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JOURNAL



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A photograph of a white laptop on a light-colored wooden desk. The laptop screen displays the text 'In This Issue' in a large, dark red serif font. To the left of the laptop is a black pencil holder containing several pencils. To the right is a black mug. The background is a solid light pink color.

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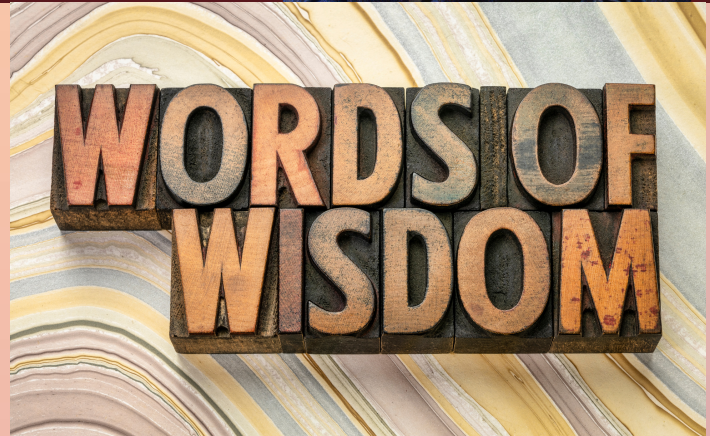
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From The Desk Of The National President Jeremy Mead, Dip. FS, LMBIFD



Hello everyone, I trust that you are all in fine form?

Well, yet another month has passed and our erstwhile editor is nagging me again for some words of wisdom, and that is where it all goes wrong. I am a Funeral Director who, like the most of you reading this, has the best job in the world, and loves what he does, how would I have any words of wisdom!



I just happened to have been asked by the Board of Directors if I would like to assist the Institute further by being appointed as 1st Vice President, and as one of less than 100 members of the Profession to hold a Diploma in Funeral Services, I do feel privileged to be able to represent you all as your National President on various occasions.

Which brings me to my next point, I left school aged just 14 years without any formal qualifications, and have worked ever since, so when the chance, and it was by chance, arose to study for my Cert. F.S. & Dip. F.S. at the tender age of 59 I grabbed that chance with both hands. Yes, it was hard work but it was worth it, without doubt it was. Surely if one wishes to be the best at something, a little hard work will be needed, and I now know that there is very little left for me to learn academically to become a better FD, notwithstanding, as I'm sure you will all agree, every day is a school day in this job, we never stop learning.



I have to admit that when I was asked if I would train as a tutor I did consider it, but felt there was more to offer as an examiner. A job that gives me tremendous pleasure and pride knowing that little 'ole me can help in some small way to shaping the future careers of some of the finest Funeral Director's in this country. It is always interesting to see how our students react they knock on that door for their Arrangement Exam and find me sat there!—one young lass, who shall remain nameless, exclaimed “oh, thank God it's you”.... I didn't quite know which way to take that.

For any of us to continue to serve the families that we are asked to serve, we are going to need to be educated - Fact, and I'm not talking about GCSE's and mainstream education, I am talking about Funeral specific education. If we don't start showing the world that we as a profession can educate ourselves and our staff members, then sooner or later the Government will do this for us, and I do not believe this will be in the form of online education, I think the minimum standard it will need to be is University Accredited face to face learning.

My talks about this with the Association and the Society are still ongoing and I am pleased to report that we are all still talking the same language.

We can all teach each other the day to day practicalities of how to be a better FD and rightly so, but when it comes to proving this to the outside world we are going to need something a little more tangible than "Old Bert showed me how to do this way"

So, to teach ourselves to be the best we need the best teachers – and this is where you ALL come in, every single one of our Dip F.S. holders is qualified to start to become a teacher/tutor for not only themselves, but also for the Institute. You all have youth on your side, you all have the knowledge, you all have the required skills, and I'm fairly certain you could all do with the extra income! So please give it some thought, if not for yourselves then for the good of us all.

Our Education Team, ably led by Andy Floyd, have been working away at how you can become a qualified tutor by choosing the correct training methods, and it is now easier than ever before. To prove this fact, if you were to apply to Andy now, by September next year YOU could be teaching and adding to your income! If this has intrigued you in any way shape or form, then please speak to me or Andy and we can provide more information for you.

I am really looking forward to our Awards Presentation at Conference this year, as this has been one of the main items that I have focused on during this year, it will be especially poignant for me to present the awards, as I've examined most of the students..... No I need to rephrase that, I've assisted with their examinations, and to quote that famous saying, "You've all done really well".

Talking of Conference, we are both really pleased to announce that two months prior we are **fully booked!** We have at least 20 fully booked stands for the Trade Show which is combined with our friends at the FSA, a courtyard full of vehicles to show off, Jimmy the Horse will be taking you all for a ride up the drive in his carriage, oh, and Karen & I have a little surprise for you ALL on the Friday night. We both look forward to seeing you all there for what promises to be an amazing weekend, for which we also both thank our conference organisers David & Clare Gresty.



Please give some thought to what I have said above, stay safe and keep looking after your families.

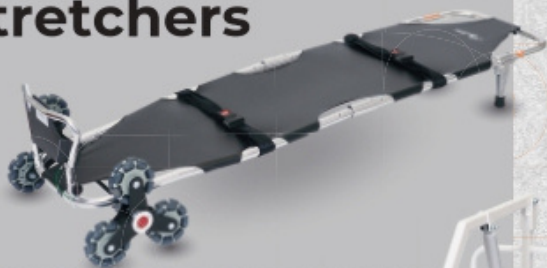
Take care, Jem.

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From The Desk Of The Editor

Hayley Bell, Dip. FD, LMBIFD



Dear Readers, Welcome to Issue Eight! The months seem to be whizzing by at great speed!

I am pleased to provide my monthly round-up of the latest news and events from 'Journal HQ.'

As Chair of Examinations, I had the opportunity to meet face-to-face with Andrew Floyd, Chair of Education, to finalise the last of the paperwork for our recently revalidated Diploma in Funeral Service by Greenwich University. It was a productive meeting, and I am pleased to say everything is now in place, and we hope to hold an education meeting to provide updates to everyone.

Looking After Ourselves So We Can Look After Others

On a more personal note, I recently helped a close friend make funeral arrangements. It was a difficult and emotional time, but I felt honoured to be able to support them during their time of grief. It made me reflect on the challenges we, as funeral directors, face when dealing with personal arrangements. Maintaining a professional balance when emotions are running high can be challenging, but it is crucial for the well-being of everyone involved. As funeral directors, we need a good support network to help us cope with our job's stress and emotional toll. A support network can include colleagues, friends, family, or even a therapist. We need to take care of our mental health to continue to provide the best possible service to our clients during their time of need. If you ever need a friendly ear, please reach out to me.



Looking Ahead To Exciting Events

Looking ahead, I am excited for Jem and Karen's conference in October. The conference promises to be an incredible weekend event, and I am particularly excited about the trade fair in association with our friends at the FSA. This will be an excellent opportunity for us to network and engage with like-minded professionals.

Finally, want to take this opportunity to thank our advertisers, contributors and, of course, my Deputy Editor, Lucie, for their continued support of the Journal. Your contributions are greatly appreciated, and they help us to continue providing our readers with high-quality content.

Until next time, take care.

Hayley

UNDERSTANDING THE AFTERLIFE OF YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Hayley Bell, Editor of The Journal

Social media has become an integral part of our daily lives, allowing us to connect with friends, share our thoughts and experiences, and document our lives. But have you ever stopped to think about what will happen to your social media accounts when you die? I hadn't given it a moment's thought until a friend of mine, both in the real world and on Facebook, died last year; their family (not being tech-savvy) has not removed or memorialised the page. I found it disconcerting when I received a notification to write a Happy Birthday message on their 'wall', yet I can't seem bring myself to unfriend them.

Social media has become so deeply entrenched in our lives that, emotionally, it can be difficult for families to let go of that link to the person who has passed away. Our online profiles have become an extension of our lives, like a journal of our everyday thoughts and interactions. For some grieving relatives, closing that digital chapter can feel akin to burning a cherished diary or discarding precious photographs.

THE EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT TO ONLINE PROFILES

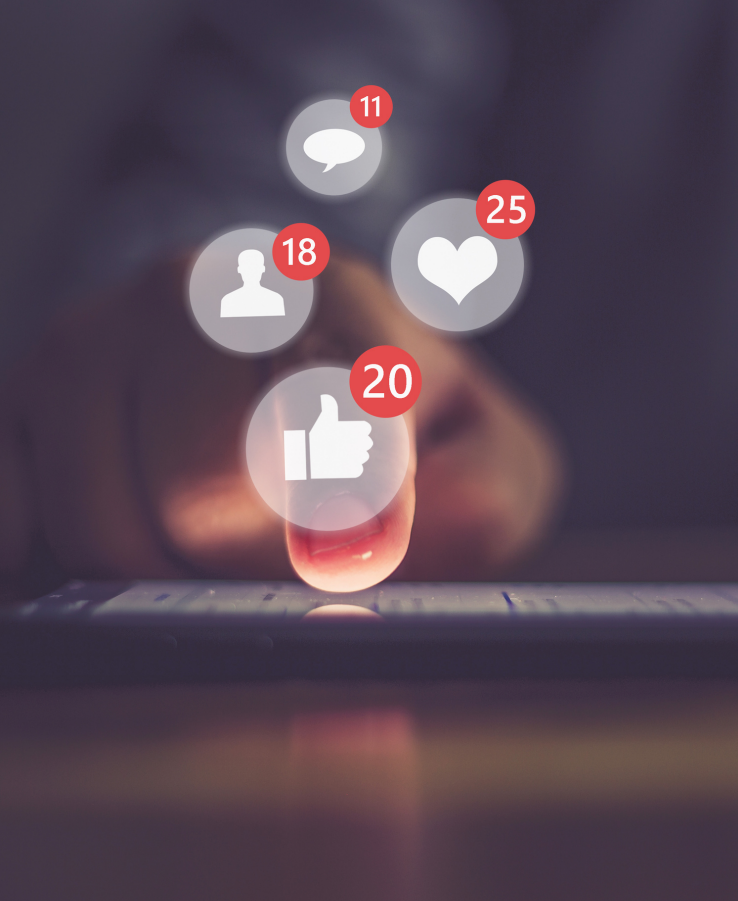
When we lose someone we love, we naturally seek ways to hold onto their memory. In the past, we might have kept physical mementoes like letters, photographs, or personal belongings. But in the digital age, where our lives are increasingly intertwined with social media, our online profiles have become a new form of remembrance. They serve as a virtual monument, a place where friends and family can gather to remember, share stories, and find solace in their grief. The decision to keep a deceased loved one's social media accounts active is often driven by this need for connection and the desire to preserve their digital presence.

Furthermore, social media platforms have introduced features specifically designed to honour the memory of deceased users. Facebook, for example, offers a "Memorialised Account" option, which allows friends and family to turn the profile into a memorial page.

This ensures that the account remains visible, but with certain restrictions to protect the privacy of the deceased. Friends can still leave messages, share memories, and post photos, creating a space for ongoing remembrance and mourning.

However, the decision to keep an account active or memorialise it is not without its challenges. While it provides a sense of comfort and connection for some, it can also be a source of pain and emotional distress for others. Seeing posts or receiving notifications from a deceased loved one can be a constant reminder of the loss, making it difficult to move forward and find closure. Each individual and family must navigate this complex terrain and make a decision that feels right for them.





THE LEGAL AND PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Aside from the emotional aspect, there are also legal and practical considerations surrounding the fate of social media accounts after death. The laws and policies regarding digital assets and accounts vary across jurisdictions, adding a layer of complexity to an already sensitive issue.

One of the challenges is gaining access to the deceased person's account. Social media platforms have implemented security measures to protect users' privacy, and this extends to their accounts after death. Facebook, for instance, requires proof of death, such as a death certificate, before granting access to the account to a designated person. This can be a cumbersome process, especially when navigating the grief and administrative tasks that come with losing someone.

Moreover, it's crucial to consider the potential for identity theft or misuse of the deceased person's account. Keeping an account active without proper safeguards can expose personal information, allowing hackers or malicious individuals to exploit the profile for fraudulent activities. This highlights the importance of having clear guidelines in place and taking steps to protect the digital legacy of the deceased.

It's worth noting that some individuals take proactive steps to address these concerns while they are still alive. They may leave instructions regarding the fate of their social media accounts in their wills or designate a trusted person as their "digital executor" to manage their online presence after their passing. These measures can provide peace of mind and clarity for both the deceased and their loved ones.

THE FUTURE OF OUR DIGITAL LEGACY

As our lives become increasingly intertwined with social media, the question of what happens to our online presence after death becomes more pressing. Social media platforms are beginning to recognise the importance of addressing this issue and have started to develop policies and features to accommodate the needs of grieving families and friends.

Looking ahead, it is likely that we will see further advancements in this area. Perhaps we will have more control over our digital legacy, with the ability to customise what happens to our accounts and data after we pass away. It's also possible that new platforms or services will emerge, specifically designed for memorialising and preserving the online presence of the deceased. The future of our digital legacy is still uncertain, but it is clear that the conversation surrounding this topic is only just beginning.

The question of what happens to our online accounts when we die raises complex emotional, legal, and practical considerations. For some, keeping the accounts active or memorialising them provides a sense of comfort and connection to the deceased. However, it can also be a source of distress and hinder the process of grieving and finding closure. It is crucial for individuals and families to navigate this terrain in a way that feels right for them, considering their emotional needs, legal obligations, and desire to protect the digital legacy of their loved ones. As we continue to grapple with these questions, social media platforms will likely adapt and develop new features to better accommodate the needs of the bereaved, ensuring that our digital presence lives on in a way that honours and respects our memory.

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Deputy Editor's Desk

Lucie Kibbey, Cert. FS, MBIFD

Howdy, Howdy, Howdy,

Summer Holidays are in full swing in the Kibbey household and Mumma Kib is relying heavily on red wine to get her through the next 3 weeks before school once again decides to do the job of 3rd parent.

A massive shout out to teachers up and down the country, I do sincerely hope you are enjoying your summer break, because I am struggling with the noise of 2 children at home, how you do it with a classroom full is beyond me and you deserve more praise than I can give you. Perhaps a pay rise from the government would be better 😊

We have been enjoying days out when the weather has allowed and I'm taking the kids with me to their first Music festival over the bank holiday weekend. The Long Road in Leicestershire if anyone else is heading – give me a wave.

Not much else to report this month, lots of work going into the Journal (the wonder that is Hayley sorting it all out!) and as we steam ahead towards the BIFD AGM in October, I know the Admin Team and BIFD Board have been working their socks off to make it a fantastic weekend for all those attending. Sadly, I will not be with you this year as I decided 4 days in a Caravan with one “Man Child” and two savage children would be more fun. I may have been under the influence when I suggested this. Please don't judge!

Enjoy the rest of the summer everyone and I'll see you in the next issue.

All my muchness *Lucie x*

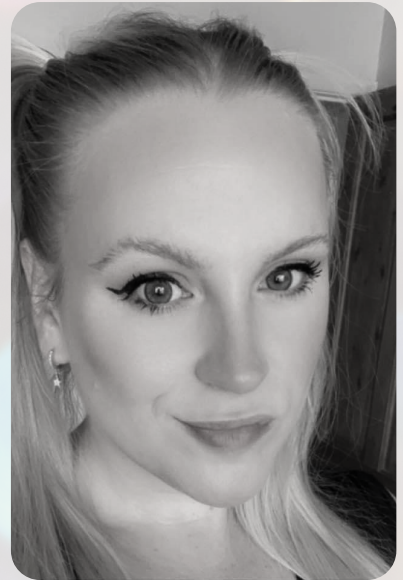


Memory Within:

Interview With Lucie Kibbey & Jo O'Hare

As some of you may know, I am a huge fan of country music, and recently I got chatting to the lovely Jo O'Hare about a festival we are both attending over the August bank holiday weekend. It was then that I discovered that Jo is an independent Memorial Jeweller, and we spent a long time discussing our different roles within the funeral industry. My interest was piqued, and I asked Jo if she would do a little interview with me to give us all some insight into her work.

Jo is also attending the Scottish Funeral Awards on Friday 18th August and is listed as a Finalist – Best of Luck Jo!!!!





LK: Hi, Jo! Please Introduce Yourself.

My Name is Jo, I'm 46 and I live in rural South Lanarkshire with my husband Paul and our 10-year-old son Thomas, our horses (Bee and Seren), cats, dog, and chickens. I run a memorial jewellery company called Memory Within.

LK: Why Memorial Jewellery and how did you come to be making it?

Life as I knew it changed forever in 2019, when the carotid artery in my neck dissected, resulting in a series

of strokes that left me fighting for my life in hospital. The strokes left me mostly paralysed down my right-hand side, limited peripheral vision, aphasia and with significant cognitive issues. Three months following my strokes, my mother tragically, unexpectedly passed away, leaving the family devastated. I had been looking at having a special piece of jewellery made with some of mums' ashes. The idea of making memorial jewellery was first suggested by one of my rehabilitation team, as a form of physiotherapy for my right hand. My hand slowly grew stronger, and my craft became more practiced. Before too long, I was being asked to make items for friends.

LK: What does Memorial Jewellery mean to you?

Every piece that I create is special. These are the remains of somebody's loved one. Ashes or hair or fur are often accompanied with a letter and sometimes a photograph, describing their loved one, what they liked, favourite memories, the music they loved to listen to, the last holiday they took together, their favourite food and funny stories I get a sense of who this person was in life. Each piece is also a visual reminder of just how far I have progressed in my own journey.

LK: What is your favourite piece and why?

The piece I made for myself with my mum's ashes - it took a long time to choose the right setting and just the right colour, but I love it and I wear it daily.

LK: You live in Scotland, how popular is Memorial Jewellery in the Region?

Memorial jewellery is becoming increasingly popular as a whole and I make memorial jewellery of customers throughout the UK.
via my website www.memorywithin.co.uk



LK: Do you think there is enough knowledge around Memorial Jewellery?

Many customers do not realise that memorial jewellery isn't a recent "trend". What we now refer to as memorial jewellery, was once called Mourning Jewellery. Mourning jewellery dates to the 1600s but gained huge popularity in the 1800s when Queen Victoria mourned the death of her beloved Albert. Victorian mourning jewellery can still be found and identified by their name, birth, and death date inscriptions. These rings would have contained locks of hair rather than the modern-day preference of cremains.



LK: What is the strangest request you have had?

A toenail. A TOENAIL. But my job is not to judge.

LK: How time consuming is the role?

Being self-employed, I'm able to choose my own work hours. Some weeks can be quiet, and I'll have some more free time, other weeks will be busy, and I'll be in the studio from 8am through to 9pm. I only ever have one piece of jewellery on the bench at a time. We've recently moved into a larger studio and have a new range of "silver impressions" jewellery to add to our memorial jewellery collection, offering fingerprint, hand, and footprint in silver, later in 2023. I'm in the studio 4 days a week.

LK: Do you have any difficulties in supply of materials / what is the average order time?

We try to be as ecofriendly as we possibly can be, this means that our resins, the material we use to build the MemoryGems, is an EcoResin and must be imported. We offset the environmental impact by making sure we've ordered enough to keep us going for several years to come. Our other materials are made within the UK. Supply is rarely an issue as we either make our own jewellery bases or work closely with a local supplier who manufactures inhouse. Memory Within have an order time of 4 weeks but this is often far quicker.

LK: You are an independent female trader – any advice for the budding female entrepreneurs out there?

Be brave, be confident and remember that there is always more to learn. There are many groups aimed at women in business, full of support and advice - join in, this is your support network. Working alone can be lonely (and overwhelming and a bit scary), but also liberating and satisfying. Have faith in yourself, you can do it.

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A BEAUTIFUL KEEPSAKE TO CHERISH

Heart in Their Hand offers families a beautiful keepsake to share with a loved one or baby that has died. The little heart can be placed in the loved one's hand when saying goodbye, and the keepsake is taken home as a beautiful, tangible reminder of the connection shared.

Set up in memory of her baby boy Adam, who was stillborn, Cathy wanted to make memorable keepsakes to help families feel connected when having to say goodbye, and the project has now helped thousands of families in the devastating situation of baby loss, as well as having to say goodbye to loved ones. The collection offers several beautiful designs, including pendants, keyrings and a wooden range perfect for natural burials and cremations.

"Losing our baby boy to stillbirth left me wishing to feel more 'connected' to him once we'd said goodbye. So out of this wish, I created 'Heart in their Hand' so that families could feel a tangible connection when saying goodbye, and the feedback has been incredibly touching."



FEEDBACK FROM A FAMILY:

"The hearts brought a sparkle of light into the darkness and helped my family feel just a little less alone, a little more held..."

Funeral Directors can purchase stock to hold in the branch or order as and when a family would like some for fast delivery in time for the funeral. They also offer an engraving service for a small additional charge and have a number of display items and customer packs for use in the branch.

**CATHY WILL BE EXHIBITING AT THE BIFD & FSA TRADE FAIR
ON OCTOBER 21 AT ALEXANDRA HOUSE IN SWINDON.**

CHARITY ABSEIL: CAN YOU HELP GEORGIE & DAVID BECOME SHAUN SUPERHEROES?



David Chambers & Georgie Luxford will be abseiling 450ft for Brighton & Hove Hospice, The Martlets.



Most people receive care from them in their own homes. Others choose to spend their final days on their inpatient unit, or to join them as inpatients for respite care or symptom management. Outpatients also visit the hospice for pain relief, physiotherapy, counselling, welfare advice and social activities.

Martlets' care is free thanks to the support of local people, businesses, and trusts. An NHS grant covers a portion of the costs, but like so many they rely on the community to fund most of their vital services. From terminal cancer and end-stage heart disease to neurological conditions such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, and Motor Neurone Disease, they will help.

Can you help Georgie and David to raise as much as they possibly can for this excellent charity (and to make themselves feel a little better about leaping from such a great height!!)?

To raise money for local Brighton & Hove hospice, The Martlets, Georgie Luxford and David Chambers have both signed up to take part in the Brighton Flock event representing Brighton office, Bowley Gallagher, part of Sussex Family Funeral Directors.

They will be abseiling 450ft from the Brighton i360 on Thursday 5th October to raise as much money as possible for this fantastic cause.

Martlets is a local Sussex charity providing essential care to people affected by terminal illness in Brighton and Hove, and surrounding areas. Their expert teams provide the very best care and support, helping patients and their loved ones to live life to the full during the precious time they have together.



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CHOICE FUNERAL PLAN ADVERT CAMPAIGN SHORTLISTED FOR TOP MARKETING AWARD

A television advert campaign promoting funeral plans from the country's third largest funeral company has been nominated for a prestigious marketing award.

Funeral Partners have been shortlisted in the category of Best Use of a Small Budget in the Marketing Week Awards 2023 for their television advert campaign for Choice funeral plans.

The light-hearted ads featured adorable duo Maureen and Brenda attending various funerals of their friends making wry comments from the back of a church about the choices and details of their friends' funerals, and how they might have benefitted from having a plan.

Funeral Partners were supported on the project by top production agency How Now Creative, who were briefed to create a fresh concept, to stand out in a competitive market, which wasn't unnecessarily sombre or dull.

Funeral Partners 

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Kelly Hailou and Phil Bolger from 'How Now Creative' on set

Funeral Partners Marketing Director Kelly Hailou said: “We’re absolutely thrilled to be nominated for this award. “It’s a testament to the hard work from everyone who was involved in this exciting project here at Funeral Partners, How Now Creative and our media agency FIVEfoot8. Television was a new marketing channel for us, and we made a bold decision to incorporate gentle humour into a sensitive topic and it has proved to be successful. We have received such fabulous feedback from customers, suppliers, families and friends. The characters and concept have really resonated with people. I’m looking forward to attending the ceremony and meeting the other finalists, I have my fingers and toes crossed.”

The adverts appeared on more than 80 Sky channels with the target demographic who live close to the six key Funeral Partners brands being promoted, seeing them approximately 20 times each during the three-month campaign. This was supported through the line using paid for search, social media, traditional press, trade press and in-branch advertising.



Maureen and Brenda in Church

The adverts resulted in a marked increase in website visits, enquiries and brochure requests, with a positive increase in plan sales as well as raising brand awareness for future clients. Further TV campaigns are now in the offing.

The Marketing Week Awards ceremony will be held at The Londoner Hotel in Leicester Square, London, on November 1.

ARTHUR GRESTY FUNERAL HOMES ARE NEW SPONSORS OF WYTHENSHAW FC'S JOHN WALKER STAND

A local Funeral Directors are the proud new sponsors of a football club's main stand which bears the name of their legendary President.

Arthur Gresty Funeral Homes, which has branches in Wythenshawe, Altrincham and Northenden, are supporting Wythenshawe Football Club and will sponsor The John Walker Stand at their Hollyhedge Park home for the next two seasons.

The main stand has been named after Mr Walker since 2020 as a special tribute to his seven decades of commitment to the club where he has held almost every position available.

Dan Preston, Funeral Arranger and Conductor at the Wythenshawe branch of Arthur Gresty Funeral Homes in Woodhouse Lane said: "We've had a great relationship with the club for a long time, but I am really pleased we have been able to take this important next step. The ground is less than a mile from our funeral home, so they're a natural partner for us to work with. The Ammies do such great things in our community by getting young boys and girls into football as well as running their senior teams. We are delighted to be continuing our association with them. John is a Wythenshawe stalwart. Nobody is more deserving of having a stand named after him at Hollyhedge Park."

Funeral Partners



Wythenshawe AFC President John Walker and Arthur Gresty Funeral Arranger and Conductor Dan Preston

The Ammies first team are heading into their first-ever campaign in the North West Counties Premier Division, with the women's first team set for their debut season as a semi-professional side.

Club Vice Chairman Carl Barratt said: "I'd like to thank everyone at Arthur Gresty for their generous support which will allow us to continue to have John's name on the main stand. It means a lot to everyone at the club because he has done so much good over the years. The word legend is used a lot, but he genuinely is one."

For more information about Arthur Gresty Funeral Homes and their services visit agresty.co.uk.



Wythenshawe AFC President John Walker, Arthur Gresty Funeral Arranger and Conductor Dan Preston and club mascot Billy Piggot

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**Mike Jolly, Business Principal
Eaves Funeral Service**

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**Mike Jolly,
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**Sam Kershaw,
Chief Executive Officer**
on 07834 531822
sam.kershaw@funeralpartners.co.uk



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

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Your reputation is our reputation

FOUNDING DIRECTOR RETURNS TO FUNERAL PARTNERS



Sam Bryan at the historic Woking Crematorium

Barry Pritchard was one of the founding Directors at Funeral Partners before he decided to return to Sheffield and launch his own venture, along with his wife Yvonne.

Over the years he has stayed in close contact with the current Chief Executive Sam Kershaw and has now selected the country's third largest funeral business as his acquisition partner after choosing to sell their three businesses - Barry Pritchard Funeral Services, WN Allcock Funeral Services and Trafford Lowe Funeral Services.

The three Funeral Services brands boast five branches across Sheffield and Derbyshire, which are new areas for the Funeral Partners network.

Barry is currently serving as the National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD) President and is teaming up with Funeral Partners to give him more time to focus on his proudly earned role.

"I've kept in touch with lots of friends and former colleagues at Funeral Partners since I left and it has been great to see the company thriving," he said. "Once the decision had been made to sell the businesses, they were the obvious choice. Their values as a business and as a management team are aligned with my own, their policies safeguard the future of my staff and offer them the first-class support which comes from being part of a large network. I am proud to be part of Funeral Partners again and confident that the businesses are in safe hands. Being President of the NAFD is a real honour and I want to give it my all during my term, and this arrangement with Funeral Partners will allow me to do this. There are significant changes and developments in the funeral profession, more than we have seen in the last 50 years, and I am dedicated to being able to advice, influence and support our Funeral Services colleagues."

Barry is a third-generation Funeral Director following proudly in the footsteps of his father Alan – known to many as Jim – and grandfather Charles. The Pritchard family have been undertakers since the early 1900s. *"The funeral business is all I've ever known, and it is in my blood,"* Barry added.

Sam Kershaw said he was pleased to welcome Barry back to Funeral Partners.

"I have worked with Barry on and off for 30 years and am delighted that he has chosen to bring his well-respected, and successful businesses to us at Funeral Partners," he said.

"We're always keen to maintain relationships in the industry and see each other at the NAFD events. Barry and I have kept in touch and I have seen the great success he has had over the years with his funeral homes, creating a reputation for high standards of service and respect within the industry and local communities they serve. He will make an excellent NAFD President and I will be looking to support him in his new role whichever way I can. We welcome Barry Pritchard Funeral Services, WN Allcock Funeral Services and Trafford Lowe Funeral Services teams into our family of businesses and look forward to working with them to carry on their great work."

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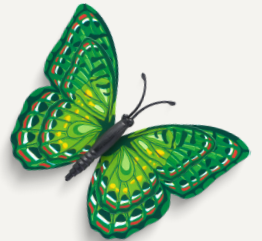


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Prospect Hospice is a local adult hospice and delivers with no charge to patients and their families, care, comfort and confidence, around the clock, every day of the year, to a community of 300,000 people across Swindon, Marlborough and north east 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.

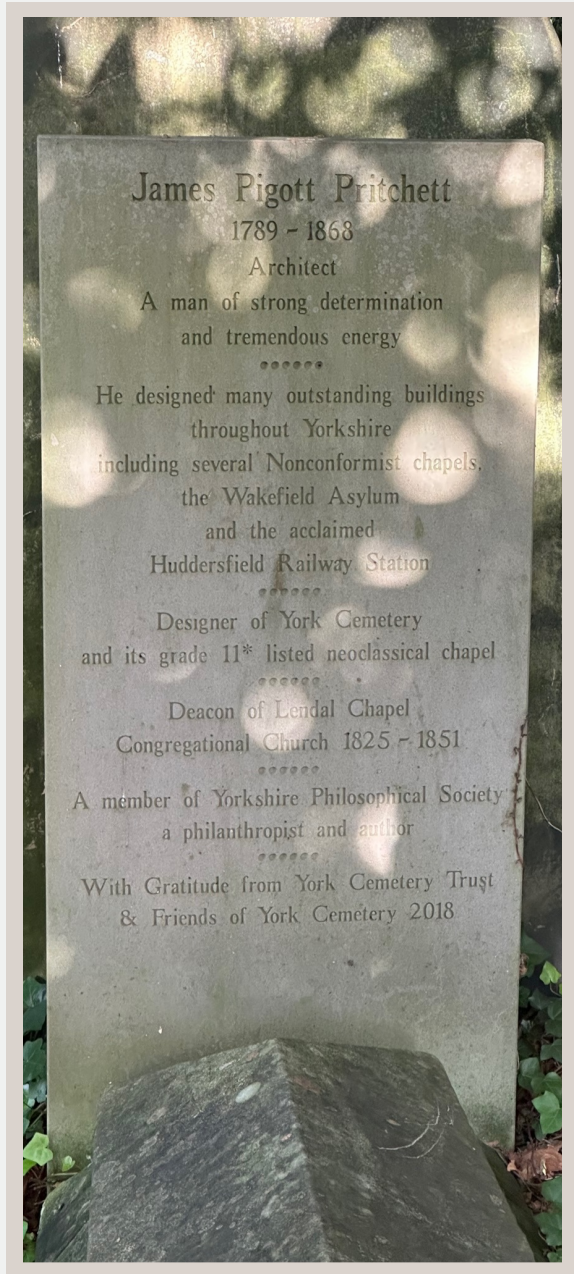
Sheryl Crouch, head of income at the hospice said: "We are thrilled to have been nominated by Mead Family Funerals as their chosen charity to support throughout the term that Jem Mead will be President for the British Institute of Funeral Directors. What an honour for us to be the beneficiary of any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

A HISTORICAL TOUR OF YORK CEMETERY CLIVE PEARSON: REGION C DIRECTOR

Members of region C held a meeting at York Cemetery where an educational tour of the cemetery was given followed by a lovely meal at a local Indian restaurant. The visit to York Cemetery was not only educational but also a unique and enriching experience for all members of Region C.

During the educational tour, participants had the chance to learn about the history of York Cemetery, its significance in the local community, and the stories behind some of the notable individuals buried there. The tour guide provided fascinating insights into the cemetery's architectural features, the symbolism of various gravestones, and the different burial practices throughout history.

The visit to York Cemetery also offered an opportunity for reflection and contemplation as members of Region C strolled through the beautifully landscaped grounds. The serene atmosphere and well-maintained gardens provided a peaceful setting for attendees to pay their respects to the departed and appreciate the tranquility of the cemetery.



Architect James Pigott Pritchett (1789-1863)

After the tour, the group gathered at a local Indian restaurant to enjoy a delicious meal together. The restaurant served a variety of traditional Indian dishes, allowing members of Region C to savour the flavours and experience the rich culinary heritage of the region.

The meeting at York Cemetery not only fostered a sense of camaraderie among the members of Region C but also provided a platform for learning and cultural exchange. Participants left the visit with a deeper understanding of the history and significance of cemeteries, as well as a newfound appreciation for the diversity of the local community.



Members of the Region enjoyed a delicious meal at a local Indian Restaurant, where a meeting was held to nominate Regional Director Clive Pearson, and Regional Secretary and Treasurer, Hayley Owen



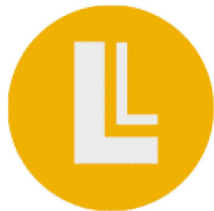
Overall, the educational visit to York Cemetery was a resounding success for Region C. It offered a unique opportunity for members to learn, reflect, and connect with one another while exploring the rich history of the area. The combination of the educational tour and the delightful meal made for a truly memorable experience for all those in attendance.

York Cemetery, located in the historic city of York in England, has a rich and fascinating history that spans over 175 years. Established in 1837, it is one of the oldest and most significant cemeteries in the region, serving as the final resting place for thousands of individuals from all walks of life.

The creation of York Cemetery was a response to the growing population of York and the need for a new burial ground. Prior to its establishment, the city's burial sites were overcrowded, unhygienic, and unable to accommodate the increasing number of burials. As a result, a group of influential individuals, including architect George Basevi and railway engineer George Hudson, formed the York General Cemetery Company and purchased 24 acres of land on Cemetery Road to create a new cemetery.



Pictured: Kayleigh Ingham, Debbie Torrie, Alan Haigh, Graham Torrie, Hayley Owen, Diddy Baxter, Clive Pearson, Beth Harron, Sebastian Kirwin, Jeff Heaton, Kelley Smithson, Paige Hill, David Gresty, Emma Scantlebury, Catherine Bush, Rev'd John Mayes, Angela Clarke, Andy Sargent and Andrew Naylor



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WHAT ABOUT INSTAGRAM FOR YOUR FUNERAL HOME?



Eimer Duffy, FIT Social Media

I would say 99% of us all have smartphones. Yes? And having a digital connection has become increasingly more important. And so from this social media use has increased with the use of our devices. And we are all now on different platforms. One platform that is expanding its popularity and features is Instagram. It serves as a platform for sharing stories, celebrating life and commemorating the moments that matter. Many of the different generations use Instagram everyday. And they use the search facilities and hashtags to make the most of their experience.

For Funeral homes, Instagram presents a unique opportunity. To extend warmth, understanding and professional service to families. Ahead of, during and after their most vulnerable times. Many professionals, even those in industries as venerable as the Funeral industry, have found value in using Instagram to connect, inform and support.

Let's dive into understanding Instagram better. And see how it can be an asset for funeral professionals:

What is the main purpose of Instagram?

Instagram is a visual focused social media platform. It's designed for sharing photos and videos. It allows users to express themselves, share memories. Also connect with others through comments, likes, and direct messages. It has grown to accommodate businesses, creators, and professionals, becoming a space where communities can come together regarding shared interests and experiences.

What are some of the benefits of using Instagram?

- **BUILDING TRUST AND EMPATHY:**

Showcasing selected behind-the-scenes moments, sharing testimonials, or offering glimpses into daily operations. This gives you the opportunity to humanise your Funeral home and foster trust within your community.

- **EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH:**

Use Instagram to educate your audience about Funeral preparations, traditions and more. This is particularly valuable in dispelling myths or addressing common concerns.

- **COMMEMORATION AND CELEBRATION:**

Share obituaries, memory posts, ideas or events to help families celebrate the lives of their loved ones.

- **ENGAGE WITH THE COMMUNITY:**

Through Instagram, you can take part in community events, and partner with local businesses. As well as offer support in times of local or national tragedy.

How to set up an Account:

Setting up an Instagram account is straightforward:

- **Download the App:** Available on both iOS and Android, simply download the Instagram app from your device's app store.
- **Sign Up:** Open the app, click on 'Sign Up' and provide the required details.
- **Choose a Username:** Ideally, it should match your funeral home's name @_____.
- **Complete Your Profile:** Add a profile picture, a bio, links (up to 5 to maximise your profile) and contact details etc..



Types of accounts:

- **Personal Account:** Best for individual users. It's private and meant for personal sharing.
- **Business Account:** Ideal for funeral homes. It provides insights into post performance, allows for Instagram ads and offers a contact button.
- **Creator Account:** Designed for influencers and public figures. It has more detailed analytics and flexible profile controls.

For Funeral homes, a Business Account is the most suitable.

Type of Content to Post:

- **Testimonials:** Share stories from families you've served, highlighting the comfort and support you've provided.
- **Behind-the-scenes:** Showcase your staff, facilities, or preparations for services to demystify the process.
- **Educational Content:** Share information about Funeral traditions, planning, FAQs and more.
- **Memory Posts:** With permission, share tributes or obituaries for the departed, allowing the community to join in remembrance.

Hashtags:

And if you're wondering about the world of hashtags, they're more than just trendy additions. They act as connectors, making your posts discoverable to those who seek them. Think of them as ways to categorise your posts, Reels and Stories. Imagine them like interactive buckets helping to expand your reach. Hashtags increase your content's discoverability and connect you to broader conversations.

Tips when using hashtags, choose relevant ones like #FuneralService, #GriefSupport or more specific to your community. Your business name and your location.. Ideally use a maximum of 9.

Types of Posts:

Here are three types of formats available to you. Each serves a unique purpose and offers distinct engagement opportunities:

- **Feed Posts:** These are the standard posts that appear on your profile and in your followers' main scroll. Photos, videos and carousels (a mix of multiple photos or videos in one post) all fall under this category. They remain on your profile indefinitely unless deleted. For Funeral homes, feed posts could feature testimonials, memory posts or educational content.
- **Stories:** These are 15-second visuals that vanish after 24 hours. They're ideal for timely updates, behind-the-scenes glimpses, or interactive content like polls and questions. Given their transient nature, they offer a more casual, immediate way to connect. Funeral homes might use stories to announce same-day events, share glimpses of ceremonies or offer daily words of comfort.
- **Reels:** Reels are Instagram's answer to the short, engaging video trend, allowing users to create 15-30 second videos set to music. While they might seem geared towards entertainment, creative funeral homes can use Reels to share snippets of memorial events, brief educational videos or uplifting messages of hope and remembrance.

Each format engages your audience in different ways, so experimenting with all three can help you discover what resonates most with your community.

In Conclusion:

Instagram, when used thoughtfully, can be a wonderful tool for funeral homes to connect with families and communities. It offers a platform for both sharing and receiving, making the journey of grief a little more bearable for all involved. And an inspiring way to reach more people and engage them.

Thank you for joining me on this dip into Instagram. If you have any further questions, want to get started or really make the most of your Instagram let me know. Or do you need help in navigating the world of social media, your website or something else, please get in touch, email me on eimer@fitsocialmedia.ie and for more info go to www.fitsocialmedia.co.uk

Looking forward to being at the BIFD conference 20-22 October 2023, hope to see you there!

Thanks for reading.

Eimer



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.



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Managing Director, Marian Sinclair: Serving families since 2002

MOTORCYCLE FUNERALS: A LASTING LEGACY

Founder of Motorcycle Funerals, the late Rev Paul Sinclair was a powerhouse, and a force to be reckoned with. Lovingly referred to as the 'Faster Pastor', Paul's larger than life infectious character is what brought Motorcycle Funerals into existence and to the success it is today.

After a biking accident in London, Paul had a vision whilst recovering in hospital. As a life-long biker, Paul started to think about how he's like to leave this world. He was so inspired, he put pen to paper and began the process of designing his very first motorcycle hearse, one still in use today.

In the first few years, interest grew, and TV appearances became the norm as Paul's energy drove MCF forwards and his vision of bikers having a dignified final ride became a reality.



Soon, there was a whole fleet of Motorcycle Hearses, supporting families and funeral directors throughout the UK.

Just a few weeks following Paul's passing in 2019 from Glioblastoma-grade 4 (brain tumour), wife of 18 years, Marian took over the business and did her best to resume work as usual for the families that needed them.

Marian's vision is to carry on Paul's Legacy, now with a fleet of 15 vehicles, including:

- Triumph Bonneville
- Triumph Thunderbird
- Triumph Speed Triple
- Harley Davidson Road King
- Suzuki Hayabusa
- Trike
- Tandem Bicycle

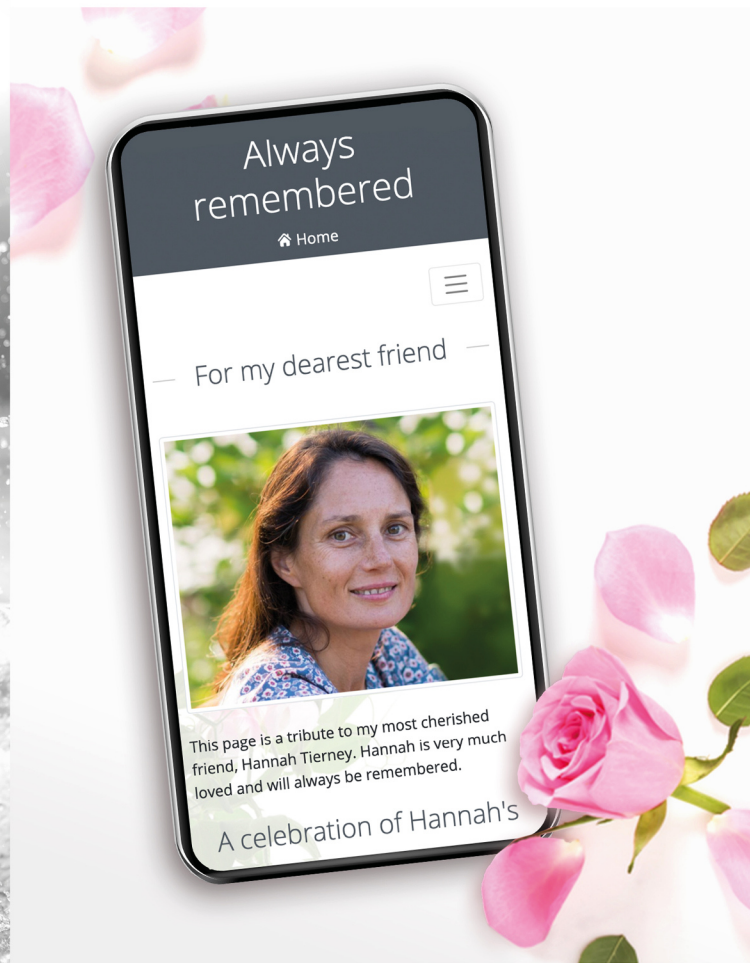
Not just for bikers, but for anyone who wants something special for a final ride.

One thing for certain, no one can replace the late 'Revving Rev', but the MCF family continues to serve families with passion and zeal during what can sometimes be a challenging or even traumatic period of time.





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NATIONAL DOG DAY

Deputy Editor, Lucie Kibbey

National Dog Day is an annual event celebrated on August 26. National Dog Day was established in 2004 by animal advocate & pet and family lifestyle expert Coleen Paige. The aim of the awareness day is to raise awareness about the number of dogs that are currently in rescue centres and encourage the adoption of these animals.

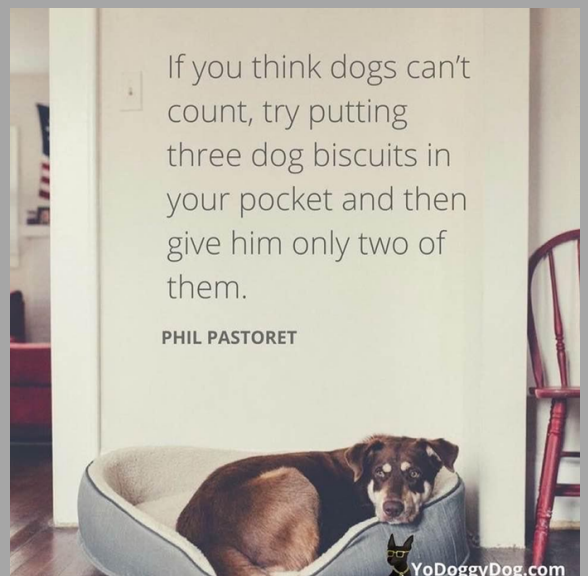
Sadly, each year, millions of dogs become homeless because they are unwanted, or their owners are unable to care for them. National Dog Day aims to encourage people to adopt dogs from shelters and rescue organisations.

Life in lockdown has not only allowed us to spend more quality time at home with our families (of the humankind), but also with our pets too! Whether your pet has become your new working from home buddy, or they've just been there keeping your spirits up...this precious time has given us the opportunity to witness all their cute quirks and funny personalities more than ever!



If you think dogs can't count, try putting three dog biscuits in your pocket and then give him only two of them.

PHIL PASTORET



To celebrate National Dog Day, Safestyle previously launched a nationwide #DogInWindow photo competition to tie in with this special day, asking dog owners to share their best window snaps to find the UK's cutest pooch.

After being inundated with hundreds of adorable entries - from pooches perched in windows After being inundated with hundreds of adorable entries - from pooches perched in windows people-watching to others overseeing their owner's gardening skills, we're excited to announce that they have picked their winner. Huge congratulations to Kynda from Bolton! And as a HUGE dog lover and owner of a daftie little Cock-Jack myself, I thought I'd share Reba (and Holly's) #DogInWindow effort from a few years ago.



Kynda from Bolton, Safestyle's #DogInWindow Competition 2023



THROWBACK: Reba and Holly's own #DogInWindow picture



Editor Hayley's Three 'Hounds', (L-R) Ziggy, Ozzy and Lemmy always wait for her at the window to get home from work

I'm a huge fan of poetry, and in line with the theme, here is one just for our canine companions.

In Memory Of *A Treasured Friend*

*My hand still goes to stroke you
There's an empty space upon my lap
And the floor looks a little different now
Where you layed to have your nap*

*I miss playing with your favourite toy
And giving you a snack
I feel like shouting out your name
Just hoping you might come back*

*The love you gave was endless
And you made my life complete
Nothing can replace the feeling
Of you laying at my feet*

*So for now be safe in Heaven
Be happy and be free
Wait for me at the Rainbow Bridge
When Heaven calls for me*



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Life After Death

These things I know:
How the living go on living
and how the dead go on living with them
so that in a forest
even a dead tree casts a shadow
and the leaves fall one by one
and the branches break in the wind
and the bark peels off slowly
and the trunk cracks
and the rain seeps in through the cracks
and the trunk falls to the round
and the moss covers it
and in the spring the rabbits find it
and build their nest
inside the dead tree
so that nothing is wasted in nature
or in love.

– *Laura Gilpin*



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FSA/FFMA CALLS ON PROFESSION TO VERIFY QUALITY OF PRODUCTS OFFERED TO BEREAVED FAMILIES

UK laws around product labelling are very straightforward. Labels must not be misleading about things such as: quantity or size, price, what it's made of, how, where and when it was made, what you say it can do and the people or organisations that endorse it.

This means that if you describe a coffin as sustainable, made of a particular material or suitable for cremation, for example, you need to be able to evidence that this is the case. Recent issues, that have come to light have related to issues such as describing a coffin as solid wood when the bottom is made of plywood, or describing a casket as sustainable, without the proper accreditation to support this assertion, risks falling foul of Trading Standards.

One topic right at the heart of this issue is the manufacture of high quality coffins. After a number of issues were raised by crematoria, where coffins had damaged cremators by leaving sticky residue on surfaces - and by funeral directors, who had the distressing experience of carrying a coffin that proved not to be robust enough, the Funeral Furnishing Manufacturers' Association (FFMA) launched the Coffin & Casket Testing Protocol.

Since launching in 2016, the Protocol has been deployed to test 180 products made by the Association's 50 plus members, who comprise a high percentage of the British coffin making sector. Coffin materials checked under the Protocol range from oak veneer and wicker to picture coffins and cardboard.

The aim of the testing scheme is to ensure coffins, caskets and even shrouds are safe for use in both cremation and burial settings, bringing peace of mind to bereaved families, crematoria and burial ground operators and funeral directors.

And with the rise of online coffin sales on e-marketplaces, the need to uphold quality standards has never been greater.

FFMA Chief Executive Alun Tucker said the Protocol had become the universal kitemark for quality in coffins. *"We're incredibly pleased with how the scheme has embedded itself within the sector as the standard for quality assurance in just a few short years. And with 180 products tested so far, we can be confident that the majority of coffin and casket ranges presented for funerals in the UK are of exceptionally good build quality. This is essential to families, who need to know that the products supplied for a loved one's final journey will perform as intended. It's also a vital health and safety issue for funeral directors and employees at crematoria, cemeteries and burial grounds. The last thing anyone wants is a coffin or casket igniting too soon during charging at a crematorium, or the base collapsing whilst lowering into a grave."*

Do you provide **FFMA Accredited coffins?**



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Halliday Funeral Supplies Ltd
Hewkin McAllister Ltd
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JC Atkinson
John Sheridan and Sons Ltd
L.T. & R. Vowles Ltd
Legacy Tribute UK
LifeArt Coffins Ltd
Lifelia UK Ltd
London Casket Co. Ltd.
Midland Funeral Supplies Ltd
Musgrove Willows Limited
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Natural Woven Products
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‘Look for the logo’



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