



The summer issue of Pharos International will soon be available to purchase as part of an annual subscription or as a one-off issue. You can order your copy online at www.cremation.org.uk/publications.

News in this issue includes updates on:

- Statutory medical examiner system announcement
- Test Valley Crematorium offering twilight services
- The development of Bishopbriggs Crematorium
- High Court challenge over proposed crematorium at former Tayto factory
- National medical examiner update



CBCE 2024

This year's Cremation & Burial Communication & Education event will be held at **Winter Gardens, Blackpool** and will take place from Monday 24th June to Wednesday 26th June 2024.

To register please visit the **CBCE website** and book online. For any queries please contact that CBCE Administration team at info@cbce.org.uk or call on 01543 439 714.

Follow **CBCE on X** and **LinkedIn** for further up-dates on speakers, exhibitors and more.



CREMATORIA NEWS

Test Valley Crematorium is now offering twilight funeral services from Monday to Friday. Families can schedule final farewells at 6pm, 7pm and 8pm, with the option for up to 40-minute services in the chapel. The crematorium, in **Romsey**, is part of the Westerleigh Group, one of the country's largest independent owners and operators of crematoria and cemeteries. Manager **Robert Metcalf** said: "We are always looking for ways to offer local families more choice when it comes to arranging funerals. Spring is on its' way and with it will come some beautiful twilight evenings, with the soothing backdrop of birdsong over our beautiful grounds, which could provide a comforting environment for a funeral. The later services may also help those who have friends and relatives who want to pay their respects but who may have difficulty being able to attend a daytime service because of other commitments. Test Valley Crematorium deeply cares about enabling families to create a funeral that is uniquely personal to those they have lost and the new option of being able to choose a twilight service is just another way in which we provide more choice for those we support." To read the article, please go to the: **[Andover Advertiser's website.](#)**

Work is underway on building a brand-new crematorium to the northeast of **Glasgow** which is due to open this winter. **Bishopbriggs Crematorium** is being developed by Westerleigh Group, one of the UK's largest independent owners and operators of crematoria and cemeteries. Bishopbriggs Crematorium will be Westerleigh's fourth Scottish site, joining Borders Crematorium, Stirlingshire Crematorium and West Lothian Crematorium. The new facility is being built mid-way between Bishopbriggs and Kirkintilloch and is overlooked by Campsie Hills, as well as being surrounded by agricultural farmland. The crematorium will be equipped with the latest technology and high-quality facilities, with the focal point of the development being a modern, welcoming chapel which can seat 120 people, with significant additional standing room available. **Ed Lane**, Operations Director said: "This modern crematorium will be one of the most environmentally friendly in the UK, featuring the very latest advanced filtration and abatement technology. To reduce the crematorium's dependency on external sources of energy, solar photovoltaics and crematory heat recovery systems are being installed. We are very much looking forward to serving people from the communities in and around the Greater Glasgow area and bringing our exceptional level of care and standards to them. To read the full article, please head to the: **[Westerleigh Group's website.](#)**

CREMATORIA NEWS

A High Court challenge has been taken against An Bord Pleanála's refusal to grant planning permission for a crematorium at the site of the former Tayto factory in **Coolock, Dublin**. The action has been brought by **T Stafford and Sons Unlimited**, which has for many years operated funeral homes in Dublin. The applicant successfully applied in 2022 to **Dublin City Council** (DCC) for permission to construct a crematorium at Greencastle Road, Coolock, where it had previously secured planning for a funeral home, as well as associated offices and other facilities. However, DCC's decision to give the proposed electric crematorium the go-ahead was overturned by the board last February on the grounds that the crematorium would "materially contravene" the zoning of the site, as set out in the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028. The proposed crematorium would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, An Bord Pleanála concluded. Its' decision came after an inspector recommended that permission be refused. The applicant claims in judicial review proceedings challenging the decision that the board made "a fundamental legal error" in its' finding that the crematorium contravenes the development plan. There was no basis nor evidence to support such a finding, the applicant claims, and the decision to refuse is "irrational". The applicant said that the decision is unlawful, because it allegedly relied on non-statutory guidance from the UK. The board treated that guidance as if it were binding and determinative of the appeal, which it is alleged amounted to a breach of fair procedures. Represented by Niall Handy SC, instructed by Gavin Simons of Amoss Solicitors, the applicant has brought judicial review proceedings against An Bord Pleanála, where it seeks various orders and declarations from the court. These include an order quashing the board's refusal to grant permission. The matter came before Mr Justice David Nolan at the High Court who deemed the application formally opened, and adjourned the action. To read the complete article, please head to: www.rte.ie.

NIGEL OWENS MBE
CBCE 2024 - BANQUET DINNER SPEAKER



We're delighted to announce that Nigel Owens MBE will be our after-dinner speaker at this year's CBCE Banquet



Nigel Owens is a Welsh international rugby union referee. He is an international and Heineken Cup referee and was the only Welsh referee at the 2007 Rugby World Cup in France, as well as the 2011 Rugby World Cup in New Zealand and is regarded as the first openly gay man to referee at the highest level. Nigel was appointed as an international referee in 2005, and that year officiated his first international between Ireland and Japan in Osaka. Owens made his World Cup debut in Lyon, France on 11th September 2007 in the Argentina vs. Georgia match. He is one of only two referees to be appointed to referee two consecutive Heineken Cup finals. He has since done a third final, this as well as two Amlin finals makes a total of five European Finals making him the most capped referee in European competition. In 2011, he was made a member of the Gorsedd of Bards. Nigel Owens was raised in the small village of Mynyddcerrig, Carmarthenshire, Wales and is a fluent Welsh speaker. His autobiography, Hanner Amser (Half Time), was published in Welsh in 2008, then English in 2009. He was a patron of the LGBT Centre of Excellence Wales, until its' disbandment in late 2012, but he is still that of the Wooden Spoon Society rugby charity. In 2013, he became a patron of Bullies Out charity in Wales.

NATIONAL MEDICAL EXAMINER UPDATE

Statutory medical examiner system date announced.

Maria Caulfield, Parliamentary under Secretary of State has announced in Parliament, that the **statutory medical examiner system** will come into force on **9th September 2024**. Her statement in Parliament read: ‘I wish to inform the House that the Government will today lay before Parliament regulations which will reform death certification in England and Wales. Under these reforms all deaths will legally become subject to either a medical examiner’s scrutiny or a coroner’s investigation. The changes coming into force on **9th September 2024** will put all the medical examiner system’s obligations, duties and responsibilities on a statutory footing, and ensure they are recognised by law. The changes will provide greater transparency on the circumstances surrounding a death. Medical examiners will always offer a conversation to the bereaved, providing an opportunity for them to raise questions or concerns with a senior doctor not involved in the care of the deceased. This will help deter criminal activity, improve practice and ensure the right deaths are referred to coroners for further investigation. The introduction of medical examiners is part of a broader set of reforms to death certification, coronial and registration processes which will allow for the efficient flow of information between medical practitioners, medical examiners, coroners and registrars in the new system. This is the most significant set of reforms to death certification in 70 years and we have allowed additional time to prepare for implementation. We are working closely with our partners in Government, local registration services, coronial services and the health service to ensure that the appropriate operational processes are in place to deliver these changes in September 2024. There will be further communication regarding legislative changes and operational guidance between now and September 2024.’

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2024-04-15/HCWS395>



RESEARCH NEWS

The Open University has launched a new study into the Medical Examiners Service and its' impact on bereaved families.

The research is headed by **Dr Kerry Jones**, Senior Lecturer in End-of-Life Care at The Open University, and co-chair of the university's Carer's Research Group. She is joined by **Sharon Mallon**, Senior Lecturer in Social Work and Wellbeing at Staffordshire University, who is also a former academic at the OU. 'By understanding more about how this service is communicating with families after the death of a loved one, we can help to shape the service as it is rolled out across England and Wales,' said Dr Jones.

Recruitment of potential participants is aimed at those person's aged 18 and above and whose have experience of a death of a family member is more than 6 months prior. For more information on the research, please visit:

<https://www5.open.ac.uk/wales/en/news/new-research-launched-services-bereaved-families>



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