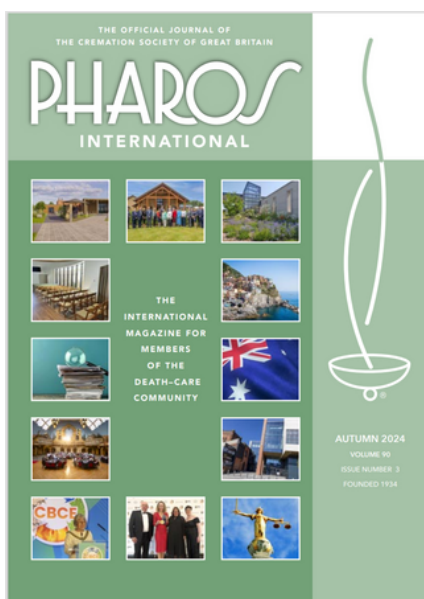




We are pleased to bring you this month's round-up of news articles from across the cremation sector. We will also shortly be publishing the autumn issue of *Pharos International*. If you don't already subscribe, please do visit [our website](#) for more details.

News in this issue includes updates on:

- Wantage Park development
- Appeal hearing for Angus crematorium
- New crematorium planned for outskirts of Cramlington
- Arun Crematorium dedication
- Scottish Government News
- Policy for the development of standalone crematoria in Malta



## NEWS REVIEW

## CREMATORIA NEWS



The Cremation Society

A public consultation is getting underway on controversial plans for a new crematorium next to a secondary school. The process started with an exhibition on 25th September close to the site of the **Wantage Park** development near Northampton. West Northamptonshire Council said the facility was "much needed". Some local people have expressed concern about the crematorium being so near a school. The council says a new crematorium is desperately needed, and the proposed facility will be "state-of-the-art" and sustainable. It will be next to a secondary school that serves new housing developments in the Round Spinney area. The consultation began with a session at Moulton Community Centre on Wednesday 25th September, where the plans for the proposed crematorium were displayed. They will remain there until 2nd October, and there will also be an online consultation. Mike Hallam, the council's cabinet member for corporate services, said: "The feedback gathered from this pre-planning consultation will play a key role in shaping the final plans, and I urge everyone to get involved." The council added that the crematorium would have modern filtration systems to ensure there would be no smoke or odours affecting the school. Moulton Parish Council will be holding an extended public session to discuss the proposal on 1st October. For the full article, please head to the: [\*\*BBC website.\*\*](#)

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Plans for a new crematorium on the outskirts of **Cramlington** have been approved. Crematoria Management, part of **Westerleigh Group**, plans to build a new facility off **Arcot Lane**, near Arcot Hall Golf Club. The new crematorium would be the closest one for around 130,000 people and, the applicant states, would provide much-needed capacity to relieve pressure on other facilities. **Richard Laughton**, senior planning officer at Northumberland County Council, reported: "It is regarded that the current network of crematoria already contains more than sufficient capacity for current community need. As such, an independent consultant was appointed. The analysis concluded that whilst there is a recognised need for an additional cremation capacity in the area, the proposed Cramlington location would have an impact on existing crematoria, particularly Blyth. As Blyth functions as a single chapel crematoria however, the need for an additional crematorium in the area is increased although the need would still remain stronger closer to Newcastle." He added: "Overall it is agreed the site is in a suitable location and it will provide additional capacity whilst also meeting a qualitative need." To read the article, please visit the: [\*\*Northumberland Gazette website.\*\*](#)

Plans for an extension to Pembrokeshire's **Parc Gwyn Crematorium**, with a new memorial garden featuring a stone megalith have been submitted to county planners. Pembrokeshire County Council, which owns the existing Parc Gwyn Crematorium, near Narberth, is seeking permission for a change of use of adjacent agricultural land to a memorial garden, along with associated ancillary development including access, parking, an entrance canopy, two shelters, a megalith stone structure, seating, footways, bird nest box poles and landscaping. A supporting statement accompanying the application states: "The proposal involves creating a garden designed with the objective of providing a nature-rich experience for those wishing to gather, reflect and remember. The existing crematorium site is set amongst formally presented memorial gardens with large lawn areas, rockeries, trees and shrubs. With greater awareness of the nature emergency, it is anticipated that the demand for more natural settings in public services will increase. Therefore, by proactively providing a more natural memorial space, Pembrokeshire County Council is taking a long-term approach to green infrastructure provision." It adds: "The natural memorial garden would be an extension to the outdoor space currently available at the Parc Gwyn crematorium site, with provision for burial of ashes and memorials also provided. The provision of this space would see the transformation of an agricultural monoculture pasture to a setting in which nature is allowed to thrive." The scheme will be considered by county planners at a later date. To read the complete article, please head to the: **[Pembrokeshire Herald website.](#)**

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Planning officials have put an appeal hearing for a new **Angus crematorium** on hold. The application for the 120-mourner facility at Greystone west of Arbroath was due to be considered by the council's review body on 17th September. Councillors were set to consider the appeal after the authority's planning department rejected the Myreside Farms plan in May. They refused farmer Neil McEwan's proposal under delegated powers and the grounds for refusal included a lack of public transport links. But development review committee chairman Bill Duff revealed planning officials had raised a "procedural matter" in terms of the council's scheme of delegation. He said officers considered it appropriate to withdraw the Greystone report. The crematorium would sit close to Carmyllie Hall beside the B961 and Mr McEwan said the hall committee had submitted a letter of support for the project. No new date has been set for the appeal hearing as of yet. To read the full article, please go to the: **[Courier Evening Telegraph website.](#)**

## NEWS REVIEW

### CREMATORIA NEWS



A new crematorium for Hindu and Sikh funerals could be built on a Leicestershire farm. A late 19th Century farmhouse and outbuildings in **East Scraftoft** would make way for what would be the second faith-specific facility in the country if approved. Applicants **CDS Group** said there is a “strong need” for the proposed crematorium at Scraftoft Lodge Farm as Leicester has the highest population of Hindus and Sikhs outside of London. Permission is sought from Harborough District Council for two chapels, which the Local Democracy Reporting Service said would be expected to hold six ceremonies a day between them, as well as a dining hall and car and coach parking. According to the applicants, a faith-specific facility would allow time for Hindu and Sikh traditions that multi-faith crematoriums cannot always accommodate. These include the laying of gifts and flowers on a coffin before the main chapel service, and having areas of water nearby for the scattering of ashes "to complete the spiritual journey". Planning documents state the disused farmhouse, outbuildings and barns which would be demolished are vacant and in “varying states of disrepair”. Members of the public have raised concerns about parking and the proposed access onto Keyham Lane East, near the existing Natural Burial Ground. Residents can comment on the plans until 14th October, with a decision expected on the application by the end of the year. To read the full article, please go to the: **[BBC website.](#)**

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Families who buy a memorial from any Westerleigh Group crematorium could help protect the planet by triggering a donation to **World Land Trust (WLT)**, an international conservation charity that protects the world’s most biologically significant and threatened habitats. For every memorial purchased between 9th September and 6th October, Westerleigh will donate £100 to WLT’s Buy an Acre programme – at no cost to the memorial buyer. Westerleigh Group has pledged to donate at least £45,500 to the programme, and even more, depending on how many memorials are sold. Every £100 funds the purchase and protection of one acre of land in some of the most biodiverse habitats on earth, but which faces threats such as deforestation, urbanisation and agriculture. WLT works with a network of partner organisations around the world who are committed to placing local communities at the heart of conservation efforts. Westerleigh Group is one of the UK’s largest independent owners and operators of cemeteries and crematoria, with 40 sites in England, Scotland, and Wales, all set within beautifully landscaped gardens of remembrance which provide peaceful places for people to visit and reflect. To find out more about the World Land Trust, please go to the: **[Worldland Trust website.](#)**

## 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. **Arun Crematorium** opened in August 2023 to serve the communities in and around Arundel, Bognor Regis, Littlehampton, Selsey and Worthing. It is part of Westerleigh Group, one of the UK's largest independent owners and operators of crematoria and cemeteries, with 40 sites across England, Scotland and Wales, all set within beautifully-landscaped gardens of remembrance which provide peaceful places for people to visit and reflect. 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 Deputy Mayor of Bognor Regis, Councillor Gill Yeates, local funeral directors, clergy, celebrants and senior representatives from organisations representing funeral and cremation professionals all over the UK. The service was led by Rev Richard Hayes, vicar of Clymping, Yapton and Ford, who thanked everyone involved in caring for and supporting the bereaved. **Debbie Smith**, CEO of Westerleigh Group, told the congregation about the four-year journey leading to the opening of the crematorium, which has already established itself as an important part of the local community. She praised manager Adam Westwood and his team for the exceptional care they have provided to bereaved families since the site opened. After the service, guests were able to tour the modern and welcoming chapel as well as Arun Crematorium's beautifully landscaped grounds. **Adam Westwood** said: "I'm proud to be helping to provide local families with the exceptional care that Westerleigh Group is renowned for, working with them to create uniquely personal services and memorials for their loved ones. We are also building relationships with the wider community, enabling them to access and benefit from our beautifully peaceful and wildlife-rich grounds.



Benchmark Architects are delighted to announce that **Oak Hill Lawn Crematorium**, has been shortlisted in the Community and Faith Category for the **AJ Architecture Awards 2024**.

The AJ Awards celebrate outstanding projects across more than 16 categories from housing, health, and wellbeing to workplace and cultural projects. The awards are open to all practices, regardless of size or scale, and the winners will be announced at a celebratory event on 3rd December 2024, at Park Plaza Westminster Bridge, London. Located in the serene landscape of Hatfield, Oak Hill Lawn Crematorium serves as a peaceful and reflective space for the community. The design creates a calming environment for visitors, combining modern aesthetics with a natural ambience. The main chapel provides space for 150 seated guests. Additional standing room can be provided in the entrance foyer, with the doors between the foyer and chapel opened to create one space. The chapel's interior has been designed to preserve the original features of the early concept. The glulam structure is complimented by light-coloured timber cladding, and the integrated acoustic treatment ensures a peaceful environment for reflection. The building has been designed to sit within the landscape with the top of the chapel roof sitting lower than the surrounding tree line when viewed from the approach road at the site entrance. The primary building material is a buff/brown brick that has been carefully detailed to enhance the façade. The natural and earthy tones of the buff shades create a cohesive colour scheme. Additionally, a Portland stone band runs through the building, providing a beautiful edge to the port cochere.





## Forthcoming regulation changes to further support bereaved people

Legislation laid in the Scottish Parliament will make improvements to the way Funeral Support Payment is delivered. The proposed changes include providing assistance for funerals abroad in exceptional circumstances, refining the approach to deducting funds from the deceased's estate and introducing more flexibility for funerals outwith the deceased's local authority area. The definition of funeral has also been extended to include alkaline hydrolysis, alongside cremation and burial, to ensure that the payment can be awarded if this becomes available in Scotland, and for eligible clients who choose alkaline hydrolysis for a funeral abroad. **Funeral Support Payment**, delivered by Social Security Scotland, has provided £51.1 million to over 26,000 people across Scotland to help pay for funerals since it launched in September 2019.

You can read more on this at [News – Five years of delivering Funeral Support Payment](#). Any questions please email [funeralpoverty@gov.scot](mailto:funeralpoverty@gov.scot)

## Financial support available during Baby Loss Awareness Week

With **Baby Loss Awareness Week** coming up (9 – 15 October 2024), Social Security Scotland want to raise awareness of the financial help available to families. Funeral Support Payment and Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment can provide financial support to families who are coping with the loss of a baby.

You can find out more about this and resources available to share within your networks and community at [Resources – Funeral Support Payment](#). Any questions please email [communications@socialsecurity.gov.scot](mailto:communications@socialsecurity.gov.scot)

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS



A long-awaited policy for the development of standalone crematoria got the planning minister's final rubberstamp last week, paving the way for Maltese families to have a viable cremation option. Planning Minister **Clint Camilleri** confirmed to **Times of Malta** that he had signed the Planning Authority's final version of the 'Policy and design guidance for the development of standalone crematoria' and said it would be published online "in the coming days". The policy, which is a partial review of the existing cemeteries policy, provides design guidance for the development of standalone crematoria. It lays out appropriate locations and how a crematorium should be designed sustainably and operate in compliance with environmental and health regulations.

Malta legalised cremation in 2019, allowing for cremation services to be added to existing cemeteries. That bill was spearheaded by former parliamentary secretary **Rosianne Cutajar**. In 2022, Parliament then approved the Cremation Act, legalising standalone crematoria. While several applications for the development of standalone crematoria have been submitted to the PA since then, progress towards building one has been slow due to several planning and environmental concerns.

The policy specifies that a standalone crematorium must not be built in sensitive areas like industrial zones, scheduled sites or on agricultural land, should be easily accessible, and must meet emission standards and use the best available filtration and abatement technology. The building must have a specific layout and include facilities like a mortuary, viewing room, cremation chamber and post-cremation room. It should also have a garden of remembrance with columbarium. It says: "The layout of the crematorium should accommodate three main functions: front of house, ceremony area and outdoor spaces. The building should not exceed a footprint of 500 square metres and "in any case, the overall height of the main structure shall not exceed 7.7 metres". The crematorium must also be at least 183 metres away from any residential building. The policy went through two public consultation exercises and was amended in 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 with other uses. To read the complete article, please go to the: **Times of Malta website**.



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**Benchmark Architects** is an innovative architecture and design studio, we are a passionate and personable team who enjoy working on projects to create, challenge and innovate.



**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.



**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** - 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.



**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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**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.



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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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