



Let's talk about...

Death, Dying and Grief



Let's Talk About... **Death, Dying and Grief**

returns for a week-long programme of events in libraries and online, taking a look at conversations around one of life's most universal experiences. Through history, culture, storytelling and practical guidance, the programme explores how people across time and place have understood death, and how we live with it today. Events include talks from leading experts, exhibitions, workshops, and resources to support anyone curious about traditions of the past, other cultures, or ways to navigate grief in the present. Whether you join in person or online, you're invited to pause, reflect and discover how the stories we tell about death can deepen our understanding of life itself. All events are free and we welcome everyone. Come along to explore, reflect, and join the conversation.

Please note: Some content may be sensitive. Participants are encouraged to engage at their own comfort level.



Monday

Falls Road Library

The Women of Belfast

Monday 16 November

1:00pm - 2:00pm

Booking essential.

Call 028 9050 9212 or email

fallsroad.library@librariesni.org.uk

What can Belfast's graveyards tell us about the women who helped shape the city?

Historian and author Tom Hartley uncovers stories that can easily be overlooked – from women connected with the arts, war and conflict to those from minority and immigrant communities and women whose contribution to Belfast was rarely recorded. Through their lives and memorials, this talk offers a different perspective on the history of the city.



Antrim Library

The Art of Lament: Finding the Voice in Grief

Tuesday 17 November

3:00pm - 4:00pm

Booking essential.

Call 028 9446 1942 or email
antrim.library@librariesni.org.uk

Before grief became something largely experienced in private, mourning could be communal, vocal and heard.

This creative workshop explores the Irish tradition of caoineadh (keening) and how voice, breath, sound and repetition can give expression to loss when words are not enough. No previous musical or singing experience is needed and taking part in the vocal exercises is entirely optional.

A gentle, creative exploration of an ancient tradition and what it might still teach us about mourning today.

Rathcoole Library

The Irish Wake

Tuesday 17 November
at 11:00am

Booking essential.

Call 028 9085 1157 or email
rathcoole.library@librariesni.org.uk

For generations, the Irish wake brought people together at one of life's most difficult moments – to mourn, remember, tell stories and share company.

Storyteller Stephen O'Hara takes us into the folklore, rituals and superstitions surrounding this enduring tradition, exploring the customs that shaped the Irish wake and its place at the heart of community life.

Speaker: Stephen O'Hara is a storyteller from Cushendun with a passion for Irish mythology and the customs that shaped rural life. His storytelling brings together humour, history and humanity.

Online Event

Remember Me: A Social and Cultural History of Memorial Cards

Tuesday 17 November

7:00pm - 8:00pm



Registration essential.

Scan the QR Code to register.

Tucked inside prayer books, stored in biscuit tins and kept in family collections, memorial cards have quietly recorded Irish lives for almost 150 years.

Professor Salvador Ryan explores the fascinating history of these familiar objects and what they reveal about changing attitudes to death, remembrance, religion and society in Ireland. Discover how something so small and personal became an important part of our social and cultural history.



Wednesday

Shankill Road Library

Death and Burial in Ireland

Wednesday 18 November

1:30pm - 2:30pm

Booking essential.

Call 028 9050 9232 or email

shankillroad.library@librariesni.org.uk

In this lecture Professor Gabriel Cooney considers changing patterns in the treatment of the dead of the earliest human generations who lived in Ireland, with particular reference to Ulster. This is an opportunity to reflect on the relationships between past and present mortuary practices.

Carrickfergus Library

Understanding Your Grief Workshop

Wednesday 18 November

1:30pm - 3:30pm

Booking essential.

Call 028 9336 2261 or email

carrickfergus.library@librariesni.org.uk

There is no single way to experience grief. It can affect our emotions, thoughts and everyday lives in many different ways.

Led by Cruse Bereavement Support, this supportive workshop offers an opportunity to better understand grief and some of the experiences that can follow a bereavement. Through information, guidance and conversation, participants can explore grief in a welcoming and supportive setting.

Facilitator: Cruse Bereavement Support provides free, confidential support to people experiencing bereavement.

Omagh Library

The Good Grief Club

Wednesday 18 November

2:00pm - 4:00pm

Booking essential.
Call 028 8244 0733 or email
omagh.library@librariesni.org.uk

Can humour and creativity help us talk about something most of us would rather avoid? The Good Grief Club thinks so.

Creative facilitators Briege McClean and Anthea McWilliams invite adults aged 55+ to explore living, dying and planning for the end of life through conversation, stories, creativity, music and humour.

Expect an informal and supportive session with plenty of room to listen, contribute and even share a joke or two.

Online Event

Transformation, Myth and the Art of Healing

Wednesday 18 November

7:00pm - 8:00pm



Registration essential.
Scan the QR Code to register.

Why are Irish myths filled with people who disappear, cross into other worlds and return transformed?

Through storytelling, music and reflection, Bróna McVittie explores tales of the Otherworld, death, renewal and transformation found in Irish folklore and mythology.

These ancient stories have travelled across generations. This event considers what they might still tell us about grief, change and the experience of becoming someone new.



Cregagh Library

Life and Death in Medieval Ireland – Insights from the Analysis of Human Skeletal Remains

Thursday 19 November

11:00am - 12 noon

Booking essential.
Call 028 9040 1365 or email
cregagh.library@librariesni.org.uk

What can the bones of people who lived hundreds of years ago tell us about their lives?

Drawing on evidence from medieval burial grounds in Ireland, Professor Eileen Murphy explores how the study of human remains can reveal remarkable details about health and disease, diet, migration, lifestyle and violence – and even relationships and community bonds.

An opportunity to discover how archaeology can bring us closer to the lives of people who might otherwise have left little trace behind.

Carnlough Library

The Irish Wake

**Thursday 19 November
at 11:00am**

Booking essential.
Call 028 2888 5552 or email
carnlough.library@librariesni.org.uk

For generations, the Irish wake brought people together at one of life's most difficult moments – to mourn, remember, tell stories and share company.

Storyteller Stephen O'Hara takes us into the folklore, rituals and superstitions surrounding this enduring tradition, exploring the customs that shaped the Irish wake and its place at the heart of community life.

Speaker: Stephen O'Hara is a storyteller from Cushendun with a passion for Irish mythology and the customs that shaped rural life. His storytelling brings together humour, history and humanity.

Online Event

Pregnancy and Baby Loss Awareness Talk

**Thursday 19 November
1:00pm - 1:45pm**



Registration essential.
Scan the QR Code to register.

Pregnancy and baby loss can have a profound impact on parents, families and the wider people around them.

In this sensitive and informative session, Sheila Walls from Sands Northern Ireland explores the experiences of bereaved parents and families, the importance of remembrance and continuing bonds, and how others can provide compassionate support.

The session will also introduce the support and resources available through Sands and provide an opportunity for questions and discussion.



Online Event

Changing Perspectives of Grief

**Friday 20 November
12 noon - 12:45pm**



Registration essential.
Scan the QR Code to register.

Grief can bring sadness, anger, guilt and longing, as well as changes in how we see ourselves. For most people, these difficult feelings change over time. For some, however, grief can remain intense and have a lasting impact on everyday life.

Professor Mark Shevlin explores our changing understanding of grief and introduces the concept of Prolonged Grief Disorder – what it means, how it differs from the grief most people experience and when additional help may be needed.

The event will include a 30-minute talk followed by an opportunity for questions and discussion.

Limavady Library

The Irish Wake
Friday 20 November
at 2:00pm

Booking essential.
Call 028 7776 2540 or email
limavady.library@librariesni.org.uk

For generations, the Irish wake brought people together at one of life's most difficult moments – to mourn, remember, tell stories and share company.

Storyteller Stephen O'Hara takes us into the folklore, rituals and superstitions surrounding this enduring tradition, exploring the customs that shaped the Irish wake and its place at the heart of community life.

Speaker: Stephen O'Hara is a storyteller from Cushendun with a passion for Irish mythology and the customs that shaped rural life. His storytelling brings together humour, history and humanity.



Further information and resources are available at:

www.librariesni.org.uk

www.compassionatecommunitiesni.com

www.cruse.org.uk