

Bereavement Services in Sheffield

**APSE Cemeteries and Crematoria
Seminar 2025**

Delivering Bereavement
Services that meet the needs
of the community



About Sheffield

- Sheffield: industrial heritage, green spaces, vibrant communities, diverse population
- Bereavement Services: 2 crematoria, 16 cemeteries, garden of remembrance
- Coroner's Service: South Yorkshire West, public mortuary, digital scanning + forensic centre for South Yorkshire
- Dedicated compassionate team





Why Bereavement Services Matter

- Bereavement Services: Compassion, dignity, support, respect
- Cemetery Spaces: Remembrance, grief, reflection, memory, personal, calm, connected
- Community matters: Listen, diverse needs, sense of place, accessible

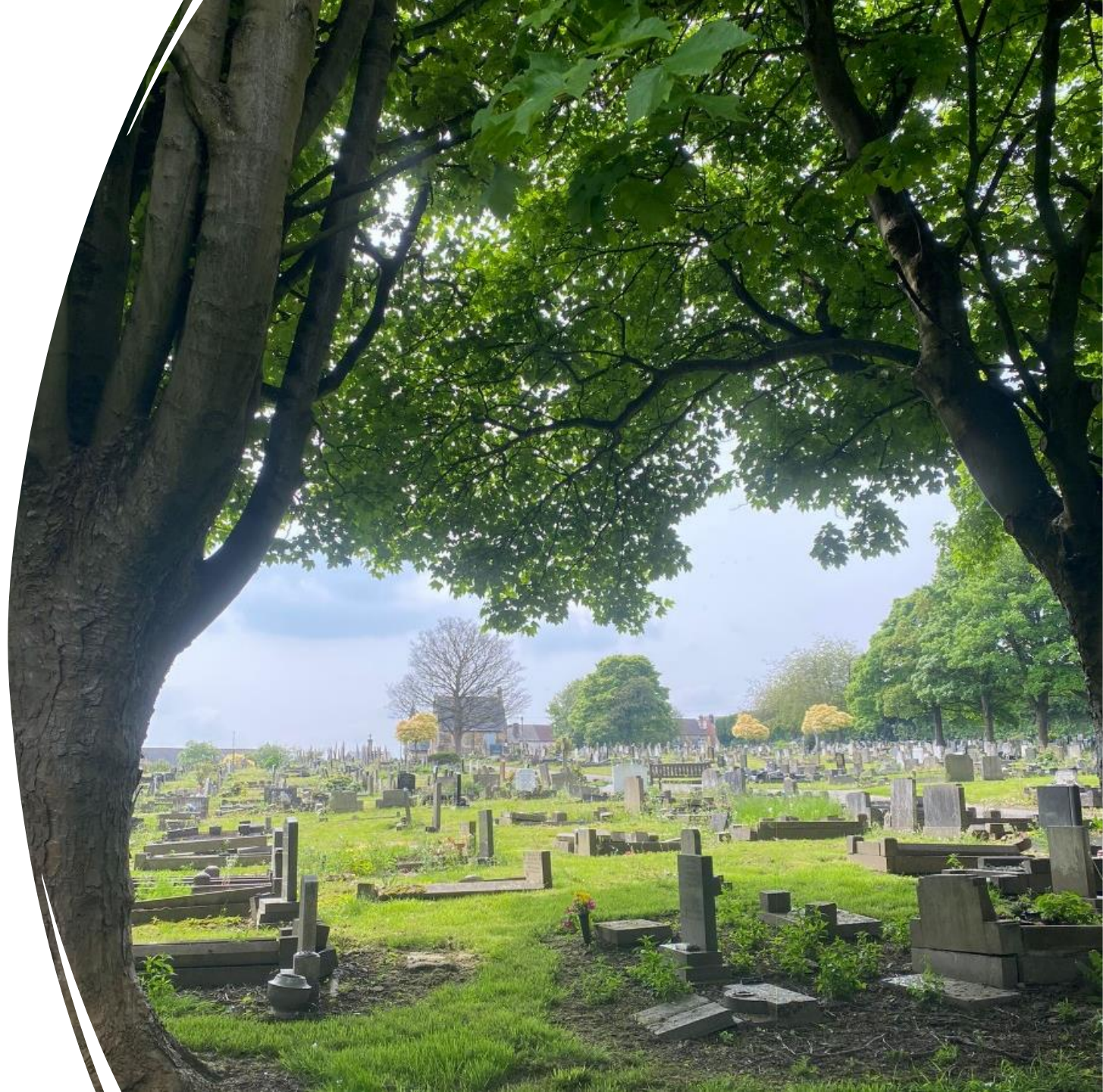
Changing World and Public Expectations

- Growing, ageing, diversifying population
- Climate change impacts
- Demand for greener, digital, personalised services
- Public attitudes changing



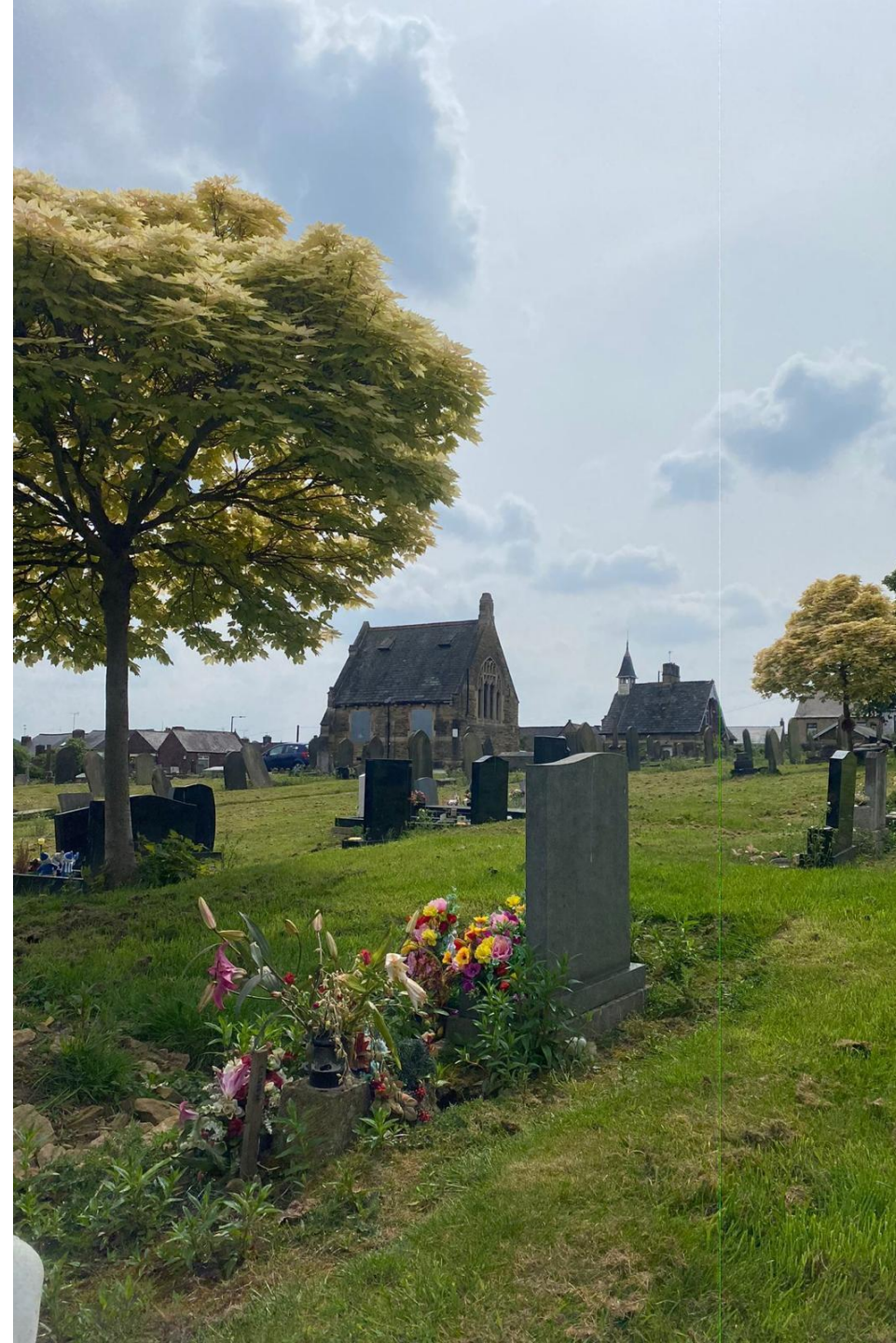
Sector Challenges Nationally

- Limited burial space, ageing infrastructure, rising costs
- Balancing regulation and community needs
- Changing attitudes to grief and mental health
- Direct cremation impact



Sector Challenges Locally

- Old cemeteries, limited new burial space
- Climate change: heavy rainfall
- Growing diversity
- Financial pressures, facility investment needs
- Changes in memorialisation



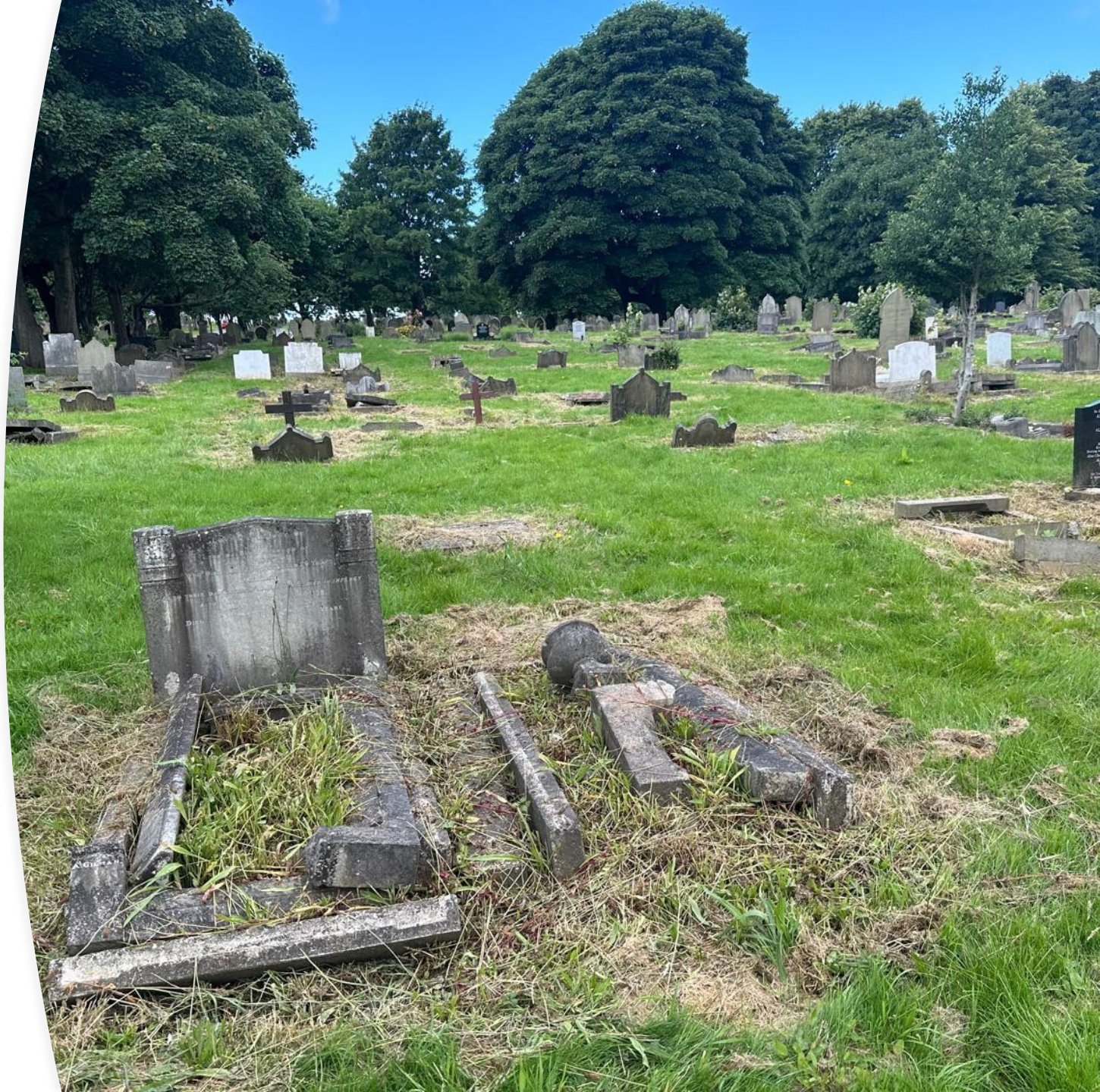
The Time to Change is Now

- Austerity
- Pandemic
- Trust and accountability
- Cemetery capacity
- Cremation market changes
- Climate change
- Public expectations



What are we doing in Sheffield

- City-wide consultation: 3,000+ responses
- Key feedback: faith, location, maintenance, accessibility, greener options
- Cross-party council member support
- New Cremation and Cemetery Services Strategy



Aligning with our Community Strategy & Council Plan

- Sheffield's Community Strategy 2025:
 - Neighbourhoods,
 - Wellbeing,
 - Climate action
- Council Plan: 3 pillars



Strategy Overview – Six Themes

- Compassion & Inclusion
- Sustainable Provision
- Environmental Responsibility
- Modernisation & Innovation
- Collaboration & Engagement
- Financial Resilience



Our Strategy in Action: Compassion and Inclusion

- Partnerships with community/faith groups
- Staff training
- Equality assessments
- Collaboration with local delivery partners and stakeholders
- Friends of Groups: community ownership





Our Strategy in Action: Sustainable Provision

- Planning new cemeteries (12–24 hectares)
- Reviewing and optimising existing spaces
- Expanding burial/memorial options
- Building service resilience



Our Strategy in Action: Environmental Responsibility

- Eco-friendly burials, greener memorials
- Biodiversity: wildflowers, habitat management
- Integration with city's green infrastructure
- Community education

Our Strategy in Action: Modernisation and Improvement

- Digitising records, online booking, digital mapping
- Facility improvements: buildings, signage, accessibility
- Piloting digital memorials



Our Strategy in Action: Collaboration & Engagement

- Co-design with faith groups, residents, partners
- Muslim Burial Forum
- Friends of Groups: vital partners
- Ongoing engagement, transparency



Our Strategy in Action: Financial Resilience

- Sustainable funding model, reinvestment
- Exploring commercial opportunities
- Balancing quality and cost
- Long-term service sustainability



Summary & Next Steps

- Practical progress: new cemeteries, regulation/community balance, robust finances
- Partnerships with Friends of Groups, faith communities, residents
- Ongoing journey, strategy refresh every 5 years





Any
questions?

Thank you for listening