy Rodger used to work for Alpaca Annie, and still volunteers there from time to time.

She said: "I was speaking with our team leader of grounds, Josh Ballard, about how beneficial alpaca waste is for roses, and after doing some research himself, he asked if I could contact the farm and arrange to buy some. "The manager there was very kind and we were delighted when they offered to donate extra bags alongside any that we purchased." Amy added: "Because alpacas have strong digestive systems, their waste is considered more organic than cow or horse fertiliser, which means it will be better for the plants and flowers overall. Also, it is very light-weight, and doesn't have a very strong smell, so it will not be off-putting for our visitors." She said she hopes that one day those visitors may also include the alpaca themselves! "Ideally, we would love to welcome them here for one of our open days."



NEWS REVIEW

MEDICAL EXAMINER NEWS

The Cremation Society was recently represented by Council Member Ian Rudkin on the National Medical Examiner's working group looking at implantable medical devices. The Royal College of Pathologists has now published the latest in its series of National Medical Examiner Good Practice Series documents. The latest document covers the area of 'Implanatable medical devises on attending practitioner MCCDs'. You can read the guidance by visiting:

<https://www.rcpath.org/profession/medical-examiners/national-medical-examiner-s-good-practice-series.html>



National Medical Examiner's Good Practice Series No. 21

Implantable medical devices on attending
practitioner MCCDs

June 2025
Author: Dr Alan Fletcher, National Medical Examiner

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NEWS REVIEW

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

An application has been filed to build a standalone crematorium on the outskirts of Gudja.

The proposal was submitted to the Planning Authority (PA) by Daniel Buhagiar in February, with the plans becoming publicly available last week. The proposed facility would see a tree-lined building featuring a cremation hall, a witness room, a reception area, indoor and outdoor ceremony areas, a mortuary, an ash storage room, offices and parking spaces at ground level on Triq tal-Lampat. The site, currently vacant, lies outside the development zone, in line with guidelines for standalone crematoria rubberstamped by Planning Minister Clint Camilleri in September. Buhagiar is not the first applicant to propose building a crematorium. Funeral director Johann Camilleri's company Active Group Limited had submitted plans for a crematorium in Paola in 2021, releasing revised plans for the facility in October. Cremation services were allowed to be added to existing cemeteries when Malta first legalised the practice in 2019, with standalone crematoria following under the Cremation Act approved by parliament in 2022.

The original bill, spearheaded by former parliamentary secretary Rosianne Cutajar, followed years of families wishing to cremate their loved ones being forced to go to Sicily or the UK instead, a service that can cost about €4,500. In terms of guidelines signed by the planning minister last year, standalone crematoria cannot be built in sensitive areas including industrial zones, scheduled sites or on agricultural land and should be easily accessible.

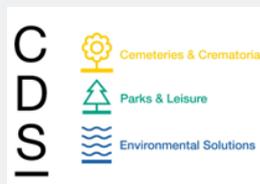
They must meet emission standards and use the best available filtration and abatement technology, while having a specific layout and providing facilities like a mortuary, viewing room, cremation chamber and post-cremation room. Standalone crematoria should also have a garden of remembrance with columbarium – a structure for storing funerary urns – and should not be larger than 500 square metres or taller than 7.7 metres.

The policy went through two public consultation exercises and was amended by parliament's environment and planning committee, at which stage the government agreed with the opposition to restrict the height of crematoria and prohibit their conversion into buildings for other uses. For the full article, please head to: [The Times of Malta website.](#)

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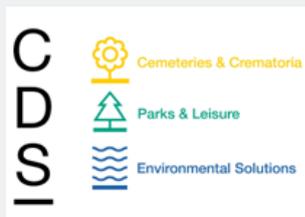
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Benchmark Architects, are an innovative architecture and design studio, with a passionate and personable team who enjoy working on creative, challenging, and innovative projects.



DRM Technic, is one of the UK's leading suppliers of gas analysis and conditioning equipment and services. They are also a renowned manufacturer of Continuous Emissions Monitoring Systems (CEMS).



The CDS Group, offer their 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, are specialists in the production of personalised memorial artwork and after cremation memorials.



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.

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Facultatieve Technologies, have over 140 years of experience in the design, construction and maintenance of cremation and filtration equipment.



Fordingbridge, are 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.



IFZW, is an established manufacturer of cremator and emission filter systems.



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



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

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



SK Environmental Ltd, is a UK manufacturer of instrumentation for measurement and control of combustion plants, specialising in environmental monitoring and control products.



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



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For any news you would like us to consider, please contact us at info@cremation.org.uk

Our contact details



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