

BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Educating the Funeral Profession

JOURNAL



The BIFD Were Joined By Delegates
From Across The Profession For
Inaugural Education Weekend
At Anglia Ruskin University
In Chelmsford



THE CPD STANDARDS OFFICE
CPD PROVIDER: 60065
2021-2023
www.cpdstandards.com

SUPPLYING FRONT LINE SERVICES SINCE 1986

“Helping You, So You Can Help Others”



www.themazwellgroup.com



Please contact

*National Office for all
Executive, Administration*

& General Enquiries:

C/O Jem & Karen Mead

BIFD National Office

10 St John Road,

Wroughton, Wiltshire

SN4 9ED

Tel: 0800 032 2733

Fax: 01920 823 261

admin@bifd.org.uk



Please send all adverts,

articles & news

c/o The Editorial Team:

Hayley Bell

journal@bifd.org.uk



Lucie Kibbey

deputyeditor@bifd.org.uk

Contacting The BIFD

National President, Jem Mead:
jem@meadfamilyfunerals.co.uk

1st Vice President, Amanda Dalby:
amandadalbyfuneralservices@gmail.com

2nd Vice President, Amanda Pink:
amanda@evelynsfunerals.co.uk

Immediate Past President, Paul Stibbards:
paul@stibbards.co.uk

Company Administrator Karen Mead:
admin@bifd.org.uk

Chair of Education, Andrew Floyd:
a.floyd.bifd.edu@gmail.com



Supporters & Contributors

Allsops

Auden Funeral Supplies

Bennetts Funerals

Colourful Coffins

EventLive

FSA

Funeral Partners

J C Atkinson

LifeLedger

Muchloved

Motorcycle Funerals

Search4Local

The Mazwell Group

Tributes Ltd

Wilcox Limousines

From The Desk Of The National President Jeremy Mead, Dip. FS, LMBIFD



Greetings one and all, yet again the end of the month is here and we are 7/12's of our year over!!!! Where is the time going?

Firstly, I have to say a massive WELL DONE to the organising team for the recent Educational Weekend in Chelmsford. That was an absolutely brilliant event, and has been received superbly by everyone that I have spoken to, and we have had numerous positive comments from members of the trade, we even had 5 google reviews from it. Once again well done to you all and a massive thank you from Karen & I.

Lots to report this month, starting with a wonderful visit to Stratford on Avon for the 2nd time in our year, our hosts were John & Adele Adams and the whole of the NAFD, and what a brilliant occasion it was. You may have seen that John has raised a magnificent figure of approaching £30,000 for his chosen charity this year - a feat that the whole of the B.I.F.D. applaud you for John, very well done. We also wish both John & Adele well for later next month and their impending arrival.



A few days later, I was invited to attend an APPG meeting in Westminster to discuss the laws surrounding how we dispose of the bodies of our loved ones when they die. An absolutely intriguing meeting attended by possibly the top 40 members of the funeral profession from within the UK. I think it fair to say that those present realised that we as a profession are not going to sit back and say "Yes Minister". We await the outcome with bated breath.



We have just the one invite this month to attend the official opening of another Westerleigh Crematorium, this time at Waseley Hills, near Solihull - which should be another good gathering of the Kindred Associations.

Plans for Conference are progressing nicely, and bookings are coming in rather quicker than we all thought! Am wondering if we will have enough rooms now? Talking of Conference, I am very much looking forward to welcoming as many of our new Diploma Holders as possible to attend the Awards Evening and Gala Dinner to receive their certificates, and to show the world how good they all are. I suspect I will feel like a very proud granddad! A superb achievement by you all.

Whilst mentioning the weekend, look out for an 'interesting' announcement by the middle of next month. I will just leave it there.

As always, it is an honour and a pleasure being your National President, look after yourselves and your loved ones. Until next month,

Jem



REGION G AGM & MEETING

Join us at 1:00pm on Saturday, 17th June at Parley Green Coffins, Nimrod Way, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 7SH.

**For more information please email Regional Secretary,
Lucie Kibbey:
lucie@evelynsfunerals.co.uk**



PARLEY GREEN
PREMIUM SUSTAINABLE COFFINS

Auden

FUNERAL SUPPLIES LTD

Passion | Pride | Quality

Lightweight
Stretchers



Removal
Trolleys



Mortuary



Coffin
Handling



BUY OUR LATEST PRODUCTS SECURELY

ONLINE NOW
www.audenfs.com



First class
repairs and
servicing by
Auden



+44 (0) 1924 402080



3 YEAR
WARRANTY



FINANCE
AVAILABLE



info@audenfs.co.uk | www.audenfs.com

**MADE IN
BRITAIN**

A Celebration of Hard Work & Learning

41st Annual General Meeting, Gala Dinner & Diploma in Funeral Service Awards Ceremony



**Join National President
Jem Mead & His Wife, Karen
on 20~22 October 2023
in their Home County of
Wiltshire for a Weekend of
Entertainment & Celebration**



**Alexandra House,
Whittingham Drive
Wroughton,
Wiltshire
SN4 0QJ**

**Limited Tickets Available c/o
Conference Secretary, David Gresty:
david-gresty@hotmail.com**

National President's Chosen Charity 2023

Prospect
Hospice

The British Institute of Funeral Directors Conference 2023:

20th – 22nd October 2023

Alexandra House

Whittingham Drive

Wroughton

Swindon

SN4 0QJ

The 41st BIFD Conference 2023 Rates

1. Friday Evening To Sunday Morning – THE COMPLETE PACKAGE

<i>Friday Dinner</i>	<i>.....Double Room (2 People) £525</i>
<i>Saturday & Sunday Bed & Breakfast</i>	<i>.....Single Room (1 Person) £335</i>
<i>Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea, Coffee & Biscuits</i>	
<i>Saturday Lunch Included</i>	
<i>Saturday Evening Drinks Reception</i>	
<i>Saturday Gala Dinner – Includes 4 Course Meal Followed By Tea & Coffee</i>	

2. Friday Evening To Saturday Morning - ONLY

<i>Friday Dinner</i>	<i>.....Double Room (2 People) £220</i>
<i>Saturday & Sunday Bed & Breakfast</i>	<i>.....Single Room (1 Person) £145</i>
<i>Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea, Coffee & Biscuits</i>	

Saturday Lunch Is Available On The Day At £25 PP

3. Saturday To Sunday Morning - ONLY

<i>Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea, Coffee & Biscuits</i>	<i>.....Double Room (2 People) £310</i>
<i>Saturday Evening Drinks Reception</i>	<i>.....Single Room (1 Person) £195</i>
<i>Saturday Gala Dinner – Includes 4 Course Meal Followed By Tea & Coffee</i>	

Saturday Lunch Is Available On The Day At £25 PP

4. The Gala Banquet Dinner Only

.....£80 Per Person

<i>Saturday Evening Drinks Reception</i>	
<i>Saturday Gala Dinner – Includes 4 Course Meal Followed By Tea & Coffee</i>	

5. AGM ATTENDANCE ONLY

.....Free To All Members & Students

<i>Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea, Coffee & Biscuits</i>	
--	--

Saturday Lunch Is Available On The Day At £25 PP

ROOM UPGRADES AVAILABLE (Subject To Availability)

Upgrade Room.....£30 extra per room per night

TO STAY BEFORE OR AFTER THE CONFERENCE DBB

<i>.....Double Room (2 People) £140</i>
<i>.....Single Room (1 Person) £100</i>

The 41st BIFD CONFERENCE - 20th – 22nd October 2023

Alexandra House Hotel, Swindon

BOOKING FORM

Members Name: Membership Number:

Address:

Post Code: Contact Telephone Number:

Email Address: Number of Rooms Required:

Special Dietary Requirements: Yes/No Details of Diet

Arrival Date:/...../..... Departure Date:/...../.....

Attending **Partners** Name:

Attending **Guests** Names:

See Rates Page To Complete Form & Payment

Tariff (1) – Full Package

Double Rate: £.....

Single Rate: £.....

Tariff (2) – Fri to Sat

Double Rate: £.....

Single Rate: £.....

Tariff (3) – Sat to Sun

Double Rate: £.....

Single Rate: £.....

Tariff (4) – Gala Dinner Only

Total Attendees £.....

Tariff (5) – AGM Only

£ No Charge

Please return, or email, your completed booking form for the appropriate amount to the Conference Co-ordinator and make payment either by Bacs or by Cheque made out to "The BIFD":

Bacs Payments To:

Sort Code: 60-83-01 - Account Number: 20336550

Mr. David Gresty

C/O The British Institute of Funeral Directors
National Office
10 St John Road
Wroughton
Wiltshire
SN4 9ED

07803 955 230

david-gresty@hotmail.com

Total Amount Due £.....



An Education Weekend at Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford: A Networking Opportunity for Funeral Professionals

Hayley Bell, Dip. FD, LMBIFD, Editor

The funeral industry is constantly evolving, and it is essential for professionals to stay up-to-date with the latest techniques, regulations, and technologies.

One way to achieve this is through attending educational events, such as our recent education weekend held at Anglia Ruskin University in Chelmsford. This event brought together guest speakers, with guided tours, a mortuary demonstration and trade stands, providing attendees with a unique opportunity to learn, network, and connect with others in the industry.

In this article, I will cover the highlights of this education weekend and what it was like working behind the scenes as a part of the Event Team.

Guest Speakers

One of the most significant aspects of the education weekend was the impressive line-up of guest speakers. These professionals provided valuable insight on various topics related to the funeral industry. Here are some of the highlights from the seminars:



Physiotherapist Danielle Lewis discussed the risk of back pain in the funeral profession, gave tips on how to maintain good back health, making adjustments at work and recovering from back pain.

Kara Heather from Essex Coroner's Service gave an insight into her role as a coroner's officer, which includes liaison with Next of Kin, GP Surgeries and any other relevant person in order to compile a death report referral which is submitted to the coroner, as well as the subsequent issuing of certification to release the deceased into the care of the chosen funeral director and allow a funeral to take place.

Heather Barker spoke about bereavement by suicide, sharing some statistics collated by The Samaritans and exploring what makes this type of bereavement different, the emotional and physical reactions, as well as some of the reasons and circumstances surrounding why someone may die by suicide.

Ben Whitworth picked up where he left off with his talk and demonstration in the mortuary, exploring products that have been created by The MazWell Group for use by embalmers and funeral directors. Showcasing some of the cosmetics that work differently to makeup that is commercially available.

Clive Pearson ended Saturday's seminars with a talk on Disaster Management, and his experiences being a part of the Kenyon's International Team. Flying all over the globe to provide assistance recovering the remains of people who have been involved in disasters, and even providing repatriation assistance for a remote location with limited facilities.

Our Resident Social Media Guru, Eimer Duffy kicked off Sunday's sessions with an interactive talk, with added KitKats and Mars Bars, discussing how social media has evolved, and the platforms that funeral professionals should consider joining to help build their reputation.

Funeral Director Maxine Edgar shared her experiences of prejudice and racism when she started her funeral career as a celebrant. While her seminar was uncomfortable to listen to, Maxine's passion sparked conversations about unconscious bias within the profession.

The final seminar was led by **Simon Holden** of the Faunus Group, who was joined by **Leo Walton** to provide an update to the research that is currently being carried out into the process of Human Composting. They spoke about the science involved, the technology they use to monitor the process and an approximate timescale from start to finish.

The seminars were informative, engaging, and thought-provoking, sparking lively discussions and debates among the attendees. Many delegates left the event feeling inspired and motivated to implement the new knowledge and techniques they learned.

Guided Tours

In addition to the guest speakers, the education weekend also included guided tours of the university's state-of-the-art facilities, including the mortuary suite led by Adam Raven. These tours provided attendees with a unique opportunity to see first-hand how these facilities operate and gain a deeper understanding of the processes involved.

As well as the guided tours, Ben Whitworth from the MazWell Group provided a seminar in the mortuary suite, which proved to be an excellent addition to the event, it provided a hands-on, interactive experience for attendees, as well as sparking discussions about MazWell's low formaldehyde embalming fluids and the results that can be attained by using their products.



a.r.u. | School of Medicine



Trades

Attendees were able to browse through the trade stands, ask questions, and learn about the latest products and technologies available. The companies who joined us were:

- Angel & Dove
- Clare Shaw Kids Books
- Funeral Partners
- FIT Social Media
- Greener Globe Funeral Awards
- Heart In Their Hand Project
- Life Expressions
- Motorcycle Funerals
- Much Loved
- Tributes Funeral Supplies.



The trade stands were a valuable resource for attendees, as they provided access to the latest products and resources in the industry. Many attendees left the event with new contacts, leads, freebies and ideas for their businesses.

Behind The Scenes



As well as attending the education weekend in my role as Editor of the Journal, I was part of an amazing Events Team. Led by my Editor predecessor, **David Gresty** I was involved with many Zoom meetings, email exchanges and a WhatsApp Group, my colleagues, Immediate Past President **Paul Stibbards**, National President **Jem Mead**, National Office's **Karen Mead**, BIFD Members **Judith Dandy & Nicola Jarman** used their connections to source the seminar speakers, goodie bags, spreading awareness of the event with kindred associations, booking the venues, choosing the menu for the Saturday night Dinner and more.

My role mainly involved the creation of the printed stationery used for the weekend: the lanyards, menu, event team t-shirts and the CPD certificates, as well as being influential in the choice of Apple Strudel for Dessert.



I thoroughly enjoyed being a part of the Event Team, everyone worked so hard, setting everything up on the Friday afternoon, keeping everything running to schedule and logging attendees in each seminar, everyone seemed to know what needed to be done to help everything run as smoothly as possible. It was a shame I didn't have the opportunity to chat longer to people, but I enjoyed strengthening existing and forging new friendships.

The education weekend at Anglia Ruskin University in Chelmsford was a resounding success. With its impressive line-up of guest speakers, guided tours, and trade stands, it provided attendees with a unique opportunity to learn, network, and grow in their professions. Funeral professionals and embalmers who attended the event left feeling inspired, motivated, and equipped with new knowledge and techniques to enhance their businesses.

Attending industry events like this education weekend is essential for professionals to stay up-to-date with the latest trends, regulations, and technologies. It provides a unique opportunity to connect with others in the industry, learn from experts, and gain new perspectives. If you have not attended an industry event, I encourage you to do so. You never know what valuable insights and connections you may gain.

With Special Thanks To Our Event Sponsors...



**Dandelion
Farewells**

A funeral for our times...



S. STIBBARDS & SONS

Care, Compassion and Support in all That We Do



FSA

Funeral Suppliers' Association
est. 1939

ANGEL & DOVE
celebrating life and love



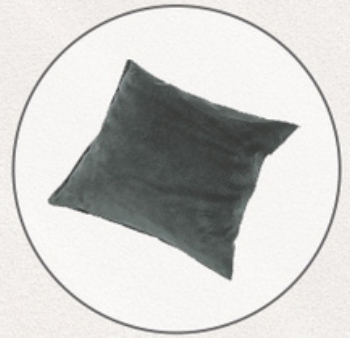
Funeral Partners



Obitus

ALLSOPS

Elevate your funeral services with our premium velveteen products - now available at a discounted price of 30% off in June



Visit www.allsops.net to sign-up

Manufacturers and Suppliers of quality products to the discerning Funeral Director
To place an order or for more information, call us on 01903 213991 or visit www.allsops.net



Land Rover Defender Hearse and Support Vehicle



The Land Rover Defender hearse accommodates the coffin and flowers with 4 available seats for funeral staff, whilst the support vehicle has 7 seats available.



Bennetts Funeral Directors

Call 01277 887110

www.landroverfunerals.com

Deputy Editor's Desk

Lucie Kibbey, Cert. FS, MBIFD

Howdy All,

It feels like an age since I last sat down to write for the Journal, time does fly when you're having fun.

We've had a great time this month enjoying the King's Coronation celebrations, I have covered this in another article, and the delightful disaster that is Eurovision!

I sadly couldn't make the BIFD Educational weekend, but it sounded like a fantastic opportunity and a great success by all the team involved in putting it together – well done gang, I will be along to the next one! Our esteemed Editor, Hayley, will no doubt be covering it off in full, and I cannot wait to read all about it.

My point of discussion this edition, is something I am very passionate about supporting and promoting – Mental Health, particularly in the workplace. I have worked for previous employers who perhaps did not see the benefits in looking after and supporting their employees and colleagues when they found themselves struggling. As we enter Mental Health Awareness Week 2023, I thought I would put together some information that may help all of us, to be a little kinder and more understanding of each other.

On a personal level, if any of my fellow BIFD colleagues or friends, ever find themselves in need of someone to talk to, please know that my phone is always on and my inbox always open for a chat.

Take care everyone, of yourselves and each other!

Lots of Love

Lucie x



What is Mental Health?

Mental health encompasses emotional, psychological, and social well-being, influencing cognition, perception, and behaviour. It likewise determines how an individual handles stress, interpersonal relationships, and decision-making. Mental health may include an individual's ability to enjoy life and to create a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience. Some early signs related to mental health difficulties are sleep irritation, lack of energy, lack of appetite and thinking of harming yourself or others.



15 - 21 May 2023

Why is Mental Health So Important?

Mental health is more important now than ever before; it impacts every area of our lives. The importance of good mental health ripples into everything we do, think, or say.

Maintaining a positive mental health and treating any mental health conditions is crucial to stabilising constructive behaviours, emotions, and thoughts. Focusing on mental health care can increase productivity, enhance our self-image, and improve relationships.

Nurturing mental health doesn't just improve our daily functioning, but it can also help us control — or at least combat — some of the physical health problems directly linked to mental health conditions. For example, heart disease and stress are related, so managing stress might have a positive outcome on heart disease.

Other benefits of taking care of our mental health can include:

- **Improving our mood**
- **Reducing our anxiety**
- **Creating an enhanced sense of inner peace**
- **Thinking more clearly**
- **Improving our relationships**
- **Increasing our self-esteem**



Why Should We Spread Mental Health Awareness?

By making a concerted effort to spread mental health awareness, we can work to de-stigmatize how we think about, approach, and identify mental health issues in our society. Currently 1 in 5 workers are dealing with a mental health issue.

Having those tough conversations and admitting there's a problem means we can come up with a solution. We can start removing the shame and fear that's often associated with topics surrounding mental health. Doing so can increase the likelihood of someone reaching out when they need help. Asking for help is a sign of strength. Working together allows us to begin building a foundation that respects and honours the importance of good mental health.

Another benefit to focusing on mental health awareness is that it can make signs and symptoms of certain conditions more well-known. Early intervention is predictive of how successful mental health treatment will be for many conditions. The earlier someone is diagnosed and begins treatment, the more likely it is that they'll be able to manage their condition and improve their mental health.



What Are the Most Common Mental Health Conditions?

There are countless mental health conditions, and some are more common than others. It is reported that less than 37% of people seek mental health treatment for their symptoms.

Common mental health conditions include:

- Depression
- Panic disorder
- Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)
- Eating disorders



What Are Different Factors That Influence Mental Health?

There are so many factors that can influence mental health that it can be difficult to fully address them all. There are some factors that can negatively influence mental stability and health, including:

- Past trauma, abuse, or neglect
- Long-term and/or severe stress
- Social isolation
- Loneliness
- Bereavement
- Discrimination
- Long-term physical conditions
- Social disadvantages
- Poverty or significant debt
- Unemployment
- A breakup or divorce
- Dysfunctional family life



How to have a conversation with an individual about their mental health

1. **Choose an appropriate place** – somewhere private and quiet where the person feels comfortable and equal. Possibly a neutral space outside of the workplace. If they are a remote worker, consider whether going to where they are may help.
2. **Encourage people to talk** – people can find it difficult to talk about their mental health but it helps to have an open culture where conversations about mental health are routine and normalised. Ask simple, open and non-judgmental questions and let people explain in their own words how their mental health problem manifests, the triggers, how it impacts on their work and what support they need.
3. **Don't make assumptions** – don't try to guess what symptoms an employee might have and how these might affect their ability to do their job – many people are able to manage their mental health and perform their role to a high standard but may require support measures when experiencing a difficult period.
4. **Listen to people and respond flexibly** – everyone's experience of a mental health problem is different so treat people as individuals and focus on the person, not the problem. Adapt your support to suit the individual and involve people as much as possible in finding solutions to any work-related difficulties they're experiencing. Remember effective workplace adjustments are often quite individual but needn't be costly or require huge changes.
5. **Be honest and clear** – if there are specific grounds for concern, like high absence levels or impaired performance, it's important to address these at an early stage.
6. **Ensure confidentiality** – people need to be reassured of confidentiality. It's sensitive information and should be shared with as few people as possible. Create strict policies to ensure this. Discuss with the individual what information they would like shared and with whom. For further information on data protection see the [Information Commissioner's Office](#).
7. **Develop an action plan** – work with your employee to develop an individual action plan which identifies the signs of their mental health problem, triggers for stress, the possible impact on their work, who to contact in a crisis, and what support people need (see next section). The plan should include an agreed time to review the support measures to see if they're working.
8. **Encourage people to seek advice and support** – people should speak to their GP about available support from the NHS such as talking therapy. If your organisation has an Employee Assistance Programme it may be able to arrange counselling. The Mind Infoline can signpost people on to support and our network of local Minds across the country can also help source advice and support.
9. **Seek advice and support yourself** – the Mind Infoline and local Minds can provide information to employers too. Occupational Health (if you have it) can provide tailored advice to support both employers and employees. If relationships have become strained or confrontational mediation can help – some local Minds run mediation services, as do ACAS. Small businesses can access the free [Health for Work Adviceline](#) service provided by NHS occupational health services.
10. **Reassure people** – people may not always be ready to talk straight away so it's important you outline what support is available, tell them your door is always open and let them know you'll make sure they get the support they need.

The Original[®] Colourful Coffins

As individual as you



Colourful
Coffins[®]
as individual as you



*'The most
beautiful coffin
I've ever seen'*

To place your order call 01865 779172

www.colourfulcoffins.com - enquiries@colourfulcoffins.com



WHY DON'T WE GIVE AS MUCH LOVE, CARE, AND ATTENTION TO THE END OF OUR LIVES, AS WE DO TO THE BEGINNING?

BY KATIE COSTELLO

Death cannot be avoided; I say that so bluntly, but with love, because it is true, but I know how much it hurts to even think about it.

Death is THE most emotive, life changing and challenging experience we go through. We lose people we love and we ourselves will die at some point too. It's the nature and cycle of life. Death is a natural part of our existence. All your ancestors before you died and everyone you know now will die too. I don't say this to be macabre or cold, it's a fact, and one we all know but often chose to ignore or avoid. Why do we avoid it? Because we are scared and somehow think we if we don't talk about, if we brush it under the carpet or leave it alone, we won't have to face it. It may be that we have lost someone, and it is too painful to face. Maybe we lost someone too young or suddenly. Sometimes it is us that has had our own mortality stare us in the face. Whatever it is, it scares us and what then happens is when it does inevitably happen, we are even more scared, even more unprepared and our grief is even more challenging because we haven't talked about it or faced the harsh reality of it. Having sat with hundreds of souls who have died, and also supported their families, trust me when I say I know how true this is.

With every other experience this huge in life, we plan and prepare. We learn about it; we try to understand, and we get things in place to support us. We go to a job interview; we learn about the company and go armed with questions. We buy a house; we go see it multiple times, get surveys done and be sure to have it examined and every corner looked into many times over. We go on a date or get married but are sure to have everything in place, get to know someone and make sure we are really sure by asking questions, getting our affairs in order, and planning our lives together.

When we give birth, we plan, prepare, have appointments to check on us and our babies. We make sure we are examined; we make sure our needs are met and we plan how we want this little soul to come into the world. And we make sure it comes in surrounded by so much love. We make sure it feels safe, loved, has all the help it needs, and it all goes as smoothly as it can.



SoulMaid's

Why don't we give as much love, care, and attention to the end of our lives, as we do to the beginning? If we know the magnitude and overwhelming nature of death, and that it is as huge as giving birth, why do we not face or plan for it in the same way? Often, we are more aware of that love, safety, and connection at the end than we are the beginning. Why when we know it is more challenging, more emotional, and very difficult, do we not plan, not ensure we feel safe and not provide as much support for those souls that are leaving and their families?

In many other countries, cultures and religions death is seen and acknowledged as a sacred, beautiful, transition and is very much embraced as part of life. In our society now, we seem to have become so divorced and so detached and have really medicalised death. In these other cultures, death still happens at home, with the family around, the community even. But here, we assume someone else will deal with it and the doctors and nurses will sort it all for us. Soul Midwives were traditionally the crones or hags of the village, the elders, who would lead and hold a bedside. Many other faiths and places in the world still do exactly this. Where has our connection gone?

This is where a Soul Midwife comes in.



picture © Katie Costello, Soul Midwife

When most people hear the term Soul Midwife, they think of maternity and birth, understandably so. Interestingly, this is why we use the term midwife to describe our role with the dying. You see, a Soul Midwife plays a similar role. A midwife supports a soul to enter this world, a Soul Midwife supports it to leave. And when we think about it, as I said above, birth and death are so similar. We put so much care and attention into coming into this world, we should also do the same when it comes to leaving it.

Soul Midwives are non-medical, holistic companions who guide and support the dying in order to facilitate a gentle and peaceful death. Some call themselves death doulas or end of life companions, we are all the same but different in our own way and training. We are the ones who sit by the bedside, hold space, and support the journey of death, hands on, hearts open, no judgement or agenda. Soul Midwives draw on ancient skills and traditions, apply and adapt them to modern day life, and death, and treat dying as a rite of passage and a precious and sacred journey. A Soul Midwife can facilitate and allow people to talk about, create and achieve the dying journey they need want and deserve. We have and use birth doulas, this is the same role, but a Soul Midwife supports the soul leaving this life, instead of entering it.

A Soul Midwife is with someone as much or as little as they need or want throughout their journey. We treat everyone we work with as our own family. We see death as precious and profound and believe people should have as much love and support as possible. It will happen to us all and we only have one chance to get it right, for that person and those left behind. A Soul Midwife can help you talk about death and dying. It is easier when we are well of course. Discussing your wishes and deepest feeling with those you love can be one of the hardest conversations you will ever have when you are facing the end of your life. But the result and consequences of doing so are so priceless.



picture © Katie Costello, Soul Midwife

We don't often actually talk; it can be more about the listening. Deep listening is something most of us take for granted. SM can truly connect and really 'hear' what someone is saying, and it is not always about the words. Listening is probably the biggest part of our role for our people and their families. It is not always a case of saying 'the right thing' but simply 'being present'. That is not always easy for families to do so we can be a huge support during these times by simply being there.

When it comes to treatment and care, thinking and talking about it early on in your journey takes any worries away from yourself and your loved ones if and when it happens. Planning your funeral can be empowering and believe it or not, an uplifting experience for everyone involved. It can be emotional of course, but it is worth it. Being a Funeral Celebrant as well as a SM, I can take that journey with you and conduct your funeral for you when the time comes knowing you have someone that knows you and can speak from, not only experience, but the heart.

We don't often actually talk; it can be more about the listening. Deep listening is something most of us take for granted. SM can truly connect and really 'hear' what someone is saying, and it is not always about the words. Listening is probably the biggest part of our role for our people and their families. It is not always a case of saying 'the right thing' but simply 'being present'. That is not always easy for families to do so we can be a huge support during these times by simply being there.

When it comes to treatment and care, thinking and talking about it early on in your journey takes any worries away from yourself and your loved ones if and when it happens. Planning your funeral can be empowering and believe it or not, an uplifting experience for everyone involved. It can be emotional of course, but it is worth it. Being a Funeral Celebrant as well as a SM, I can take that journey with you and conduct your funeral for you when the time comes knowing you have someone that knows you and can speak from, not only experience, but the heart.

Memory boxes, scrap books, recipe collections and audio recordings are just a few of the wonderful ways you can leave your legacy. Doing them as a family, with children, or with those you love can be a type of healing, a support through the early grief that sets in. The memories created in doing these things alone will be precious. Soul Midwives can help everyone involved, even if only for ideas.

Another part of our role maybe to attend appointments as an impartial, yet loving, support. We can just 'be present' so you feel less alone. We can also help research, investigate options, look for help and seek advice. There is a huge amount of support out there for those who maybe poorly, it's just a case of knowing where to look.

Some Soul Midwives have other tools, complimentary or alternative therapies, or extra skills they can offer dying souls. Sound, Oils, Aromas, Crystals and Gentle Touch are all some of the things we have in our TOOLKITS and that we can offer those we work with. All of these old ancient therapies bring a sense of calm, can reduce heart rates, ease fear, and holistically support someone's journey through death. All senses can become heightened when we die, and all of these ways have been proved to work for centuries by our ancestors.



We can hold sacred space at the bedside. We can create a calm, loving and safe space for the soul's journey ahead. Families may want to do this themselves and we can support loved ones to do this to help fulfil a person's wishes. Some people want music, pictures, a favourite blanket, or trinket near them, all of these personal touches can help create a loving vigil. This is an example of one of the benefits of having tough conversations early on.



picture © Katie Costello, Soul Midwife

Some Soul Midwives, like myself, have also taken on the role of death educators in our local communities. Part of my business and way of working, is to freely share information and talk openly and honestly about all aspects of death and dying. I do this via my website and social media channels. We don't know what we don't know, and I hope to change that for some. I also offer TLC - Tender Loving Care - end of life care workshops. These sessions offer skills and education about the dying process and how to 'be' and what to 'do' with the dying in different ways to support them. It can empower loved ones, support staff in Care homes and educate those in businesses or health care about what happens when someone is dying and ways to lovingly support them. There are insights into the stages of dying and what a person, and their soul may go through. These training days are offered as groups in the community, to families and individuals and as training days/modules to Homes, Hospices and Hospitals.

I am also a Funeral celebrant. This seemed the perfect way to compliment my journey and be able to support people before, during and after death. To be able to speak about someone I had the privileged to support and get to know makes such a difference to the families I support. Also, to have a celebrant who understands death, who specifically works in this field and who truly gets it, is so powerful and comforting. All of this is more than a job to me, it's who I am.

Every day is a school day and every day we learn and grow in some way.

I sincerely hope this has made that happen for you today.



Katie Costello is a Soul Midwife and Funeral Celebrant. A Soul Midwife is a holistic, non-denominational end-of-life companion.

A mentor and trainer of end-of-life care workshops, Katie also works at her local hospice and has been immersed in palliative care for the last 10 years. Katie encourages, promotes, and empowers open and honest conversations; she believes in choice, autonomy, and love, before during and after death.

Katie is a crystal and cake loving Mum. The Spanish sun, the sea, lattes, and cheese sandwiches feed her soul and her voice is her superpower.

Katie is also an Angelic reiki practitioner and holds multiple qualifications in end-of-life and dementia care, grief, bereavement, management, and advanced communication skills to name a few.

WEBCASTING APP FOR FUNERAL HOMES

WORKS IN CHURCHES, CEMETERIES, AND OTHER LOCATIONS



**LEARN MORE AND
GET 3 FREE SERVICES**

5 MINUTES TO SET UP.

 +44 7588 302446

 contact@eventlive.pro

eventlive



The daughter of a well-known retired Funeral Director has joined the business he set up more than 30 years ago. Linsie Kemp is now working as a Funeral Arranger at JH Way Funeral Services in Dawlish which was founded by her father John Way back in 1990. This is her first job in funeral services after a varied career where she has previously worked as a teaching assistant and run local taxi company Dawlish Cabs. But she is now, belatedly, carrying on in the family tradition as both her father and grandfather, Hedley, were Funeral Directors. John retired ten years ago, selling the business to Funeral Partners – the country's third largest funeral provider - who have retained the name and the level of service families have come to expect.



Funeral Arranger Linsie Kemp working at JH Way Funeral Service in Dawlish – the company her father set up in 1990

Despite being around the business as a child, Linsie said she was glad to begin working in funerals later in life.

"I don't think I would've been emotionally ready, and I'm not sure I would still be doing it now if I had started as a teenager," she said.

"But now I absolutely love it – it's the best thing I have ever done.

It's such a pleasure to help people with the last thing they'll ever do for their loved one which is to arrange their funeral and see their wishes through to the end. It's an honour and a privilege.

"No two funerals are the same – you might be arranging one funeral in the morning when you're crying your eyes out with a family and arranging a different one in the afternoon when you're all laughing away."

Linsie said she loves working at the branch in Brook Street, Dawlish, where her father used to work, and even answering the phone which was her home number as a child.

"My dad is really proud that there is a Way back at Way's," Linsie said.

"He used to live in the flat above the office and the phone number is the one we used to have. It gives me an amazing feeling when I answer it – I get goosebumps. I feel like I am making a real difference and representing my family every day."

Linsie also paid tribute to the training and support she has received from Funeral Partners.

"It has been great," she added.

"Caz Denning, the Funeral Director, at our sister branch in Teignmouth is unbelievable. If I can be half as good as her, I've done a great job. That branch was launched after my dad retired, and he was so proud to be asked to help open it in 2019, alongside the mayor. It was a lovely touch and he's delighted the family name carries on in both Dawlish and Teignmouth."

For more information about funeral services at JH Way, visit

www.jhway.co.uk

£20,000 JOHN BLENKIRON & SONS COMMUNITY FUND LAUNCHES TO SUPPORT LOCAL GOOD CAUSES

A Funeral Directors which has been proudly helping people for more than 50 years are launching their first ever community fund to offer support for local charities.

The John Blenkiron & Sons Community Fund has £20,000 available for not-for-profit organisations to apply for to assist with their vital work.

Successful applicants will represent causes benefiting people who live within a three-mile radius of John Blenkiron & Sons branches in Richmond, Barnard Castle, and their new branch in Catterick which is set to open in April.

This is the second Funeral Partners brand to launch their own community fund with James Brown & Sons Funeral Directors in Belfast pledging £20,000 to charities in and around the city last year, with another £25,000 set to be granted in 2023.

James Blenkiron is Business Principal at the business his father John founded in 1968.

Speaking about the fund, he said: *"It is a great honour that, with the support of Funeral Partners, we can help organisations in the communities we are so proud to serve. Not just here, but across the country, people need support, and we urge local charities and other good causes to come forward to apply for grants.*

The cost-of-living crisis has also impacted on people's ability to donate to charities so hopefully we can make a difference and bridge that gap. It's so important Funeral Directors are part of the community, and hopefully this will strengthen our ties even further. No matter how large or small you are, we would love to hear from you so we can connect and engage with local projects."

Senior Funeral Director Rebekah Taylor added: *"I am excited see the applications we receive and just how many people we can help. We are regularly asked by our local community for support, and this is a perfect way for us to do so. Over the last few years, we have put so much time and energy into community work, so to be given the opportunity to help more with this dedicated £20,000 fund is so exciting. It's important for everyone to see that, as Funeral Directors, we are not just here for them at a time of bereavement, but we are also here day to day, to be a part of something exciting and build and maintain relationships within our community."*

Grants will be available to projects which align with one or more of the fund categories which are health, education, employment opportunities and poverty or social deprivation. Each applicant can ask for a grant between £300 and £1,500, with each entry judged by a panel from John Blenkiron & Sons.

The window for applications is open until May 5. A second window for applications will open later this year on August 1.



Funeral Director Rebekah Taylor, Business Principal James Blenkiron and Office Manager Jackie Donaldson launching the John Blenkiron & Sons Community Fund

**For full terms and conditions, and details about how to
make an application visit**

www.blenkiron.co.uk/community-fund

Thinking of selling your business?

Do more of the things you love.
What would you do?



We are the third largest Funeral Service Provider in the UK with over 230 branches, 130 family businesses.
Be part of our story.

Why choose Funeral Partners?

- We respect and maintain your heritage and reputation
- Protect, retain and train employees
- Provide administration, regulatory and operational support
- Over 230 branches, 130 family businesses
- Financial investment and development of the business
- Flexible deal structures available that suit your needs
- Third largest Funeral Service Provider in the UK

To get a free, quick estimated valuation of what your business could be worth. Scan to go to our online valuation tool



funeralpartners.co.uk/value

For an informal, confidential conversation about selling your business now or in the future, contact:



Sam Kershaw
Chief Executive Officer
07834 531822
sam.kershaw@funeralpartners.co.uk



Steve Wilkinson
Mergers & Acquisitions Director
07528 970531
steve.wilkinson@funeralpartners.co.uk

Funeral Partners FUNERAL FIRM COMPLETES FIVE-YEAR £50,000 PLEDGE FOR BELOVED HOSPICE



Steve Coyle, Director of Pre Need at Funeral Partners, presents a cheque to Thames Hospice

A Berkshire funeral business has completed an amazing fundraising pledge to donate £50,000 over five years to help support people needing end of life care.

E Sargeant & Son Funeral Directors, supported by its sister brands Miles & Daughters Funeral Directors and Richard Lloyd Funeral Services, have now presented their fifth £10,000 cheque to Thames Hospice.

Over the years, team members from the three Funeral Directors have held sponsored events including a climb over the O2 Arena, auctions and lunches, as well as swimming, cycling and hiking challenges on behalf of the hospice which offers inpatient and community palliative and end-of-life care services to people in East Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire.

On top of this fundraising there have also been more than £150,000 of donations from clients who have been supported by the hospice, or their family and friends who have given to the hospice in memory of a loved one via the partnership between the Funeral Directors and online tribute and donation portal MuchLoved. E Sargeant & Son Funeral Directors and the other Berkshire Funeral home brands involved in fundraising, which are all part of the Funeral Partners family of businesses, pledged to donate £10,000 each year from 2018, making a total of £50,000 for the hospice to continue to provide their outstanding care. This consistent level of funding is an even more remarkable achievement given a vast number of sponsored activities had to be called off in 2020 due to the Covid-19 lockdowns.

Jane Symmons, Major Gifts Associate Director at Thames Hospice praised the Funeral Partners teams for their continued support. She said: *“Thank you to everyone at E Sargeant & Son Funeral Directors and Funeral Partners for your wonderful support over the past five years. The funds raised for our hospice will help us continue to provide compassionate care and support to local people in our community.”*

Steve Coyle, Director of Pre-Need at Funeral Partners said: *“I’d like to thank everyone who has donated, organised an event or completed a personal challenge to raise money for this amazing cause over the last five years. It has been an honour to partner with Thames Hospice and we are proud we have delivered the £50,000 promised which will allow them to continue with their incredible work. I know it has been a challenging time for charities over the last two to three years, so I am delighted we have been able to help with our donation pledge, which so many local families have benefited from.”*

Going forward, Funeral Partners homes in the Berkshire area will continue to support Thames Hospice initiatives such as their annual Light up a Life service at the end of the year and carry on with fundraising and participation in charity events.

To find out more about how to support with fundraising for Thames Hospice visit <https://www.thameshospice.org.uk/get-involved/fundraise-for-us/> and to keep up-to-date with community activity and challenges by E Sargeant & Son Funeral Directors visit <https://www.esargeant.co.uk/news/>

Brand New Look.

Same Company Values.

Introducing www.jcatkinson.co.uk



tel: 0191 415 1516 email: info@jcatkinson.co.uk web: www.jcatkinson.co.uk



Prospect Hospice

together making every day count



Prospect Hospice is a local adult hospice and delivers with no charge to patients and their families, care, comfort and confidence, around the clock, every day of the year, to a community of 300,000 people across Swindon, Marlborough and north east Wiltshire. The services costs £7.5million to deliver and being funded only 25% from statutory sources Prospect Hospice relies on fundraising events & activities, the generous donations of the community and local business support, to help raise the income to deliver their care.

Sheryl Crouch, head of income at the hospice said: "We are thrilled to have been nominated by Mead Family Funerals as their chosen charity to support throughout the term that Jem Mead will be President for the British Institute of Funeral Directors. What an honour for us to be the beneficiary of any fundraising while Jem is serving, we are so very proud and humbled to have been chosen."

REMEMBER SOMEONE SPECIAL WITH PROSPECT HOSPICE'S '*REMEMBER ME*' ROSES

Finding a special way to mark the life of someone we love is often difficult and can also feel lonely but one local charity is offering the community the opportunity to come together and remember those who are no longer with us with a new temporary art installation never seen in the area before.

Prospect Hospice will be hosting its 'Remember Me' roses art installation in their gardens in September to celebrate the lives and honour the memory of loved ones who have died.



The charity is inviting anyone in the community who would like to be involved to dedicate a beautiful rose, handcrafted from recycled metal, in memory of someone they would like to honour in return for a donation to the hospice. Each limited edition rose, available in a selection of four colours will bear the name of the person being remembered and will be displayed in the hospice's gardens at the charity's garden fete on Saturday 9 September and will remain on display throughout the month before it can be collected and displayed in a place of your own choice.

The 'Remember Me' roses are a perfect way to hold dear the memory of someone special and help support the work of Prospect Hospice at the same time. All funds raised through this campaign will go towards providing specialist end of life care for those who need it most.

On Saturday 9 September, during the hospice's annual garden fete, the hospice's first touching and impressive art display will be revealed. Supporters are welcome to visit on the day of the fete and anytime following it to admire the beautiful roses at their leisure. After the display draws to a close at the end of September, you will have the opportunity to collect your rose as a keepsake to cherish at home.

For more information about the 'Remember Me' roses, which has kindly been supported by Arval UK, or to dedicate a rose, visit:

www.prospect-hospice.net/fundraising-support-us/remember-me-roses/





Life Ledger

The free, easy-to-use service that makes notifying companies of a death simpler, faster and less stressful.

www.lifeledger.com



- Banks
- Broadband & TV
- Building Societies
- Credit Cards
- Energy Suppliers
- TV Licensing
- Mobile Phone Companies
- Gas Suppliers
- Home Insurance
- Store Cards
- Pension Providers
- Car insurance
- Water Suppliers
- Streaming Services
- Loyalty Schemes
- Social Media Accounts
- Subscriptions
- Telephone Companies
- Pet Insurance

PLUS MORE

HOW LIFE LEDGER WORKS

REGISTER

Create an account and add details of the deceased

CHOOSE

Select the companies you want to notify, add account details

SEND

Leave the rest to us...

IS LIFE LEDGER SAFE?

With bank-level security, Life Ledger is Cyber Essentials certified, is undergoing ISO27001 certification and undergoes regular security and penetration testing to ensure your information is safe.



PLANT A TREE FOR EVERY DEATH REGISTERED

Life Ledger have partnered with global environmental charity One Tree Planted and are proud to play a small part in helping them restore vital habitats across the planet. 2020 saw them plant 15 million trees.

CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III

by Lucie Kibbey, Deputy Editor

On Saturday 6th May 2023, as a family we gathered to watch a momentous and historic moment, the crowning of our new King – Charles III. It doesn't seem all that long ago that I was writing up an article around our late Queen's funeral.

My Daughter was very excited, we had matching dresses and had decorated the house, as the weather was far from ideal for a street party.

We all got a comfortable seat and sat mesmerised by the beautiful precession, that began at 10:20 AM, as the King made his way from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey, with his beautiful Queen Consort, in the Diamond Jubilee State Coach.

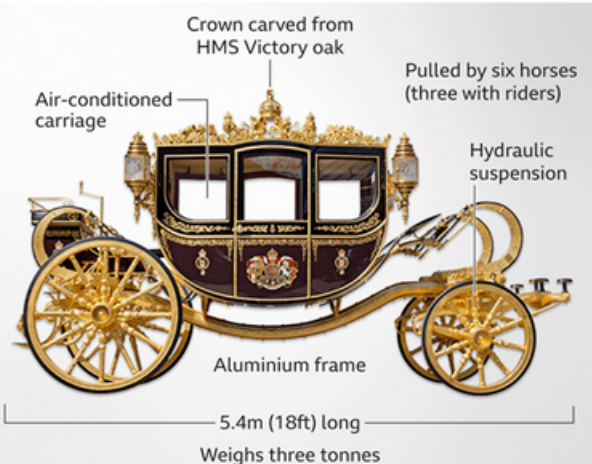


My son was interested in the amazing troops lining the procession route and appearing alongside the King. Army, Navy, Marines, RAF, and Royal British Legion just some of those taking part. With a fresh pot of tea and a cupcake in hand, we began to get excited as they arrived at the Abbey.



Diamond Jubilee State Coach

Built in 2012 in Australia to mark 60 years of Queen Elizabeth II's reign



Royal Collection Trust / His Majesty King Charles III 2023

More than 2,000 people from 203 countries were in Westminster Abbey to witness the arrival of King Charles, who was wearing a red velvet robe of state. The ceremony began at 11:00 AM, the music selected by the King himself, with 12 newly commissioned pieces, including one by Andrew Lloyd Webber, and Greek Orthodox music in memory of the King's father, Prince Philip.

The King's grandson, Prince George, was among the pages, alongside Camilla's grandchildren, Lola, Eliza, Gus, Louis, and Freddy. Which was in keeping of the day – not just a celebration of a new reign, but of family. Those of us gathered at home with ours, and the Royal Family coming together for a celebration of their own.

There were several stages to the service, which lasted a little under two hours, with female clergy and religious leaders from other faiths playing an active part for the first time.

Stage One: The Recognition

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby made the first declaration and the congregation shouted, "God Save the King!" and trumpets sounded after each recognition.

Stage Two: The Oath

The Archbishop of Canterbury acknowledged the multiple faiths observed in the UK by saying the Church of England would "seek to foster an environment in which people of all faiths may live freely" and then administered the Coronation Oath - a legal requirement.

Stage Three: The Anointing

The King's ceremonial robe was removed, and he sat in the Coronation Chair to be anointed, emphasising the spiritual status of the sovereign who is also the head of the Church of England.

Stage Four: The Investiture

Literally the crowning moment - and the only time King Charles will wear St Edward's Crown in his life.

Stage Five: The Enthronement

The King then moved to his throne where, traditionally, a succession of royals and peers would have paid homage - but the Prince of Wales was the only person to do so this time.



Queen Mary's Crown

Was reset and resized for Queen Camilla

Made in 1911



Three Cullinan diamonds (III, IV and V) cut from the world's largest diamond

Four of eight detachable arches were removed

Silver crown covered in 2,200 diamonds
Weighs 590g (1.3lb)

PA

After the homage, Queen Camilla was also crowned and enthroned - although she did not have to take an oath.

She was crowned with Queen Mary's Crown - originally made for Queen Mary's coronation alongside George V - but it had been modified to remove some of the arches and reset with the Cullinan III, IV and V diamonds.

In the final part of the service the King and Queen took Holy Communion - the principal act of worship of the Christian church.

They then left their thrones and entered St Edward's Chapel behind the high altar - there Charles removed St Edward's Crown and put on the Imperial State Crown before joining the procession out of the abbey as the national anthem was played.

At 1:00 PM with plates filled with party food and the wine finally open, The King and Queen returned to Buckingham Palace along the reverse of the route by which they came, this time travelling in the 260-year-old Gold State Coach that has been used in every coronation since William IV's.

A poignant moment for me personally was seeing Princess Anne, riding on horseback behind her brother. A proud moment for her, I'm sure.

Nearly 4,000 members of the UK's armed forces took part in what the Ministry of Defence has called the largest military ceremonial operation of its kind for a generation.

They were joined by representatives from 39 Commonwealth countries and the British Overseas Territories. Most marched ahead of the King along the 1.42-mile route and, as the front of the procession reached the palace, the back was still at Downing Street.

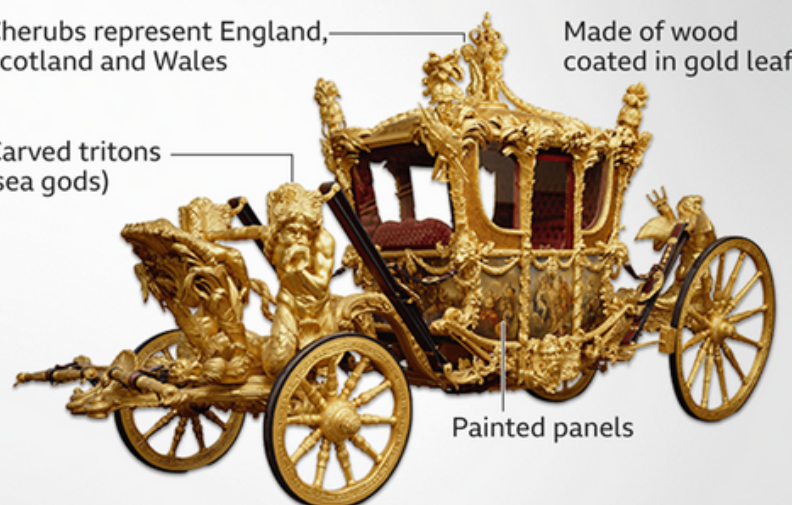
Gold State Coach

Built in 1762 and used at every coronation since 1831

Cherubs represent England, Scotland and Wales

Made of wood coated in gold leaf

Carved tritons (sea gods)



Painted panels

7m (23ft) long

Weighs four tonnes

Royal Collection Trust / His Majesty King Charles III 2023



It has become customary since the coronation of Edward VII in 1902 for the new monarch to greet the crowds in The Mall from the Buckingham Palace balcony - King Charles and Queen Camilla continued the tradition and appeared shortly before 14:30 with the royals who had taken part in the procession.



The day ended with a fly-past, although unsuitable weather conditions meant some planes could not take part and it was limited to helicopters and the Red Arrows display team.



Motorcycle Funerals

For a dignified final journey
Serving Families nationwide:
England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales.
For information and arrangements
Call us: 01530 274888

Boom Trike



Suzuki Hayabusa



Harley Davidson



Triumph Thunderbird

Triumph Speed Triple

Triumph Bonneville



Managing Director, Marian Sinclair: Serving families since 2002

HOW TO GET STARTED ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Eímer Duffy, FIT Social Média



Back from the amazing Educational Weekend of the British Institute of Funeral Directors. I wish to thank the Institute for inviting me. And a big thank you to my fab Sponsor, Marian Sinclair of Motorcycle Funerals.

The weekend was held on 12-14 May 2023 in Anglia Ruskin University. I was exhibiting along with some interesting trade suppliers. It was great to meet so many Funeral Directors, Embalmers and Trade professionals over the weekend. Then on Sunday morning I had the privilege of giving a presentation. The topic was "How Social Media Can Help Grow Your Funeral Business".

At the end of the presentation, I received an interesting question. It was "How do you get started on social media?" In response, I emphasised the importance of understanding your audience. So I thought I would like to expand on this. And provide you with a few things to kick-start your social media journey.

Know Your Audience:

As a Funeral Director or Embalmer, you serve a unique and sensitive community.

It is crucial to approach social media with empathy, respect and understanding. First you need to know who your audience is. For eg: are they Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y (Millennials) and/or Gen Z?

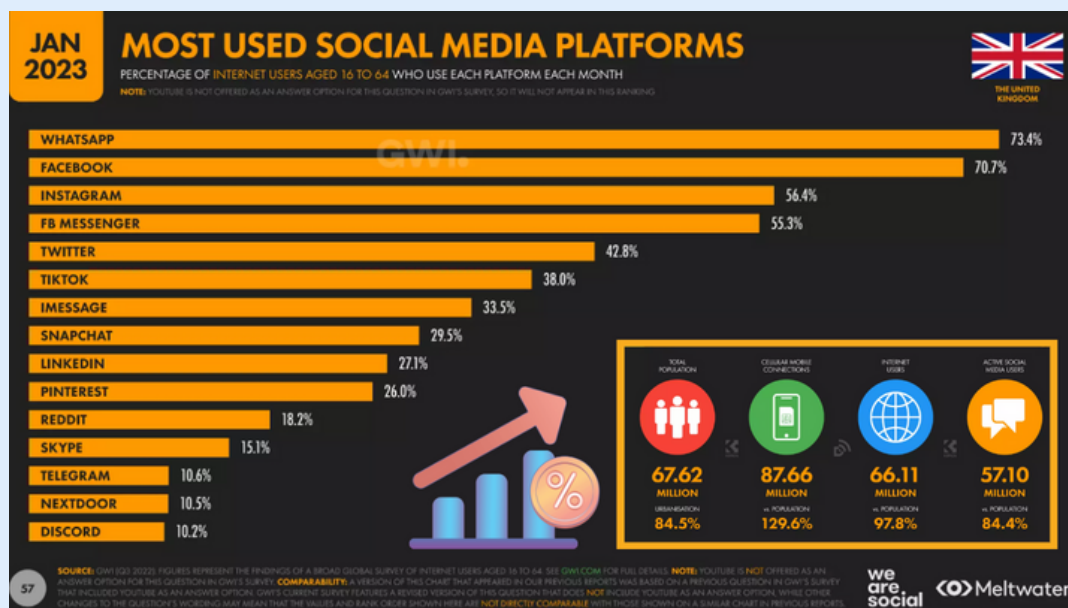
From there you can tailor your online presence to meet their needs and preferences. Here are some steps to get started:



- **Define Your Target Audience:** Consider factors such as age, cultural background, and location. Identifying your target audience helps you craft relevant content. And from there you can engage with them a lot easier. The Generations: Baby Boomers and Gen X are who you wish to attract as potential families. Gen Y and Gen Z are your future staff.
- **Research and Listen:** Observe their social media behaviour and preferences. Understand their challenges, interests and expectations. This research will enable you to align your content strategy with their needs. And create meaningful connections.

Choosing The Social Media Platforms They Are On:

Now that you have a clear understanding of your audience, it's time for your social media platforms. Here are a few popular platforms to consider:



- **WhatsApp:** This is the most popular platform in the UK and all generations are using it. This should be one of your key communication tools. It gives you a business profile and is more professional looking. This is especially important, as you can connect it to your Facebook business page.
- **Facebook:** With its broad user base and diverse age groups. It currently provides a good platform to connect with Baby Boomers. As well as Gen X and Gen Y. And build your community going forward. Share informative content, create event pages and foster engagement through meaningful discussions.
- **Instagram:** As a visual-oriented platform. It allows you to showcase your craftsmanship, share behind-the-scenes glimpses. Plus honour the lives you serve. Use hashtags relevant to your industry is key. And engage with the community through meaningful storytelling. Gen X, Gen Y and some Gen Z are active.
- **LinkedIn:** Think of it as your business card. For funeral directors and embalmers looking to expand their professional network. Establish industry credibility and more. To share educational content, connect with colleagues, and engage in industry-related discussions. Some Baby Boomers, a major platform for Gen X and Gen Y.

There are more platforms out there, but start with these. Setting them up is easy to do. The main thing is you need to ensure they are set up well and you are active on them. This means more than posting on them. They are all communication channels too with private messaging.

Creating Engaging Content To Suit Your Audience:

Now that you've chosen your social media platforms, it's time to develop the right content. It has to resonate with your audience. Remember, your goal is to inform, support and build trust. Here are some content ideas to consider:

- **Educational Content:** Share informative articles, blog posts, or videos. These should address common questions, dispel myths, or offer guidance. Covering topics such as funeral planning, grief support and more.
- **Behind-the-Scenes Stories:** Offer an inside look into your daily work routine. Highlight the care and compassion that goes into your profession. This helps humanise your brand and showcases your dedication.



- **Reviews and Stories:** With permission from families, share heart-warming feedback on their experience. Also stories that celebrate lives you have served. This fosters a sense of community and reassures potential families of your expertise.

It's essential to move away from posting death notices. Think of your social channels like magazines. This will help continue to engage your followers and stay top of mind.

The Generation Game

✓ Stay in touch
✓ Do research
✓ Interact with

Eg: Family/friends, Communities, Businesses etc.... on:

Post War & Baby Boomers (ages 58 upwards)
Generation X (ages 41-57)
Generation Y: Millennials (ages 25-40)
Generation Z: "Screenagers" (ages 13-24)

SURVEY: <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/guides/social-media-use-by-generation/>

Engaging With Your Audience:

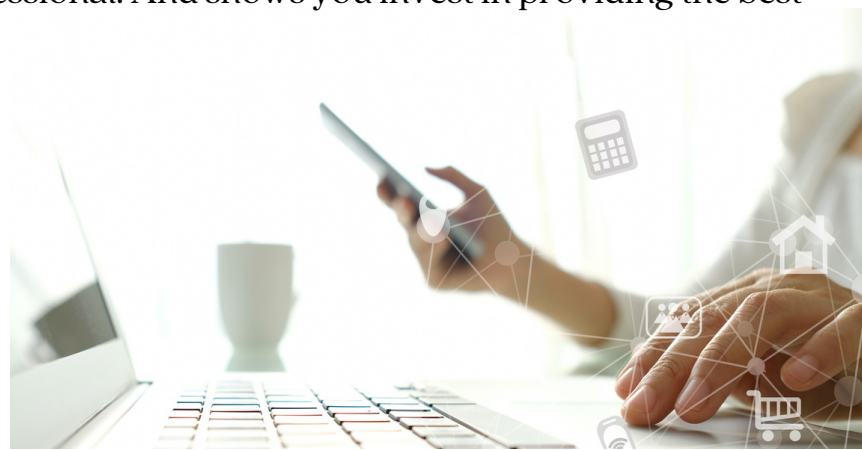
It's essential to build meaningful connections on social media. And crucial to engage with your audience. People buy from people they know, like and trust. Here are some ways to do so:

- **Respond to Comments and Messages:** Check your social media accounts for comments. As well as direct messages and enquiries in your messaging apps. Respond as soon as you can. So that it demonstrates your commitment to customer service online as much as in person.
- **Take part in Industry Conversations:** Join funeral-related groups or communities. This can be on Facebook and LinkedIn. Share insights, offer support, and contribute to discussions. You will establish your expertise. And build relationships with industry professionals and potential clients.



- **Host Q&A Sessions:** Consider hosting live Q&A sessions on your chosen social media platforms. This provides an opportunity for your audience to ask questions. And from there seek guidance, and gain valuable insights from you. Engaging in real-time conversations enhances the personal connection. And this positions you as a trusted resource.

- **Share User-Generated Content:** Encourage your followers to share their experiences of your services. This gives a sense of community. And also provides authentic testimonials that can resonate with potential clients. Repost and acknowledge user-generated content to show appreciation for their contributions.
- **Check Industry Trends and News:** Stay up-to-date with the latest information on social. Share relevant updates with your audience, offering your perspective and insights. This positions you as a knowledgeable professional. And shows you invest in providing the best possible service.



In Conclusion:

Now is the time to embrace the power of social media. Leverage it to expand your reach. Connect with families and build your funeral businesses. Getting started can sound scary. Begin with knowing who your audience is. Be on the right platforms for each generation. Content is king so ensure it is relevant and engaging. And engagement is queen; this is where you build your know, like and trust factors.

Thank you again to the Institute for the opportunity to present and to Motorcycle Funerals for sponsoring me.

If you have any further questions or need help in navigating the world of social media, please get in touch. I am delighted to say I have revamped my website and it now has lots more info to view on www.fitsocialmedia.ie. So please do explore it and let's connect on social media.

Thank you for reading, I hope you found this helpful.

~Eímer

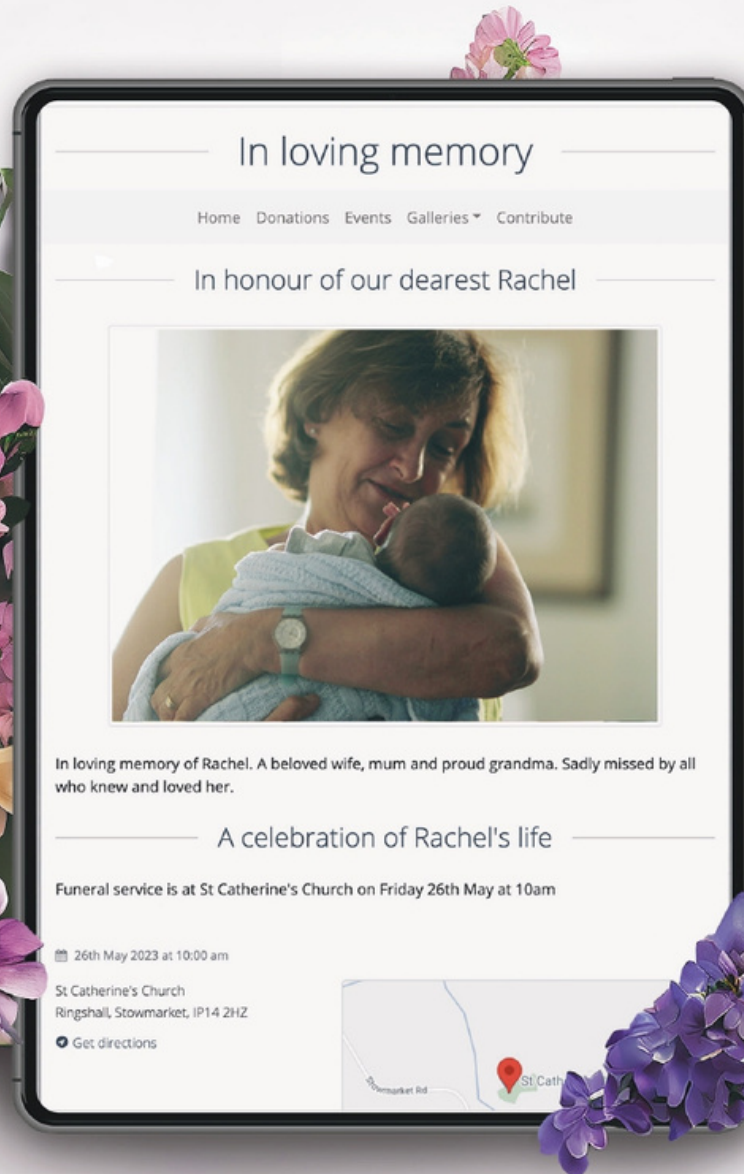
Eimer Duffy is a Social Media/Digital Marketing Consultant and Trainer for the Funeral Industry. Assisting Funeral professionals to gain a better online presence and build communities and trust online. Live online interactive sessions for all knowledge levels with the benefit of being held at a time to suit your diary via Zoom.

Take Our Social Media Survey By Scanning The QR Code



much loved

THE ONLINE TRIBUTE CHARITY



Your place to share precious memories

The award-winning online funeral notice, donations and tribute service from MuchLoved. In partnership with over 500 funeral directors, together we have raised over £130 million for UK charities and good causes.



SEARCH 4 LOCAL



Member Number: 3058

Could your business do with a new website? Do you need a hand with digital advertising?

Your online presence has a big impact on how potential customers perceive your business. As specialists in website design and hosting for funeral directors and suppliers to the industry, we provide a bespoke design service and can help your business attract new customers online. We offer free consultations and expert advice on website design, online advertising, social media and more. To find out how we can help you improve your online presence, call now for a free quote on 01392 409159.



Bespoke solutions for the funeral profession.

-  Price List Manager
-  Funeral Pricing Calculator
-  Obituary Manager



Kindred Association Vacancy: *Quality Assurance Assessor*

Hours: As and when required

(The peak times are March to September. Inspection dates and times to suit both the assessor and funeral director/associate member).

Due to changes in the funeral profession, SAIF is looking to expand their Quality Assurance Assessors.

They are looking for enthusiastic and professional people who share SAIF's commitment in supporting and benchmarking the profession independently. The ideal applicant will have either worked in the funeral profession or have extensive knowledge of the industry to carry out assessments of funeral directors and those companies who handle/care for the deceased.

The assessor will be responsible for arranging their own schedules, for which administration support will be given from the SAIF business centre. The successful applicants will be proactive and work with the current team of assessors to provide an efficient and effective assessment that meaningfully involves and promotes positive outcomes through a supportive process and sign posting of good practice for the clients. As this role is working remotely and across different counties the applicant will be require to travel and have access to email.

If you have:

- **Extensive experience and/or knowledge of working within the funeral profession**
- **Excellent written and verbal communication skills**
- **Able to work on your own initiative**
- **Proficient in using technology**

Then SAIF would like to hear from you.

Please forward on no more that 2 A4 sides for your application ensuring it covers your experience and reasons for application in strictest confidence to claire@saif.org.uk by 30 August 2023.

SAIF values equality and diversity and recognises the benefits this brings and therefor welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

If you have any questions, then please contact Claire Day at the SAIF Business Centre on 01279 726777 or 0345 230 6777 or by email to claire@saif.org.uk





TRIBUTES

COFFINS | URNS | KEEPSAKES | ENGRAVING

Traditional English Willow Coffin

Handwoven in
Somerset England

FFMA
tested and certified

Suitable for
burial or cremation



Please contact us on:

 0845 388 8742

 info@tributes.ltd.uk

 www.tributes.ltd.uk



FSA

Funeral Suppliers' Association
est. 1939





FSA

Funeral Suppliers' Association

est. 1939

**SUPPORT
OUR MEMBERS.**

VISIT:

funeralsuppliers.uk/members/

Join our *W* 75th Celebration

YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR
TOUR OF BRITAIN



Book now
for a test drive



Available from 1st June 2023
01942 259 860

www.wilcox.uk