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July 2017

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July 2017 Director's Note:

I was saddened to hear that Jon Underwood died on June 27.

We only met a few times, and didn't know each other that well but his personal commitment to expanding death and dying discourse through Death Cafes most certainly impacted many people. I also always got the impression (and other people have made the same point) that Jon did what he did because he saw Death Cafes as the most accessible way to help people deal with mortality. No other reason was needed.

The *New York Times* ran a feature on American Death Cafes in June 2013 and interviewed Jon at length. It is worth reading the piece to see how Jon's vision took shape over the years.

<https://newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/06/16/death-be-not-decaffeinated-over-cup-groups-face-taboo>

Sadly, Jon and I were scheduled to speak at the Human Tissue Authority's annual meeting in London on June 27 and the organiser's announced that Jon couldn't make it to the panel because he had become ill.

None of us at the HTA Meeting knew that Jon had died, but I do know that if his death had been announced that I would have directly addressed the everyday opportunities to discuss death and dying Jon created.

Indeed, a portion of my HTA talk focussed on making sure that next-of-kin know what you want done with your body after you die and what kind of funeral you want. These were/are exactly the kinds of things that Jon got everyone saying out loud.

Jon was a very modest person, a quality that I quickly noticed in our few meetings. The Death World has its fair share of healthy egos (count me in this group) but not Jon. He was always very unbecoming before death.

It is only fitting, I think, that Jon received a really lovely obituary in the *New York Times* that listed his accomplishments and demonstrated why so many people will remember his life and work.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/11/international-home/jon-underwood-dead-death-cafe-movement.html>

John Troyer, Director

News from CDAS

Death, Dying and Devolution: Stakeholder Day & IPR Policy Brief Launch

University of Bath in London, Pall Mall

12 September 2017

Dr Kate Woodthorpe's 6 month sabbatical with the [Institute of Policy Research \(IPR\)](#) at the University of Bath has now concluded, and her findings will be shared at an invitation-only stakeholder day in London this September.

[The project](#) examined the risks and opportunities associated with the national and regional devolution of policy and services associated with death, dying and bereavement. Bringing policy-makers and key stakeholders together at a time that negotiations take place to determine priorities, resource allocation, criteria for access and so on, the project has documented what is happening as it happens, and addressed key questions of: equality, access, regionalism, nation state building, and the relationship between individuals, families and the state.

The day will begin with a ministerial roundtable, attended by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Family Support, Housing and Child Maintenance [Caroline Dinenage MP](#). After lunch, attendees will examine best practice across the sector, emergent risks and challenges associated with devolution, the impact of public campaigns and influencing policy change.

A key part of the day is the launch of the [Institute for Policy Research Policy \(IPR\)](#) Brief on Death, Dying and Devolution. This report was commissioned by the IPR to answer the call of the Work and Pensions Select Committee's [Special Inquiry into Bereavement Benefits](#) in 2016 on the need to review policy on death, dying and bereavement across government departments. With contributions from key stakeholders and experts across the sector, the Policy Brief details the opportunities, risks and challenges for death, dying and bereavement policy and services as a result of national and local devolution. It aims to set the policy and research agenda for death, dying and bereavement for the next few transformative years.

If you have any questions about the day please do not hesitate to contact the organiser, Dr Kate Woodthorpe at k.v.woodthorpe@bath.ac.uk.

Two new books from CDAS

Families Bereaved by Alcohol or Drugs: Research on Experiences, Coping and Support

Edited by Christine Valentine, this new book is the long-awaited result of an important and ambitious research project, '[Understanding and responding to those bereaved through their family members' substance misuse](#)', into the experiences commonly encountered by members of this stigmatized and vulnerable group.

Grounded in extensive and rigorous academic research, *Families Bereaved by Alcohol or Drugs* is essential reading for academics, researchers and postgraduate students in the fields of mental health and addiction, social work and social studies, psychology, family studies and bereavement. The book should also be of interest to anyone with a professional interest in bereavement or substance use.

You can order the book from Routledge: <https://www.routledge.com/Families-Bereaved-by-Alcohol-or-Drugs-Research-on-Experiences-Coping/Valentine/p/book/9781138947085>

Free copies of the practical guidelines produced as part of the research can be downloaded from the CDAS website: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/cdas/documents/bereaved-through-substance-use.pdf>

What Death Means Now: Thinking critically about dying and grieving

A critical introduction from Tony Walter to the particular challenges the twenty first century pose humans as they encounter their own and others' mortality. Responses to these challenges include new ways to prepare for dying, new kinds of funerals, new ways to handle grief and new ways to memorialise - how effective and appropriate are these and other innovations? Special offer attached!

Order now from Policy Press: <http://policypress.co.uk/what-death-means-now>

Brexit and Death

What are the implications of Brexit for death in Britain or for Britons abroad? How, if at all, would Brexit affect such things as:

- Health care and death rates
- Social networks and support for those at the end of life or grieving
- End of life care
- Repatriation of bodies
- Trade in body parts

If you have any thoughts about these or any other possible consequences of Brexit, please email Tony Walter jaw34@bath.ac.uk Depending on what comes in, we may organise a seminar, or create a webpage, or find some other way to raise the issues and/or provide a public resource.

Save the date: CDAS18

Following the success of 2017's annual conference, we are pleased to announce that in 2018 we will be addressing, 'The new (old) politics of death'. A full call for papers will be issued in the autumn.

The event will be held on campus at the University of Bath on 08/09 June 2018.

All details are tbc, but we'd love to see you there. Each CDAS annual conference focusses on an original theme, inviting contributions from a wide range of disciplines and perspectives – they

therefore have something of the character of a workshop, in an informal and friendly setting. We welcome scholars and practitioners from around the world who are willing to engage openly with and learn from different understandings and perspectives.

Death Studies Community News

Open consultation: Reforms to the Social Fund's Funeral Expenses Payments scheme

This consultation presents proposed reforms to the Funeral Expenses Payments scheme, and asks for feedback on the changes. The package of reforms is largely focused on clarifying issues around eligibility and making the process for claiming Funeral Expenses Payments simpler. Each of these reforms has been developed in consultation with key figures in the funeral industry, or in response to public correspondence.

The consultation closes at 11.45pm on 21 August 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforms-to-the-social-funds-funeral-expenses-payments-scheme>

Homeless people are not getting the end of life care they need

A study by Marie Curie reveals that homeless people approaching the end of their lives are not getting access to the care services they need.

Researchers from Marie Curie Palliative Care Research Department at University College London (UCL), Pathway, St Mungo's and Coordinate My Care, worked with homeless people and care professionals and found that many homeless people approaching the end of their lives are living in homeless hostels.

The study showed that hostel staff often end up caring for some of those needing the most care, despite not having the palliative care training or support to do so. As a result, huge burdens are placed on hostel staff who do their best to manage with minimal support and very limited resources. The research is the largest of its kind, and the first to describe the lack of appropriate services for homeless people in the UK, from the perspectives of the homeless people themselves and those supporting them.

Web: <http://www.ehospice.com/uk/ArticleView/tabid/10697/ArticleId/22273/language/en-GB/View.aspx>

Good Life, Good Death, Good Grief: Small grants schemes 2017

We are pleased to announce that Good Life, Good Death, Good Grief is running two small grants schemes to support organisations wishing to participate in this year's To Absent Friends festival...

Small grants scheme for to absent friends concerts

A small grants fund has been established to enable community music groups to put on To Absent Friends concerts. The maximum sum available through this programme is £350 and the deadline for applications is 23 August 2017.

More information is available here: [small grants for community music groups](#).

Small grants schemes for organisations

A small grants fund has been set up to support organisations to participate in [To Absent Friends](#), with a particular focus on supporting small organisations to undertake local activities that provide public opportunities for storytelling and/or remembrance of people who have died. The maximum sum available through this programme is £250 and the deadline for applications is 23 August 2017.

More information is available here: [small grants scheme](#)

Dying Matters Awareness Week 2018

We're delighted to announce that the dates for Dying Matters Week 2018 will be Monday 14 May to Sunday 20 May. This is in line with the usual pattern but is a bit later than it has been recently because the first May Bank Holiday is 07 Monday.

We're also pleased to announce that the theme will be same as this year: *What Can You Do?* We had such positive feedback for it this year, from our supporters, the media and our partners, that we wanted to try something different and stick with the same theme for a few years in a row. We feel that there is still a lot to explore on the topic of *What Can You Do?* so we will produce new resources to dig further into it.

Our thanks again for everything you do. Dying Matters Awareness Week only happens because so many people give time, money and talent to put on events. 2017 was the biggest Awareness Week yet, with over 500 events registered and hundreds of thousands of people reached, and we're looking forward to making 2018 even bigger.

Information, factsheets and photos can be found on the [What Can You Do? Page](#).

Hospice UK and NCPC merger

Two of the largest end of life care charities, Hospice UK and the National Council for Palliative Care, formally merged on Saturday 1 July.

The boards of the two charities agreed in March to work towards a merger to support and advance the interests of the hospice and palliative care sectors. The merger brings together a wealth of resources, knowledge and networks under the Hospice UK name.

Read the full press release: <https://www.hospiceuk.org/media-centre/press-releases/details/2017/06/28/landmark-charity-merger-two-of-the-largest-national-end-of-life-care-charities-join-forces>

Events, seminars, symposia and conferences

DDD13: Ritual, religion and magic

06-10 September 2017

University of Central Lancashire

In popular western culture the number 13 is often unlucky, evoking superstition, or witches. Yet there were 13 members of the last supper, Friday the 13 is lucky in Italy and in Judaism it is the age for rites of passage. The theme for this DDD is Ritual, Religion and Magic its perception interpretation and role in healthcare, death, dying, and burial.

Booking is still open for this conference, and a draft programme is now available on the website:

http://www.uclan.ac.uk/conference_events/death-dying-disposal.php

#ddd13

Manchester's 6th International Suicide Bereavement Conference

Suicide Bereavement: Looking Forward, Instilling Hope

27 September 2017

Vue Cinema, The Printworks, Manchester

£99 + VAT

This international conference is a collaboration between Suicide Bereavement UK and Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust. It provides a platform whereby individuals can network, learn from each other and share good practice in this newly developing field in the UK. Over 300 delegates attend this event and it is always over-subscribed.

This event is suitable for those who come into contact with those bereaved or affected by suicide or those who are considering developing a post-vention service. This event is not suitable for people who are struggling to cope with their loss. The purpose of the conference is to inform and guide professionals on how to respond to and care for people bereaved by suicide.

For further information and to book: <https://suicidebereavementuk.com/suicide-bereavement-conference>

2017/18 courses from Sobell House

Education and research is key to Sobell House's drive to improve end of life care in Oxfordshire. Proud to be a WHO Collaborating Centre for Palliative Care, we offer an annual programme of study days, courses and conferences for healthcare practitioners.

Breath-Body-Mind integration for breathlessness, anxiety and 'total pain'

06 October 2017

Helping patients to live well with illness and holistic care are core remits of supportive and palliative care, yet 'hard-to reach' symptoms including breathlessness, anxiety and psychosocial-spiritual suffering are under-researched and managed in life limiting and advanced disease. The skills taught may be used to support patients and families with self-awareness and self-management. The use of body-mind techniques for self-care will also be addressed so that attendees leave the day feeling relaxed, refreshed and inspired!

Creative Songwriting and End of Life Care

04 November 2017

This day will be of interest to people working in end of life care, music therapists, music therapy students, community musicians, and other practitioners who use music in therapeutic or interactive ways. Songwriting is a powerful therapeutic intervention which can help people express and understand themselves at challenging or difficult times. This workshop explores the importance of songwriting and its significant place in current therapeutic practice. Drawing on established therapeutic models it focuses on developing practical skills and techniques that can be applied in a wide range of contexts and genres. The day will compose of comprehensive workshops and discussions that will enable delegates who are interested in, or already using, creative songwriting in their work to further develop their skills.

Spiritual distress at the end of life

22 March 2018

Living with a life-limiting illness raises many issues for those who are dying, their families and their faith communities; those in a caring role may have some difficult and distressing conversations when a person is dying. This day aims to increase confidence and skills in having conversations with those who are dying and their families, as well as exploring the vast subject of suffering and our reactions when we are in the presence of one who suffers. We will explore helpful ways of responding to spiritual distress and offering support. The day is facilitated by two people who have a wealth of experience of working in palliative and end of life care.

Other courses are available on a range of subjects, courses are chargeable but there may be funding opportunities for practitioners in Oxfordshire.

To find out more and to book: <https://www.sobelleducation.org.uk/courses>

On Being Alive to Death

14 October 2017

University of Bristol

A conference bringing together different approaches to the emotional and psychological issues of life-threatening illnesses.

As part of our 25th Anniversary celebrations, *The Harbour* is hosting a conference which will explore aspects of our psychotherapeutic work and share the charity's unique experience with other psychotherapists, counsellors, healthcare professionals, carers, academics and anyone who wants to explore further the role of emotions in dealing with life-threatening illnesses, dying and loss. Not only do we look forward to a full programme of fascinating speakers from diverse backgrounds, but we are immensely excited to be welcoming The Harbour's founder, Jill Brown, to open the conference with some reflections on our past and our present. We expect high demand for the limited spaces available so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Web: <http://www.the-harbour.org.uk/about-us/conference/>

'The Future of the End', The Future of Ageing Conference 2017

29 November 2017

Amnesty International Human Rights Action Centre, London

As a futures organisation focused on the biggest challenges facing Government and society in the context of demographic change, the International Longevity Centre work across the lifecourse, including its beginning, and end. That's why the 2017 Future of Ageing Conference will host a debate on 'The Future of End'.

Will we live forever, or die in style? Will the dead keep tweeting, and can we continue to take selfies with the deceased? Are funerals as we know them outdated, or are the hearse and black suit here to stay?

The debate, chaired by Baroness Sally Greengross OBE (Chief Executive, ILC-UK) will feature:

- Professor Douglas Davies (Director, Centre for Death and Life Studies)
- Louise Winter (Founder, Poetic Endings)
- Dave Eaton (Policy and Public Affairs Manager, ILC-UK)

Louise Winter will also kindly be running a Death Café during lunch.

[Click here to find out more about Death Cafés.](#)

For more information visit: <http://www.futureofageing.org.uk/>

Register on Eventbrite <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-future-of-ageing-conference-2017-transforming-tomorrow-today-tickets-33422908820?ref=ebtn>

#FutureofAgeing

Jobs and training opportunities

Chief Operating Officer and a Policy and Legislation Manager National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD)

These are diverse and exciting leadership roles, at a time of change, for the funeral profession and offer the successful candidates opportunities to shape the future of the Association and the legislative landscape in which funeral directors operate.

Click below for details of the roles and person specifications:

- [Chief Operating Officer](#)
- [Chief Operating Officer Role Specification](#)
- [Policy and Legislation Manager](#)
- [Policy and Legislation Manager Role Specification](#)

The closing date for expressing an interest in both roles is Friday 4 August 2017.

Events Calendar

Date	Event	Location	Contact/Information/Book
16 Dec 2016 – 30 Jul 2017	Dying Matters – A Community Display	Leeds City Museum	http://www.leeds.gov.uk/museumsandgalleries/Pages/leedscitymuseum/Dying-Matters.aspx
21-24 Jul 2017	Death and the Maiden Conference	University of Winchester	deathandthemaide@winchester.ac.uk
19 Aug 2017	Cemetery Day in Spital Cemetery	Spital Cemetery, Chesterfield	http://friendsofspitalcemetery.co.uk/
30 Aug – 02 Sept 2017	Annual Meeting of the Society for Social Studies of Science (4S)	Boston, Mass, USA	http://www.4sonline.org/meeting
06-10 Sept 2017	DDD13: Ritual, religion and magic	University of Central Lancashire	http://www.uclan.ac.uk/conference_events/death-dying-disposal.php
12 Sept 2017	Death, Dying and Devolution: Stakeholder Day	University of Bath in London, Pall Mall	k.v.woodthorpe@bath.ac.uk

17-20 Sept 2017	2017 International Public Health & Palliative Care Conference:	Ottawa, Canada	http://www.iphpc2017.com/
26-28 Sept 2017	Dying and Death in 18 th -21 st Century Europe	'1 Decembrie 1918' University of Alba- Lulia, Romania	Email: mrotar2000@yahoo.com
27 Sept 2017	Suicide Bereavement: Looking Forward, Instilling Hope	Vue Cinema, Printworks, Manchester	https://suicidebereavementuk.com/suicide-bereavement-conference
06 Oct 2017	Breath-Body-Mind integration for breathlessness, anxiety and 'total pain'	Sobell Study Centre, Oxfordshire	http://sobelleducation.org.uk/
07-08 Oct 2017	Dying – A Transition: Letting Go and Finding	Stillpoint Lab, London	www.diealog.co.uk
14 Oct 2017	On Being Alive to Death	University of Bristol	http://www.the-harbour.org.uk/about-us/conference/
20 Oct – 01 Nov 2017	Digital Existence II: Precarious Media Life Conference	Sigtuna Foundation, nr Stockholm, Sweden	http://et.ims.su.se/activities/#2017-01-11
04 Nov 2017	Creative Songwriting and end of life care	Sobell Study Centre, Oxfordshire	http://sobelleducation.org.uk/
28 Nov 2017	Viva la difference!	Sobell Study Centre, Oxfordshire	http://sobelleducation.org.uk/
29 Nov 2017	'The Future of the End': The Future of Ageing Conference	Amnesty International Human Rights Action Centre, London	http://www.futureofageing.org.uk/
01 Dec 2017	Death and Time	BSA Meeting Room, London	https://www.britsoc.co.uk/events/key-bsa-events/death-and-time/
07 Dec 2017	Deconstructing Donation Study Group Conference	Bristol Life Sciences, University of Bristol	https://portal.britsoc.co.uk/public/event/eventBooking.aspx?id=EVT10670
08-09 Dec 2017	Encountering Corpses: Final seminar	Manchester Metropolitan University	https://encounteringcorpses.wordpress.com/
09-10 Mar 2018	On Memory, Spirits and Selves	Derby, UK	compassion_well@hotmail.co.uk

22 Mar 2017	Spiritual distress at end of life	Sobell Study Centre, Oxfordshire	http://sobelleducation.org.uk/
05-07 April 2018	Remember Me: The Changing Face of Memorialisation	Hull, UK	www.hull.ac.uk/rememberme
14-21 May 2017	Dying Matters Awareness Week	Nationwide	http://www.dyingmatters.org/
08-09 June 2018	CDAS18: The new (old) politics of death	University of Bath	www.bath.ac.uk/cdas
06-07 Sept 2018	Death & Culture Conference	University of York	https://www.york.ac.uk/sociology/research/death-and-culture/

Please do let us know of any events you think would be of interest to other subscribers. You can find more details on all of these events, and events featured in previous newsletters, on the CDAS web pages www.bath.ac.uk/cdas