

BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS



THE JOURNAL

ISSUE 5



Help support families and keep babies safe.



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The Lullaby Trust raises awareness of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), provides expert advice on **safer sleep for babies** and offers **emotional support for bereaved families**.

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2023-2025

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admin@bifd.org.uk

www.bifd.org.uk



Please send all Adverts,

Articles & News

c/o The Editorial Team:

journal@bifd.org.uk



**National President's
Chosen Charity**



The Presidential Team:

National President, Amanda Pink:

amandapink@bifd.org.uk

1st Vice President, Clive Pearson

2nd Vice President, Dr Philip Gore

Immediate Past President, Amanda Dalby

admin@bifd.org.uk

Chair of Education, Andrew Floyd:

a.floyd.bifd.edu@gmail.com



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Letter from the National President

Amanda Pink

Dear Members, Associates, Students, and Supporters.

As the month of May unfolds with longer days and moments of reflection, I am reminded of how vibrant and connected our profession truly is. I'm delighted to share just a few highlights from the past month with you all.



To begin, on the 25th and 26th of April, I had the pleasure of attending the British Institute of Embalmers' Annual Banquet and Conference, held at the Sketchley Grange Hotel in Hinkley. It was a delightful occasion spent in the company of my husband, Adrian, along with friends, colleagues, and representatives of our Kindred Associations — an opportunity to celebrate the skilled and often unsung work of our embalming professionals. Congratulations are due to Rachel Shipley on her Presidential year, and I offer my warmest best wishes to Edward as he begins his own journey as the incoming President.



On 30th April, I joined our 1st Vice President, Clive Pearson, for an insightful visit to Obitus HQ in Sheffield. Together, we met with their dedicated team to explore how Obitus can further support the Institute and our ongoing commitment to education and excellence. Obitus continues to innovate in helping Funeral Directors, officiants and families create truly meaningful services through personalised audio-visual tributes — something that resonates deeply in our line of work.

This month, we have also witnessed a moment of historical significance within the global faith community. Following the recent passing of Pope Benedict, American Cardinal Robert Prevost has been elected as the 267th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church. He has chosen the name Pope Leo XIV. We send our condolences to the Catholic community and reflect on the continuity and change that such a transition symbolises.



On 8th May, we paused as a nation to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of VE Day. This day marks the courage, sacrifice, and resilience of a generation whose efforts shaped our freedoms. Many of us will have families touched by that history, and it's important that we keep their stories and contributions alive in our communities.



Looking ahead, I would like to highlight a fantastic opportunity for engagement and learning. Region G will be hosting its Regional Annual General Meeting on Saturday 14th June at 11am, at the headquarters of Parley Green Coffins in Ferndown, Wimborne (BH21 7SH). This is more than just a meeting — it's a chance to see first-hand how beautifully handcrafted, eco-friendly coffins and caskets are made using premium recycled materials. These products represent a sustainable and thoughtful choice for families, and I encourage members and students alike to attend. The meeting will count towards your CPD, and you can confirm your attendance by emailing admin@bifd.org.uk.

Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who supported last month's presidential skydive in aid of our 2025 charity, The Lullaby Trust. Their work supporting bereaved families and promoting safer sleep is vital. If you haven't yet had a chance, donations are still very welcome and can be made here: <https://lullabytrust.dedicationpage.org/charityoftheyear2025>

As always, I am humbled by the dedication and professionalism of our members across the UK. Whether you are newly qualified, a student in training, or a seasoned Fellow, thank you for the vital work you do every day.

Best Wishes to you all,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Amanda'.

Amanda Pink, Dip. FS, LMBIFD
National President, Region G



43RD ANNUAL BIFD CONFERENCE

24TH – 26TH OCTOBER 2025



The Copthorne Slough-Windsor Hotel
Clippenham Lane, Slough, SL1 2YE

The BIFD Invites You To Conference 2025

National President, Amanda Pink, would like to invite all Members, Fellows, Students, Associates, Presidents of the Kindred Associations and all Guests to the forthcoming Conference and Gala Dinner to be held on 24th - 26th October 2025 at The Copthorne Slough-Windsor Hotel.

The Copthorne Hotel offers comfortable and contemporary facilities, where modern comfort seamlessly blends with the historic Windsor. With 219 spacious and comfortable rooms, the 4-star hotel is the perfect base to feel relaxed and rejuvenated for our Conference Weekend.

From here, you can visit the medieval **Windsor Castle** still in use since the middle ages, see the changing of the guard and experience Windsor's rich history. The hotel is also located very close to **Legoland Windsor** perfect for our guests who would like to attend with their family.



The **Bombay Pavillion Restaurant** offers dishes inspired by the traditional clay oven 'Tandoor' and curries that stay true to their origin.

The **Motion Health Club** provides comprehensive leisure facilities and state-of-the-art gymnasium and swimming pool.

Heathrow Airport is a mere 15 minute drive and is ideally located just outside of central London, just 30 minutes away by train.

The President's Charity 2025

For her Presidential Year, Amanda is supporting The Lullaby Trust.

The charity works to educate and support new parents in the best sleep practices for their babies with the aim to prevent deaths. Their aim is to reduce the level of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) which they have helped to reduce by 81% since 1991 saving over 30,000 babies. They also support bereaved parents following the tragic and devastating loss of a baby or young child and have so far helped over 800 families. A fantastic charity that needs funds to continue its important work and any support provided to our campaign for the Lullaby Trust throughout 2025 and at Conference will be gratefully appreciated.



The itinerary so far...

Friday 24th October 2025

The Board of Directors will be meeting in the afternoon.

After checking into your rooms, Amanda invites you to join her for a 3 course dinner in the hotel function suite.

Saturday 25th October 2025

The AGM will take place in the morning followed by a buffet lunch.

In the afternoon Amanda is planning an educational session... Watch this space for further information.

The evening will start with a Drinks Reception followed by a 3 course dinner with wine, plus cheese & biscuits. We will also have our Diploma Awards Ceremony and Handover of Offices followed by music and dancing until late.

Earlier than 24th or later than 25th October 2025

If you would like to enjoy a longer break, we have secured good rates either side of the Conference, so that you can enjoy Windsor for an extended stay.

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The British Institute of Funeral Directors Conference 2024:
24th – 26th October 2025

The Copthorne Slough-Windsor Hotel
Clippenham Lane
Slough
SL1 2YE

The 43rd BIFD Conference 2025 Rates

1. Friday Evening To Sunday Morning – THE COMPLETE PACKAGE

Friday DinnerDouble Room (per couple) £675
Friday & Saturday Bed & BreakfastSingle Room (per person) £425
Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea & Coffee
Saturday Lunch Included
Saturday Evening Drinks Reception
Saturday Gala Dinner – Includes 4 Course Meal

2. Friday Evening To Saturday Morning - ONLY

Friday DinnerDouble Room (per couple) £295
Friday Bed & BreakfastSingle Room (per person) £200
Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea, Coffee & Biscuits

Saturday Lunch Is Available At £30 PP

3. Saturday To Sunday Morning - ONLY

Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea, Coffee & BiscuitsDouble Room (per couple) £395
Saturday Evening Drinks ReceptionSingle Room (per person) £235
Saturday Gala Dinner – 4 Course Meal Followed by Tea & Coffee
Saturday Bed & Breakfast
Saturday Lunch Is Available At £30 PP

4. The Gala Banquet Dinner Only£85 Per Person

Saturday Evening Drinks Reception
Saturday Gala Dinner – 4 Course Meal Followed by Tea & Coffee

5. AGM ATTENDANCE ONLYFree To All Members & Students

Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea, Coffee & Biscuits

Saturday Lunch Is Available On The Day At £30 PP

The 43rd BIFD CONFERENCE - 24th – 26th October 2025

The Copthorne Slough-Windsor

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: £.....

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”:

Tariff (2) – Fri to Sat

Double Rate: £.....

Single Rate: £.....

Bacs Payments To:

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

Tariff (3) – Sat to Sun

Double Rate: £.....

Single Rate: £.....

Tariff (4) – Gala Dinner Only

Total Attendees £.....

Tariff (5) – AGM Only

£ No Charge

Total Amount Due £.....

Mr. David Gresty

C/O The British Institute of Funeral Directors

National Office,

2 Heather Ridge Arcade,

Heatherside,

Camberley, Surrey,

GU15 1AX

07354 847 702

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A LIFE OF MERCY, A FAREWELL OF GRACE: THE FUNERAL OF POPE FRANCIS

On 26 April 2025, the world came together in solemnity and reverence to bid farewell to His Holiness Pope Francis, the 266th pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church. His funeral, held in St Peter's Square at the Vatican, was both a grand occasion of state and a deeply spiritual service, reflecting the profound humility, compassion, and humanity that defined his papacy.



Pope Francis, born Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1936, made history as the first Jesuit Pope, the first from the Americas, and the first to take the name Francis, inspired by Saint Francis of Assisi. Throughout his twelve-year papacy, he championed the causes of the poor, advocated for interfaith dialogue, and emphasised mercy, simplicity, and environmental stewardship.

Following his death on 21 April 2025 at the age of 88, arrangements were made according to a blend of long-standing tradition and personal wishes that Pope Francis had quietly outlined in recent years. True to his nature, the ceremonies surrounding his funeral were notable for their dignity and simplicity.

The Rites and Ceremonies

The days between his passing and funeral saw the late Pope lying in state inside St Peter's Basilica, where tens of thousands of mourners from around the world queued to pay their respects. His body was displayed in a plain cypress coffin — a conscious choice by Francis, symbolising humility and the transience of earthly life.



On the morning of the funeral, St Peter's Square was filled with a congregation of world leaders, cardinals, clergy, religious figures of many faiths, and the faithful from every corner of the globe. An estimated 150,000 people attended in person, while millions more watched via broadcast and livestream.

The Mass was celebrated by Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, Dean of the College of Cardinals, as is customary when a Pope dies without an immediate successor (since Pope Francis had not resigned). The ritual closely followed the *Ordo Exsequiarum Romani Pontificis* — the official order of the papal funeral Mass — with Scripture readings chosen to reflect Pope Francis' devotion to the Beatitudes, service to the poor, and the call to universal brotherhood.

During the homily, Cardinal Re praised Francis as "a bridge-builder in a divided world" and "a pastor who never lost the scent of his sheep." The service was conducted in Italian and Spanish, reflecting Francis' heritage and international reach. A moving litany of prayers and chants filled the square as the coffin was gently carried back into the basilica following the Mass.

Final Resting Place

Pope Francis was laid to rest in the Basilica of St Mary Major in Rome, outside the Vatican walls. Francis, who shunned much of the pomp and privilege of the papacy, had asked to be buried there rather than in St Peter's Basilica, where many of his predecessors are. It was the first time a pope was laid to rest outside the Vatican in more than a century. In accordance with tradition, three items were placed in the coffin: a lead tube containing a sealed record of his papacy, a pallium (the white woollen band symbolising his pastoral authority), and a bag of Vatican coins minted during his reign.



Reflections for the Funeral Profession

The funeral of Pope Francis was a remarkable example of how ceremony, symbolism, and personal wishes can be seamlessly woven together, even on a global stage. Despite the inevitable grandeur of a papal funeral, the simplicity requested by Francis — from his plain vestments to his modest cypress coffin — underscored the principle that dignity and respect do not depend on opulence.

For members of the funeral profession, the event also highlighted the importance of planning, cultural sensitivity, and honouring personal values in all end-of-life ceremonies, regardless of scale. It was a vivid reminder that, in every funeral, the primary focus must be on the individual being remembered — their life, their service, and their humanity.

Pope Francis' final journey was one of prayer, unity, and humble celebration, marking the end of a pontificate that forever changed the tone and priorities of the Catholic Church. In death as in life, he called us all to compassion, simplicity, and love.



**Requiescat in pace,
Papa Franciscus.**

DAVID GRAINGER

NATIONAL PRESIDENT 2005 - 2006

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of David Grainger, who died on 10th May 2025.

David was National President of the British Institute of Funeral Directors from 2005 to 2006 and will be fondly remembered for his longstanding dedication to both the funeral profession and funeral service education. A much-respected colleague at Leverton & Sons Ltd from 1989 until his retirement in 2017,

David's contribution to the industry was significant and enduring.

During his distinguished career, David played a pivotal role in shaping BIFD Education. He was instrumental in the development of both the BIFD Certificate and Diploma in Funeral Service, as well as the accompanying textbooks. His efforts also strengthened our relationship with the University of Greenwich, helping to elevate professional standards and educational opportunities for funeral directors across the UK.

David's commitment, wisdom and warmth left a lasting impact on colleagues and students alike. He will be greatly missed by all who had the pleasure of working alongside him.

Funeral will be held on Friday 23rd May at 3.30pm. Golders Green Crematorium (East Chapel), Hoop Lane, London, NW11 7NL

All welcome but family flowers only. No nominated charities have been chosen

Our thoughts are with David's family at this difficult time.

May he Rest in Peace

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CPD OPPORTUNITY

Visit to Parley Green Coffins by Region G

Regional Annual General Meeting and visit to Parley Green Coffins

www.parleygreen.co.uk

By kind permission of Parley Green Coffins we have arranged a visit to their premises on **Saturday 14th June 2025** @ 11.00am for AGM and a show round.

1 Nimrod Way, Ferndown Industrial Estate, Dorset, BH21 7SH

The National President of the BIFD Amanda J Pink Dip FS LMBIFD

will be in attendance and looks forward to meeting you all.

The president will give an update on national news and events.

This event is open to all members and students.

Please register your attendance for catering purposes to
admin@bifd.org.uk

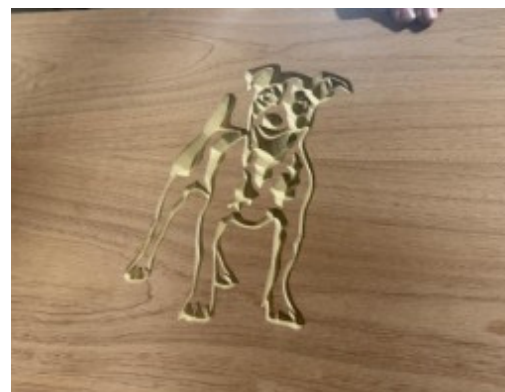
VISIT TO STEVE SOULT COFFIN MANUFACTURERS



The British Institute of Funeral Directors recently embarked on a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) visit to Steve Soult Coffin Manufacturers, affectionately known as the Coffin Boffins, at their new state-of-the-art factory. The visit provided an insightful glimpse into the innovative processes and dedication to quality that have become synonymous with the brand.

Upon arrival, the representatives were warmly welcomed by the friendly and professional staff, setting the tone for an engaging and informative experience. The welcoming atmosphere was a testament to the company's commitment to both its employees and visitors, making everyone feel at home.

One of the standout features of the facility was the cutting-edge 3D engraver, a marvel of modern engineering. This sophisticated machine not only selects the tools it requires for engraving but can also handle intricate designs that may take up to an hour to complete, depending on the complexity of the artwork. Tulip wood, chosen for its sustainability over traditional oak, is used for engraving solid wood coffins, aligning with the company's eco-conscious ethos.



Safety is paramount at Steve Salt Coffin Manufacturers, and this is exemplified by the laser beam protection surrounding the engraver. This safety feature ensures that the machine halts immediately if someone approaches, underscoring the company's dedication to maintaining a safe working environment throughout the factory.

The facility also houses a machine dedicated to veneering the edges of coffins, enhancing their professional appearance. Another specialised machine is employed to saw the shoulders of the coffins, showcasing the precision and attention to detail that define the company's craftsmanship.



With the integration of new machinery, the time required to produce a coffin has been halved, significantly boosting efficiency. For painted coffins, MDF wood is utilised, providing a smoother and more refined finish. Each coffin undergoes a meticulous finishing process, receiving a base coat followed by two lacquer coats before being baked in an oven heated to 31 degrees Celsius.



Customisation is a hallmark of the Coffin Boffins, offering a variety of handle options to suit individual preferences. Once completed, the coffins are expertly stacked and prepared for delivery.



The logistics of delivery are handled with precision and environmental consideration. Each van is assigned specific loading times and delivery schedules, following a circular route to minimise environmental impact. The morning following the visit, ten vans were dispatched, illustrating the company's operational efficiency.

Steve Soult, the visionary owner, has invested significantly in modernising the business, ensuring its legacy and continued success for generations to come. This busy yet impeccably organised firm left a lasting impression on all who attended the visit.



In summary, the CPD visit to Steve Soult Coffin Manufacturers was both educational and enjoyable, highlighting the company's innovative practices, commitment to sustainability, and adherence to the highest standards of quality and safety. The experience reinforced the Coffin Boffins' reputation as leaders in the industry, blending tradition with modernity in a seamless and forward-thinking manner.



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2025/26 MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

Please complete this form IN FULL and return it with your payment and any supporting documents, as required.

Name:		BIFD Membership No.:
Address:		
Town:	County:	Post Code:
Telephone:	Email: please print clearly	

I hereby apply to renew my membership in the British Institute of Funeral Directors, as follows:

✓	MEMBERSHIP TYPE	SUBSCRIPTION AMOUNT		
	Licenced Full Member (CPD FORM MUST BE COMPLETED)	£185.00		
	Full Member	£160.00		
	Retired Member (voting)	£ 75.00		
	Retired Member (non-voting)	£ 50.00		
	Student Member	£ 75.00		
	Associate Member	£100.00		
✓	ADDITIONAL MEMBER ITEMS	Quantity	Cost	TOTAL AMOUNT
	Additional copies of Annual Licence <i>(ONLY available to Full Members with a Licence, as above)</i>		£10.00	£
	Member's Lapel Badge		£ 5.00	£
	Member's Window Sticker		£ 2.45	£
	Member's Tie (normal straight tie or clip on)		£10.00	£
	Member's 40 th Anniversary Tie (straight tie) – all funds from tie sales donated to the National Presidents chosen Charity.		£15.00	£
Total Additional Member Items				£
Membership Subscription (as above)				£
TOTAL TO PAY				£

Member's Signature:

✓	Payment Method
	Cheque - enclosed <i>(Cheques to be made payable to the British Institute of Funeral Directors)</i>
	BACS (internet banking) Sort Code: 60-83-01 Account No.: 20336550 (please quote your surname as the reference when paying by BACS / Internet Banking)

To opt out of allowing your personal information to be shared, please tick the box.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are applying for a Licence, you must complete the 2025/2026 CPD Return and enclose it with your Subscription Renewal. CPD Returns will be checked and verified and you may be contacted and requested to supply additional information if we need further verification.

1st April 2022-31st March 2023

Tel: 0800 032 2733 Email: admin@bifd.org.uk Web: www.bifd.org.uk



MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:

TOTAL

National Office will require this log in support of your Licence application for 2025/2026. This information must be retained for a minimum of three years.

A continuation sheet may be used.



BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS

APPLICATION FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP – 2025/26

FULL NAME		
Address:		
		Post Code:
Telephone:	Home:	Business:
Mobile:		
Email:		
Website: www.		

Details of qualifications ie Diploma in Funeral Service or Diploma in Funeral Practice

Please complete and return this form to National Office with evidence of your qualifications. ie. a copy of your NAFD Diploma Certificate or IFD Cert FP Certificate. Once we have checked these we will provide you with our bank details for you to send payment prior to us issuing your membership certificate.
I Declare that the information furnished by me as part of this Application is correct and I agree to comply with the Rules of the Institute including the Code of Ethics.
I Acknowledge that any Membership Certificate issued to me will remain the property of the Institute
I Confirm that on termination of my Membership of the Institute, for any reason, I will return my Membership Certificate and cease using the logo or any advertisement containing reference to the Institute.
I Agree to my details being shared with Institute members

Signature:	Date:
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Please forward the completed application form to:

British Institute of Funeral Directors

BIFD National Office 2 Heather Ridge Arcade Heatherside Camberley Surrey GU15 1AX

Tel: 0800 032 2733 Email: admin@bifd.org.uk Web: www.bifd.org.uk



BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS
APPLICATION FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP - 2025/26

FULL NAME or COMPANY NAME		
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Email:		
Website: www.		

Involvement with the funeral/bereavement sector :

Please complete and return this form to National Office.

Once the Board of Directors have approved your application, we will provide you with our bank details for you to send payment prior to us issuing your membership certificate.

I Declare that the information furnished by me as part of this Application is correct and I agree to comply with the Rules of the Institute including the Code of Ethics.

I Acknowledge that any Membership Certificate issued to me will remain the property of the Institute

I Confirm that on termination of my Membership of the Institute, for any reason, I will return my Membership Certificate and cease using the logo or any advertisement containing reference to the Institute.

I Agree to my details being shared with Institute members

Signature:	Date:
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BIFD National Office 2 Heather Ridge Arcade Heatherside Camberley Surrey GU15 1AX
Tel: 0800 032 2733 Email: admin@bifd.org.uk Web: www.bifd.org.uk

Region C Visit to Maple Park Crematorium



Thursday 19th June



6pm



**Hambleton Crematorium
Thirsk YO7 4SA**



Hayleyowenfd@gmail.com



**National
President
Amanda**

Pink

- National President Amanda Pink will be joining us
- Certificate Presentation
- Tour of the Electric cremators
- Refreshments afterwards in the café



Defibrillator Installed at Southport Funeral Home to Help Save Lives



A potentially life-saving piece of equipment has been installed at a funeral home in memory of a beloved father and husband.

M Rushton Funeral Directors have had a defibrillator mounted on their premises on Marshside Road, Southport, after the family of Trevor Christian, who Rushton's had cared for, raised money to purchase it and it has been accompanied by a plaque commemorating his life.

A defibrillator is a medical device that delivers a shock to the heart to help restore a normal rhythm in cases of sudden cardiac arrest. They are designed to be used by non-medical professionals, as quick interventions can be crucial in heart-related matters.

Southport Saviours, a charity with the aim of increasing the number of defibrillators in the local area, both installed the machine and provided the team at Rushton's with training on how to use it, should the need ever arise.

Michael Rushton, Business Principal at M Rushton Funeral Directors, which is part of the Funeral Partners family of funeral homes, said: "When we were asked by the family whether we would be happy to house the defibrillator, we were absolutely honoured.

We have a good relationship with the family and are in an excellent location to improve the defibrillator coverage in Southport.

"They are also supporters of Southport Saviours, and I know it was special for them to have it installed in Trevor's memory.

"The training Southport Saviours gave us was excellent, we all learned a lot, and I would recommend it to anyone because you never know when you might need to help someone, be it a loved one or a complete stranger.

"Everyone at Rushton's and Trevor's family, are pleased his legacy will live on and are proud the defibrillator may save lives in the future."



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Your reputation is our reputation



Funeral Directors with Heritage Stretching back to 1800s joins Funeral Partners' Growing Network

The family behind a funeral business which has been helping people for more than 160 years say that working with Funeral Partners will allow them to continue doing what they love.

Gibsons' Funeral Services has been serving their community from as far back as 1860, when the business was founded by Joseph Gibson, who moved to Howden-le-Wear in County Durham offering joinery, carpentry, cabinet making and funeral services.

Since then, six generations of the family have served their community, with Matthew Gibson and his sister Victoria the latest of the family to do so.

Still operating from their original premises at Howden-le-Wear, plus a funeral home in Bishop Auckland and an office in nearby Shildon, the family decided now was the right time to seek an acquisition partner and chose Funeral Partners to secure the future of Gibsons' Funeral Services.

Matthew said: "Things like regulation, the pandemic, tax changes and various other factors have made it more and more difficult for people like us to run businesses independently.

"We felt Funeral Partners values and behaviours fitted with our way of operating the business and that they would support us to continue in our own style."

Matthew and Victoria are both staying with the business and said their family's hard work over the decades is what has made the Gibsons' Funeral Services what it is today.

"Our history is a point of pride – it was my father's business, my grandfather's business and we have always run it to the best of our abilities," Matthew added.

That history and reputation is why we have such a dedicated and loyal following.

"Even after all this time, we get great satisfaction in the service we provide for our clients.

"Frankly, that's part of the reason why we decided to sell the business – so we could access the support Funeral Partners offers in terms of investment, marketing, administration, compliance, HR and more, so we can focus on what we love to do, and what we are best at - helping bereaved families at their time of need."



Sam Kershaw, Funeral Partners CEO said: "Gibson's Funeral Service has a well-deserved reputation for excellence, and we are deeply honoured they chose Funeral Partners as their acquisition partner.

"We are excited to work with Matthew, Victoria and their team and support them as they continue and grow their incredible legacy.

"Their dedication ensures that the Gibson family's tradition of excellent service to the community will continue for generations to come."

Honouring Dad This Father's Day with a Lasting Tribute

As Father's Day approaches, it can be a deeply emotional time for those whose fathers are no longer with them. At Rose Names, we understand how poignant this day can be. While the absence may be felt more keenly, it can also be a time to celebrate the cherished memories you hold dear.



A beautiful way to honour your father's legacy is by naming and planting a rose in his memory. Each bloom becomes a gentle reminder of the love and moments you shared. To make it even more personal, we can print his photo on the plant's label — creating a unique, living tribute that grows year after year.

A named rose is not just a plant, but a heartfelt symbol for the whole family to treasure and share — a lasting gesture of remembrance, blooming with love each season.



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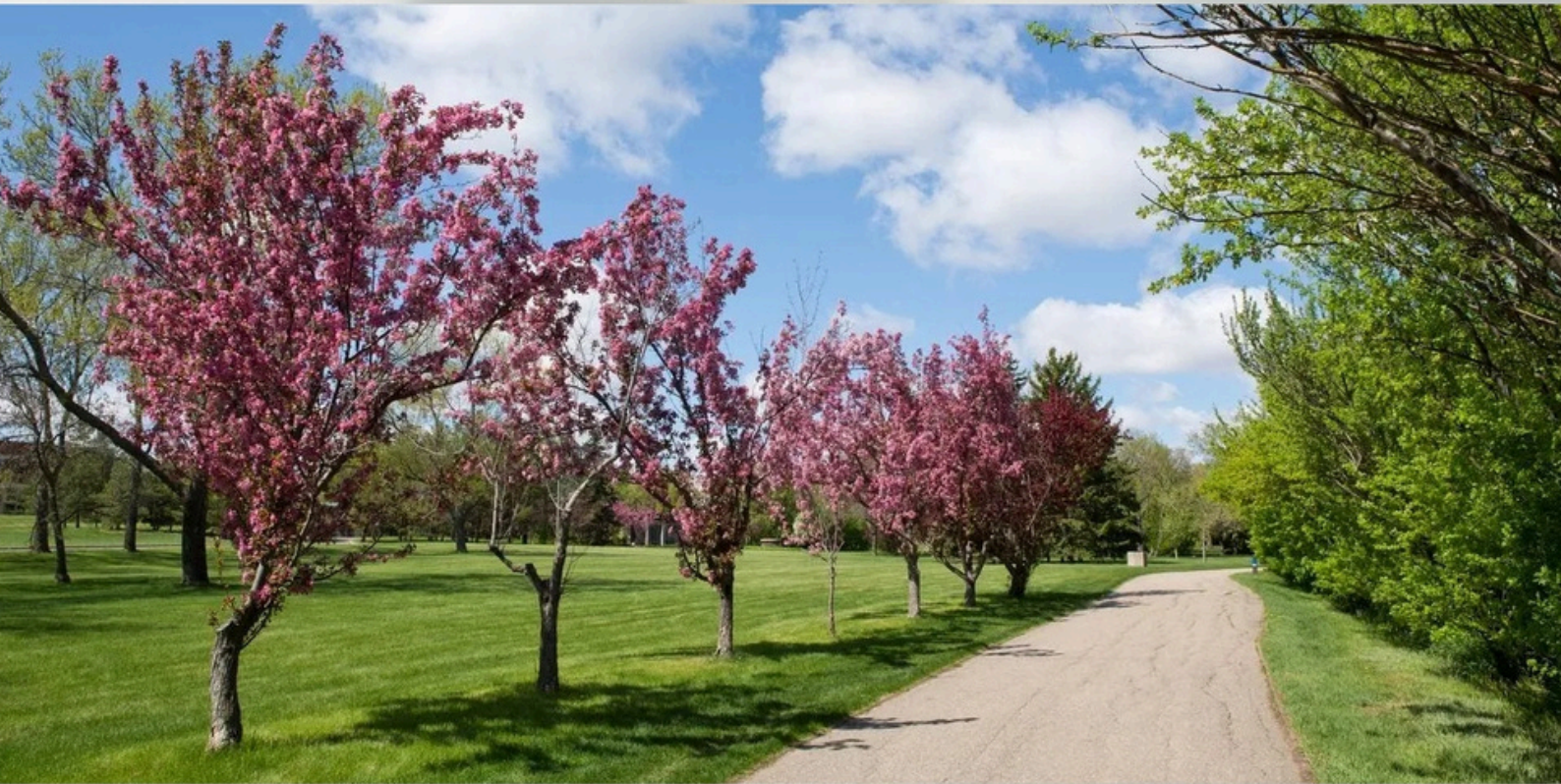
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BIFD AND OBITUS ANNOUNCE NEW 5-YEAR PARTNERSHIP



We're excited to share some important news with our members: the British Institute of Funeral Directors (BIFD) has signed a new five-year strategic partnership with Obitus, the UK's leading provider of media services for funerals.

Starting 1st June 2025, this agreement strengthens our long-standing relationship with Obitus and will support BIFD members through enhanced educational resources, event sponsorship, and increased access to training and professional development.

As part of the partnership, Obitus will sponsor the BIFD AGM and Annual Conference, contribute regularly to The Journal and our social media platforms, and support PR efforts to raise the profile of both organisations. Members will benefit from exclusive access to Obitus-led webinars, podcasts, and CPD-approved training modules designed to improve confidence and consistency in funeral media delivery.

We're also working together to co-fund research into the evolving educational needs of Funeral Directors and will invite member feedback on new tools and services under development.

This partnership reflects our shared commitment to high standards and ongoing professional development. We're excited about the opportunities ahead and thank Obitus for their continued support.



Obitus



Cremation & Burial Communication & Education 2025

23rd - 25th June 2025 - *Hilton Southampton - Utilita Bowl*



Learn - Hear from keynote speakers covering a wide range of relevant topics and leave with an up to date knowledge of burial and cremation issues.

Connect - Network with industry-leading practitioners, learning from their insights and forging new partnerships.

Discover - Explore the most effective way of providing your service by seeing and discussing the most up-to-date technology and tools available.

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Scan to register or visit cbce.org.uk for more information



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Practical tips for providing compassionate bereavement support

Funeral businesses can be a wonderful source of support for bereaved families.

MuchLoved's expert, Catherine Betley, offers advice to help you provide bereavement support to suit the expertise, time and resources that you have available.

Four simple steps that will help many bereaved families

Most families that you look after will have low level bereavement care needs; very few need professional counselling. This means that, with a few basics, you can provide valuable support for many bereaved people in your community:

1. From your website, link to an aggregator site which will help people find local, national and specialist organisations. AtaLoss and The Good Grief Trust are both reputable and have a good search facility
2. Include other expert content, such as podcasts, books and leaflets
3. Check regularly that all the information on your website is up to date
4. Individual counsellors and psychotherapists must be on a Professional Standards Agency accredited register, whilst organisations must be members of a reputable professional body. Check before making any recommendations

Grieving is normal

You can help bereaved families by reassuring them that the grief they are experiencing is normal. Grief has no time limit and it's normal to experience waves of grief that come and go. Your expertise, care and compassion will be a huge source of support for many of the families that you look after.

Other aftercare or bereavement support services that you could offer

Bereaved people are bombarded with information and admin that needs to be dealt with, so offer support that is simple and reliable. Here are some ideas:

- Informal drop-in sessions run by an arranger, funeral director or clergy
 - Access to formal grief groups
 - Access to in-house or external counsellors
- Links to helplines run by charities or membership organisations, e.g. SAIF Care
 - Instant chat support services, e.g. GriefChat
 - Bereavement centres in your community
- Online tributes can also be a good start for many bereaved families

Important considerations for your business

If you are thinking about introducing new services, consider the impact on your funeral business and staff:

- Families value your time and expertise, they don't expect you to be bereavement counsellors
 - Think about all the families you've dealt with over 12 months and what they needed. Focus on simple steps which could help many people, not just the exceptional cases
- There may be local charities or organisations that you can support or send people to rather than setting up something yourself
- From a business perspective, what is the likely cost and impact on your existing resources
- Self-care is really important. Look after yourselves, or you won't be able to look after other people. Beware of stretching yourselves too far, physically and emotionally

About Catherine Betley and GriefChat

Catherine Betley is the founder of Grief Chat and Head of Charity at MuchLoved.

She has 25 years of experience in counselling services and developing bereavement support services. GriefChat provides quick, easy and anonymous support which people can access on the spot without referrals or waiting times.



At MuchLoved, we're looking at how we can help funeral businesses to provide more bereavement support. We'd love to hear from you with your ideas: support@muchloved.com or 01494 722818

Child Bereavement UK and Winston's Wish to Merge and Expand their Wide-Reaching Support Services for Bereaved Families

THE UK'S TWO LEADING CHILD BEREAVEMENT CHARITIES have announced that they are planning to merge. The merger will take place between Child Bereavement UK and Winston's Wish, which support bereaved children, young people, parents and families. They also provide training to professionals, equipping them to provide the best possible care to bereaved families.

Together, both charities will be united by their missions to ensure that no child, young person or bereaved parent has to face their grief alone.

At a time when demand for services is increasing, the charities plan to join forces to increase the reach and impact of their ground-breaking bereavement services and training. They will be able to support more grieving people when they need it the most, and help to reduce the long-term challenges that unresolved grief can cause.

The newly merged organisation will retain the name Child Bereavement UK, as well as its Royal Patron HRH The Prince of Wales, who has been Child Bereavement UK's patron since 2009.

Fergus Crow, who has been the Chief Executive of Winston's Wish since 2015, will be Chief Executive of the merged organisation. This follows the retirement in September 2024 of Ann Chalmers MBE, Child Bereavement UK's Chief Executive of 21 years.



HRH The Prince of Wales, Patron of Child Bereavement UK, said:

“Grief is the very worst pain any child or parent will ever endure, and while we cannot prevent these losses, we can ensure that every possible type of expert support and care is given, to help rebuild the lives of those affected.

“In my sixteen years as Patron of Child Bereavement UK I have seen the life changing impact of their work and how the support, care and compassion provided protects the long-term health and wellbeing of those living with loss. I have also seen the growing need for support of this kind, and it is because of this increasing demand that I am delighted that Child Bereavement UK and Winston's Wish are joining forces to expand their impact.

“They have recognised that together they can do so much more, and I commend them both for taking this bold step to reach more people and help to reduce the long-term challenges that unresolved grief can cause.”

Liz Gratton, Chair of Winston's Wish said:

“Combining our expertise, networks, and resources to address issues with greater impact and efficiency will allow us to deliver new projects, expand reach, and serve a broader demographic of bereaved communities that neither organisation could achieve alone.”

Alexander Fitzgibbons, Chair of Child Bereavement UK said:

“The merger is a strategic partnership built on a vision of growth, expansion and opportunity. With more, we can do more. Together, we can reach further, giving a stronger voice to bereaved children, young people, parents and families across the UK.”

As the merger progresses, both organisations will continue to deliver their respective services. Beneficiaries and stakeholders should be reassured that they will continue to be able access support and other services as usual.

DON'T FORGET!!!!!!

Our Conference Runs from October 24th - 26th this year
At The Copthorne Slough - Windsor Hotel

Places are limited so please use the forms included in this
edition to book your places



Our President Amanda Pink is bringing the Institute back to its
roots of Education and Saturday afternoon will be filled with meet
and greets and talks from various people.

This afternoon is open to members of the public who wish to know
more about what we do. Alternatively, you can explore the facilities of
the Hotel or have a wander around Windsor

Saturday Night will include a drinks
reception, followed by a 3 course meal.
and the Handover of Offices. Students
who have passed their exams, will be
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