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# APSE National Cemeteries and Crematoria Advisory Group

Thursday 26th January 2023

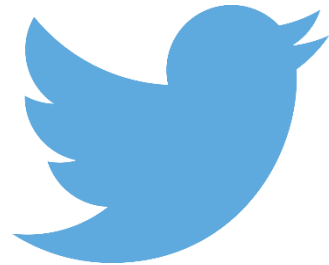
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# APSE Innovation Awards 2023 Cemeteries and Crematoria



## Purpose of the Award

- This award is to recognise the excellent work that is happening in cemeteries and crematoria across the UK.
- The ideal submission will contain a description of the problem or challenge faced, the innovative approach taken, and the outcomes achieved.
- Specifically, APSE is looking for councils that are contributing to the development of new initiatives, and of new working methods in their authority.



## A Wealth of Innovation and Best Practice

First Year of the Awards

Good level of responses covering:

- Environmental improvements
- Software
- Team development
- History and culture
- Direct cremation
- Communication and engagement
- Financial and operational efficiency
- Seasonal memorial services



**INNOVATION**



## And the winners are .....

### **Cardiff City Council**

- A direct cremation service provided by the council using its own staff and council owned ambulance collecting up to 4 deceased from funeral directors to be cremated within the city after normal service hours.
- Competitively priced
- Support of funeral directors
- Benefits to bereaved family if they wish to hold own remembrance and ashes available within 48 hours.
- Reduces need for multiple journeys from different funeral directors to crematorium.

### **Middlesbrough Council**

- Cross-skilling and resilience planning cemetery & crematorium operatives' duties into one role.
- Competency in the Cremation process and Grave digging process, including other associated duties such as the administration of cremations and burials, chapel attendant duties, scattering of ashes, memorial plaques, horticultural maintenance and others associated within the grounds of the Crematorium and Cemeteries.
- additional training on the installation of Headstones carrying out committal/life celebration services at graveside as well as gaining horticultural skills.
- Multi skill approach has resulted in greater output, and greater service resilience.



## Sheffield City Council

- Delivering a successful activity and engagement programme, based around the environmental, historical and cultural assets of Sheffield General Cemetery.
- Reach new audiences, finding narratives that spoke to young people, families, women, people of colour, and LGBTQ+ communities whilst not excluding traditional heritage audiences.
- Proposals were severely affected by Covid and as a consequence a complete new and innovative approach had to be developed including on-line programmes and temporary exhibition boards with routes fitting with allowed daily exercise, audio trails, QR codes to explain cemetery features,
- Keeping the interpretation new and engaging in contrast with permanent interpretation caused the team to reach a larger and more diverse audience than might have done had they followed our original activity plan of permanent feature which can quickly become part of the scene and ignored.
- Lessons learned were that temporary outdoor trails, free downloads and audio tales can reduce barriers to engagement and deliver powerful messages as well as offering good value as part of the mix for communicating with the public.

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# Discussion Topics

- Does weed spraying around headstones lead to memorial instability?
- Are any Bereavement Services developing carbon offsetting schemes?
- Local authority pet cemeteries - now the norm or still very much a rarity?



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