apse seminars

APSE Cemeteries and Crematoria Seminar 2026

Thursday 19 November 2026

Headingley Stadium, St Michael's Lane, Headingley, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS6 3BR

Programme

09:30 Registration and Exhibition viewing

10:30 Session one - Future-Proofing Bereavement services

Welcome by the Chair

Councillor Mark Wilson, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Building Services, Vale of Glamorgan Council

Keynote address
The Inspectors Lens: Transforming National Policy into frontline blueprint

- The Inspectors Lens: Transforming National Policy into frontline blueprint
- Turning national policy into practical, enforceable standards
- Building a consistent, compassionate regulatory culture
- Using frontline evidence to shape future policy

Robbie Beattie, *Inspector of Burial, Cremation, Funeral Directors and Hydrolysis, Scottish Government*

Creating a framework for open standards, customer choice, resilience and long-term protection of bereavement records

- How open standards can improve integration across burials, cremations, memorials, mapping, bookings and payments.
- Practical ways to reduce supplier lock-in and strengthen data portability, resilience and business continuity.
- Safeguard long-term access to critical bereavement records while supporting greater customer choice

Lewis Wray, Head of Bereavement Services, Leeds City Council and Chris Edge, CEO, Edge IT Systems Limited

Audience question and answer session

11:15 Coffee and Exhibition Viewing

11.45 Session two - Compassion and innovation in Action

Frontline Service Continuity: Supporting vulnerable families through burial and cremation

- Communicate with compassion and clarity
- Strengthen multi-agency coordination
- Build resilience in frontline teams

Jane Matheson, Bereavement Service Operations Manager, The City of Edinburgh Council

A compassionate response to funeral poverty in the context of council funerals

- How councils can support their officers handling public health funerals
- A compassionate response to families facing funeral poverty
- Practical tools and guidance for officers

Lindesay Mace, co-manager of the Down to Earth service, Quaker Social Action

15 Years of Excellence: Delivering Exceptional Cremator Lifespan, Carbon Reduction, and Service Innovation at Landican Crematorium

- Pioneering service and innovation
- Unmatched sustainability and efficiency
- Exceptional asset longevity and financial stewardship

Lisa Parkes, Cemeteries and Crematorium Senior Manager, Wirral Council

Audience question and answer session

13:15 Lunch and Exhibition Viewing

14.15 Session three - Dead Certain? Confronting the future of bereavement services

Join our panel of industry experts, including: -

Chaired by *Vickie Hacking, Principal Policy Lead* at APSE
Mike Birkinshaw, *Chief Executive of the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities*
Matthew Crawley, *Chief Executive, Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management*
Sheena Ratcliffe, Bereavement Services Manager, Derby City *Council*
The expert panel will discuss:

- Planning for future demand
  Adapting to financial pressures
- Embracing innovation and technology

And there will be the opportunity for delegates to raise questions and discuss the topics raised.

16.15 Final Remarks and Seminar Close

Seminar Objectives

About the Seminar

As local authority bereavement services face unprecedented pressure to achieve more with less, authorities are being forced to consider alternative ways of delivering this vital and sensitive service.

This seminar explores the delivery of local authority cemetery and crematoria services and examines examples of innovation in service delivery, the legal environment and the challenges ahead, with expert speakers from local authorities and the wider sector sharing their knowledge and experience

Venue

Headlingley Stadium,
49 St Michael Lane,
Leeds,
LS6 3BR

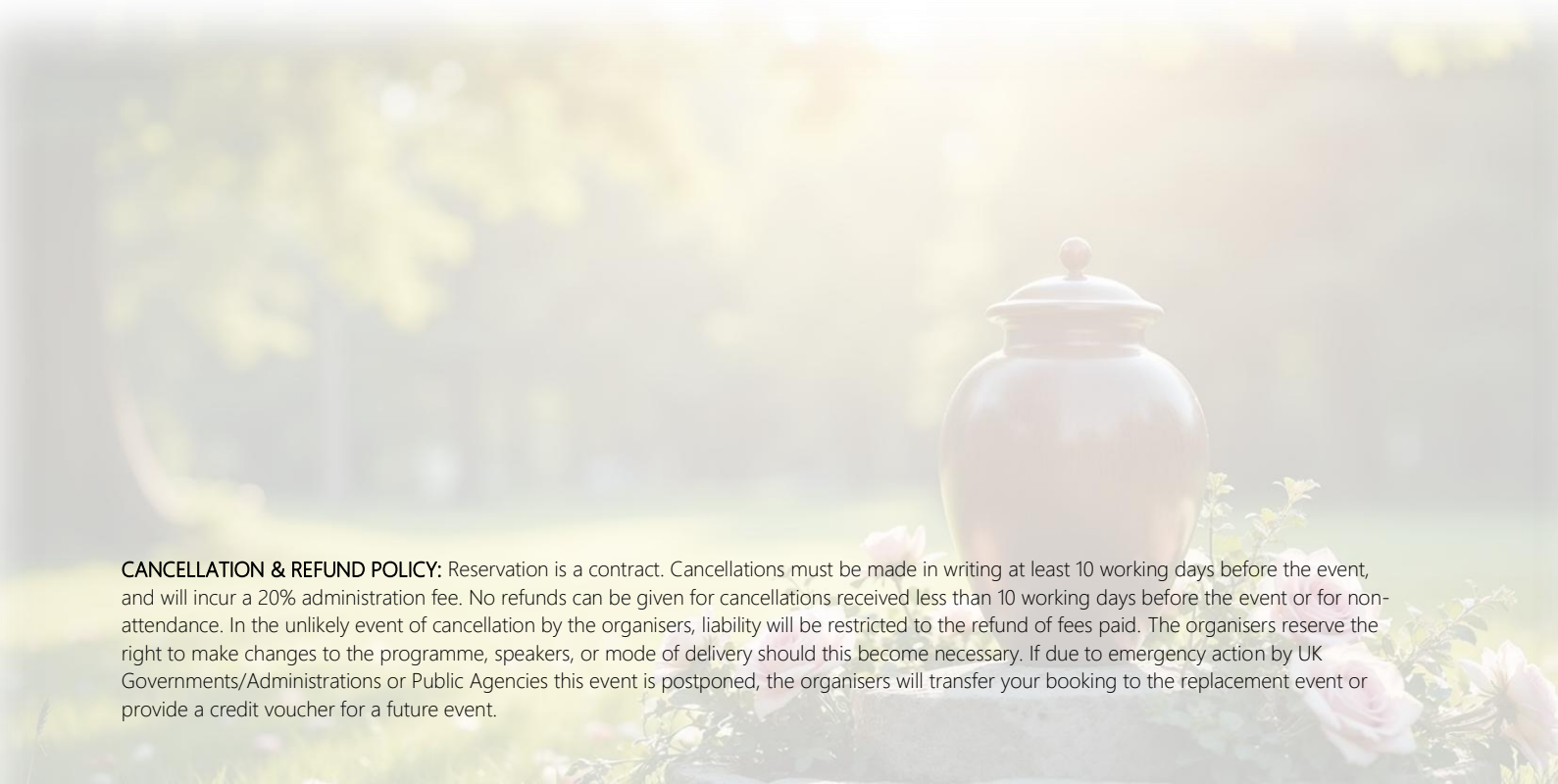
Delegate Packages Exclusive of VAT

What's included?

The delegate fee covers attendance, delegates' documentation, lunches and light refreshments.

APSE member delegate fee:	£195+VAT
Non member delegates fee:	£290+VAT
Commercial delegates:	£420+VAT

Click here to reserve your place on this event



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