



The 2024 statistics issue of Pharos International has been published, 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. Also included are International Statistics from countries across the world. 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](#).



News in this issue includes updates on:

- Rushcliffe Oaks crematorium visit by delegation from The Ministry of Health and Welfare in South Korea.
- Appeal over proposed new crematorium and skills academy in Glenrothes.
- The Competition and Markets Authority funerals market consultation.
- The completion of Plymouth's new crematorium.
- The Scottish Government's Annual Report by the Inspectors of Burial, Cremation and Funeral Directors.

## NEWS REVIEW

## CREMATORIA NEWS



The Cremation Society

**Rushcliffe Oaks** crematorium received international recognition recently as over 30 delegates from **The Ministry of Health and Welfare in South Korea** visited the site to learn more about its green operations and peaceful setting. The delegation was made up of civil servants relating to the field of welfare for the elderly and funeral traditions in the country. They visited the site as part of their wider exploration of crematoriums in Europe with Rushcliffe Oaks, operated by **Rushcliffe Borough Council** (RBC), being selected as one of four UK based locations. The trip was a key information gathering exercise for the Ministry as it considers the future of funerals in South Korea and the potential shift away from burials to cremations, a significant culture change facing their country. A key aim for the visiting party was to learn about the concept and environmentally friendly technologies used at Rushcliffe Oaks and to see first-hand how a crematorium can be integrated into local communities, helping to remove the taboo. To read the full article, please head to: [www.westbridfordwire.com](http://www.westbridfordwire.com).

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Plans for a new café and florist at a crematorium have been deferred. A shed at **Vinters Park** in **Bearsted Road, Maidstone** was proposed to be converted into two new businesses. The five-hectare site is owned by Maidstone Borough Council and in an application submitted last year, the crematorium outlined plans for its 'agricultural building' to be repurposed. One end of it will be converted into a florist and the other a café. They will have separate entrances and the coffee shop will also feature a toilet and outdoor seating. The application also proposed new pathways to link the new facilities to the gardens and chapel. A sheltered walkway connecting the buildings will also be put up.

The plans were discussed during by the council's planning committee on July 18th and some councillors expressed concerns about its environmental impact. The storage shed is in woodland to the north west of the crematorium and is currently disused. The building is made from Kentish ragstone, with a slate roof and timber doors. A decision was deferred for further discussion with the applicants. For the full article, please go to: [www.kentonline.co.uk](http://www.kentonline.co.uk).

## NEWS REVIEW

## CREMATORIA NEWS



A plan to create a new crematorium and skills academy in **Glenrothes** is now in the hands of the Scottish Government. Respect Developments (Scotland) Ltd and Dignity Funerals Ltd jointly put forward an application to create a crematorium, a construction skills academy and a manufacturing facility at the **Southfield Industrial Estate** site. In May, it was rejected by Fife West and Central planning committee councillors. Now the developers are appealing that decision, and the final call lies with the Scottish Government. In a statement, they said: “Overall, it is submitted that the proposals are in accordance with relevant Development Plan policies” and described their plans as “a positive contribution to the local area and town of Glenrothes, and an important and strategic investment to meet future needs”. When the application was being considered locally, planning Councillor John Beare (SNP, Glenrothes North, Leslie and Markinch) described the plans as “probably one of the most unusual mixes” he’d ever seen in an application. Respect Developments (Scotland) Ltd and Dignity Funerals Ltd argued that their development met all the marks for local and national development plans and should be approved. Fife Council and members of the public have until August 26th to respond. To read the full article, please go to: [www.fifetoday.co.uk](http://www.fifetoday.co.uk).

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The second and final phase of a £600,000 restoration of two of **Hartlepool’s crematorium chapels** is making excellent progress. The Hartlepool Borough Council-funded project is tackling the increasing problem of damp in the **Stranton Grange Crematorium** chapels and improving their appearance. The restoration started last September to make the exterior of the building watertight, including repairing the capping stones, repointing the brickwork and replacing the roof – all of which has now been completed. Phase two of the restoration involves the two chapels being replastered and repainted, the wooden floors revarnished and the carpeting replaced to provide a more comforting experience. Digital screens are also going to be fitted. Work on the crematorium chapel is now finished and the chapel is back in use, whilst restoration of the cemetery chapel is now under way. The whole project – which also includes refurbishment of the cemetery office to provide a better visitor experience – is expected to be completed by October. To read the article, please go to: the [Hartlepool Mail website](#).



### CREMATORIA NEWS

Plymouth's new crematorium, **The Park**, is to open this month, with all building work now complete. Construction partner Kier has officially handed over the keys to the council. The Park is now a hive of activity as staff prepare for the first services in just a few weeks' time. The new facility off Haye Road in Plympton, has designs inspired by the landscape, where the buildings nestle into the slope of the site. It is built of Plymouth Limestone, while inside light and airy ceremony rooms look out onto pooled water. The site benefits from a new café, which will be open to serve refreshments for people attending funerals, for those visiting the site to pay their respects and for passers-by. It has two rooms available for families to hire for wakes, memorialisation events or other family functions. The rooms will be able to accommodate up to 40 guests or combine both rooms with the retractable wall and it will hold 75 guests. Cllr Sally Haydon, Cabinet member for Community Safety, Libraries, Cemeteries & Crematoria, said: "Today is a proud, proud day – I feel so lucky to be the portfolio holder and to have overseen this magnificent project to its completion. To think of the difference from the first time that I came here and looked at the plans is staggering." With the site nearly operational, the council's bereavement service team will make The Park their new home. From its opening date, all cremations will take place here, with Efford and Weston Mill still active for burial and memorials. For the full article, please head to: [www.plymouthherald.co.uk](http://www.plymouthherald.co.uk).

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An Angus farmer says he's "delighted and relieved" planning councillors have upheld his appeal for a new local crematorium – for the second time. On Thursday, the area's planning review committee backed Guthrie Batchelor's proposal for farmland overlooking Dundee. The Duntrune scheme was first submitted to Angus Council almost four years ago. Mr Batchelor, from Friockheim, thought he had the go ahead in March 2023 when another review committee overturned a delegated refusal for the application. However, the council's reasons for approving the development were branded unlawful when a local objector mounted a challenge in the Court of Session. It led to a new appeal committee being formed to re-consider the proposal and they have now supported the scheme, with an early 2026 target for the new crematorium. The crematorium will have capacity for 125 mourners and will be built on sloping farmland overlooking Dundee. Campaigners say they will reserve comment on the latest decision until the planning conditions come back before the review committee. To read the full article, please go to: [www.thecourier.co.uk](http://www.thecourier.co.uk)

## NEWS REVIEW

## COMPANY NEWS

A special service has taken place to formally dedicate one of the most environmentally-friendly crematoriums in the country to the communities it serves. **Herne Bay Crematorium** opened in November 2023 to serve the communities in and around Herne Bay, Whitstable and Canterbury. It is part of **Westerleigh Group**, one of the UK's largest independent owners and operators of crematoria and cemeteries. Westerleigh Group's tradition is to dedicate a new crematorium to its community in the presence of funeral directors, celebrants, members of the clergy and senior representatives from many organisations within the bereavement sector and it usually takes place within the first 12 months after its opening. The invited congregation included the Lord Mayor of Canterbury, Councillor Jean Butcher, and the Lady Mayoress, Councillor Di Baldock, together with senior representatives from the bereavement sector, funeral directors, members of the clergy and celebrants. The service was led by The Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin, Bishop of Dover, assisted by local celebrant Ashleigh Marshall, who has conducted many services at Herne Bay Crematorium since it opened. Debbie Smith, Chief Executive Officer of Westerleigh Group, spoke of her pride at seeing Herne Bay Crematorium open, having first visited the site in early 2022 when it was just an empty field. She also praised site manager Damien Corlett-Oates and his team for the exceptional care they take in ensuring the bereaved are at the centre of all they do.



The Scottish Government has published the **Annual Report** by the **Inspectors of Burial, Cremation and Funeral Directors** covering the year to 31st March 2024. The report covers the duties carried out by the Senior Inspector and Inspector during the year and includes a round-up of the enquiries and complaints dealt with concerning burial authorities, crematoria and funeral directors.

You can read the report by visiting the Scottish Government website:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/annual-report-inspectors-burial-cremation-funeral-directors-1st-april-2023-31st-march-2024/documents/>



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## SECTOR NEWS - FUNERALS MARKET INVESTIGATION UPDATE



**The Competition and Markets Authority** has launched a consultation intended to seek the insight of interested parties on the funerals market, to enable the CMA to consider next steps, including whether or not to consult on a market investigation reference. You can view the consultation by visiting:

<https://connect.cma.gov.uk/funerals-market-insight-gathering>

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



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

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## Current advertisers in **Pharos International**



**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.

A large, faint watermark of a crematorium urn is visible in the background. The anniversary logo features the number "150" in a large, bold, black font, with a small red crematorium urn icon integrated into the zero. Below the number is a horizontal line, and underneath that is the text "1874-2024" in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.

**150**  
1874-2024

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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:

The Cremation Society  
Brecon House (1st Floor)  
16 Albion Place  
Maidstone  
Kent ME14 5DZ

01622 688292/3  
[info@cremation.org.uk](mailto:info@cremation.org.uk)  
[www.cremation.org.uk](http://www.cremation.org.uk)



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