

# A service buried under paperwork – is digitalisation a practicable solution?

APSE Cemeteries and Crematoria Advisory Group  
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Diane Widdowson, Service Manager, Environmental Health & Bereavement Services. Wakefield Council

# Our Service

- 19 operational cemeteries - 850 interments annually
- 2 crematoria - 3000 cremations annually
- Paper Burial Registers - 261,198 burials
- Paper Cremation Registers - 142,540 cremations
- Invaluable, old, often fragile paper handwritten burial registers dating back to 1850's maintained and accessed daily – inadequate storage facilities
- 144 burial ground maps

# Our journey so far

- 2004 first attempt to hold burial records and plans digitally – 240,00 burial records on-line, 65% have no search by name facility. No means of electronically locating a grave number on a plan.
- 142,00 cremations records, 81,800 available to search
- 1985 in house electronic system cessation of maintaining paper cremation registers
- 2012 'go-live' Gower Epilog system with funding for 'phase 2' for scanning & vectorisation of data

# What are we doing now

- Capture of key data from previously scanned registers and import it into Epilog
- Paper map scanning, vectorisation and linking to the Epilog grave register
- Scanning pre 1985 cremation records
- Verification
- Uploading scanned registers, data and maps into genealogy website

# Benefits

- Responsive, more accessible service
  - Currently only 2/3 staff can confidently use our burial registers
- Better on-line genealogy search facility
  - Ability to search by name, date of death etc
  - Ability to link to a grave plot mapped on cemetery plan
- Preserve the existing, often fragile, records
- Cease maintaining paper registers?

# Other Paperwork

- Statutory Forms
  - Applicants right to inspect medical certificates
- Non statutory forms
  - Financial paperwork
  - Memorial purchases

Retention and disposal policies?

Scanning?

How many years retention?

# Memorial Headstone Inspection

- 2013 Inspection Programme Approved
- Approx 38,000 memorials to be inspected
- Gower Erasmus System
- Inspection records updated on site

# The Future

**Your experience?**

**What are you doing?**

**What more can we do?**