

BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS



THE JOURNAL

ISSUE 4



Let's prevent suicide today.
Because tomorrow's too late.

SAMARITANS

If you, or anyone else is struggling you can contact The Samaritans on 116 123 any time, day or night.

For more information on The Samaritans and the work that they do visit their website

www.samaritans.org

Samaritans | Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy | Here to listen



IN THIS ISSUE...

05 A LETTER FROM CLIVE PEARSON

Clive Reflects On This Month As National President

07 CONFERENCE 2026

All the details you need for the 44th Annual Conference in October 2026

12 ELEVATING EXCELLENCE

Deputy Editor Victoria Wells reflects on her time studying for the Diploma in Funeral Services

13 MEMBERSHIP FORMS

All renewal forms and information needed to renew your membership. Please take note of information on page 13.

23 FUNERAL DIRECTORS AND CELEBRANTS

Dinah Liversidge releases Part 3 of her Better Together: Strengthening the Celebrant-Funeral Director Partnership

34 CPD SESSIONS

Details of upcoming CPD Sessions



The CPD Standards Office
 CPD PROVIDER: 60065
 2023-2025
www.cpdstandards.com

*For all Executive,
 Administration & General
 Enquiries, please contact:*
BIFD National Office
Tel: 0800 032 2733
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, Clive
 Pearson**

1st Vice President, Dr Philip Gore
**2nd Vice President, Judith
 Dandy**
**Immediate Past President,
 Amanda Pink**



**SUPPORTERS &
 CONTRIBUTORS**

Auden Funeral Supplies
Bennetts Funerals
Colourful Coffins
Funeral Partners
J C Atkinson
Muchloved
Wilcox Limousines
Obitus

Letter from the National President

Clive Pearson

Dear Members and Colleagues,

As we settle into the vibrancy of April, I find myself reflecting on the incredible momentum within the British Institute of Funeral Directors. This season is traditionally one of renewal, and within our Institute, that energy is palpable as we continue our mission of "Educating the Profession."

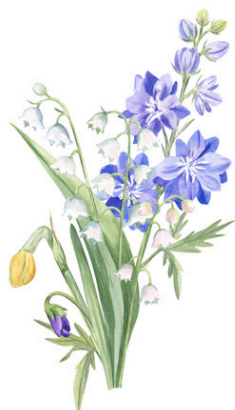


I am delighted to report that our recent Diploma in Funeral Service examinations went exceptionally smoothly. The logistical coordination required for these assessments is significant, and the professional manner in which they were conducted is a testament to the high standards we set for ourselves and our students.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the examinations board and our dedicated invigilators. Their meticulous planning and commitment to academic integrity ensure that a BIFD qualification remains the gold standard in funeral education.

To our students, I know how much hard work you have poured into your studies, and I along with your tutors eagerly await your results.

I urge everyone to keep an eye on our social media account for CPD sessions coming up throughout the year helping you keep up with your CPD hours.



As the landscape changes around us this month, it is a fitting time to discuss our role as stewards of the environment. April hosts Earth Day, and within the funeral profession, this serves as a meaningful reminder of our responsibility to offer sustainable choices.

Whether it is exploring carbon-neutral cremation options, promoting biodegradable materials, or managing our memorial woodlands with greater ecological care, our industry is at the forefront of this transition. I encourage all members to take a moment this month to reflect on how your own practice can contribute to a more sustainable future for the families we serve.

Thank you for your continued dedication to the Institute and the families who rely on our professionalism during their most difficult times

Clive

Clive Pearson
National President, Region C



SAVE THE DATE!

**TUESDAY 23RD JUNE TO
THURSDAY 25TH JUNE 2026**

We're delighted to announce the dates for CBCE 2026 which will see us returning to the Hilton Utilita Bowl - Southampton

There are a number of ticket options - head over to www.cbce.org.uk to book your place today!

44th ANNUAL BIFD CONFERENCE

23rd – 25th October 2026



Mercure Tankersley Manor Hotel

Church Ln, Tankersley, Barnsley S75 3DQ

The BIFD Invites You To Conference 2026.....

BIFD National President, Clive Pearson, and his wife Leanne cordially invite all Members, Fellows, Students, Associates, Presidents of Kindred Associations, and Distinguished Guests to attend the upcoming Conference and Gala Dinner of The British Institute of Funeral Directors. The event will take place from 23rd to 25th October 2025 at The Mercure Tankersley Manor Hotel.



Tankersley Manor centres around a renovated 17th-century residence, conveniently located just a minute from Junction 36 off the M1 and offering free parking. Its 98 refurbished rooms are designed with elegant craftsmanship and bursts of colour to create an inviting atmosphere for guests. You'll find leisure amenities such as a gym, swimming pool, jacuzzi, sauna, steam room, and five spa treatment rooms—perfect for enjoying some relaxation during Conference Weekend (advance booking is recommended). The Woodman Restaurant offers a cozy spot by the fire where you can unwind and savour classic Yorkshire dishes.

Nearby attractions include Elsecar Heritage Centre, Cannon Hall, and Chatsworth House.

The President's Charity For 2026.....



Clive and Leanne have selected The Samaritans as the Institute Charity for 2026.

Founded in 1953 by Chad Vara, who recognised through his own life experiences the importance of listening, the organisation empowers individuals by offering a compassionate ear to callers wishing to talk about their emotions, feelings, challenges, and concerns, hoping to help them make positive informed decisions about their lives.

The Samaritans' mission is dedicated to reducing the number of individuals contemplating or attempting to take their own lives. The organisation currently provides comprehensive 24/7 telephone support across England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. Its services have expanded to help individuals facing a broad range of issues, including suicide, depression, anxiety, stress, loneliness, all forms of abuse, and alcohol or drug use.

The itinerary so far...

Friday 23rd October 2026

The Education Committee is scheduled to convene in the morning, followed by a meeting of the Board of Directors in the afternoon.

Once you've settled into your rooms, Clive welcomes you to join him and Leanne for a three-course dinner in the hotel's function suite.

Saturday 24th October 2026

The Annual General Meeting will be held in the morning, and a buffet lunch will follow afterward.

In the afternoon, Clive has tentative plans for an activity of interest; further details will be provided once arrangements are confirmed.

The evening will commence with a drink's reception, followed by a three-course dinner accompanied by wine, cheese and biscuits, as well as tea and coffee. The programme will include the Diploma Awards Ceremony and the official Handover of Offices, concluding with music and dancing later in the evening.

Earlier than 23rd or later than 25th October 2026

Should you wish to extend your stay, we have arranged favourable rates for dates surrounding the Conference, allowing you to enjoy Yorkshire for a longer visit. Kindly inform us of your specific requirements, and we will endeavour to secure the most advantageous arrangements on your behalf.

The British Institute of Funeral Directors Conference 2026:

23rd – 25th October 2026

The Mercure Tankersley Manor Hotel

Church Ln, Tankersley, Barnsley S75 3DQ

The 44th BIFD Conference 2026 Rates

1. Friday Evening To Sunday Morning – THE COMPLETE PACKAGE

<i>Friday Dinner</i>	<i>.....Double Room (per couple)</i>	<i>£675</i>
<i>Friday & Saturday Bed & Breakfast</i>	<i>.....Single Room (per person)</i>	<i>£425</i>
<i>Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea & Coffee</i>		
<i>Saturday Lunch Included</i>		
<i>Saturday Evening Drinks Reception</i>		
<i>Saturday Gala Dinner – Includes 3 Course Meal, Cheese & Biscuits & Tea and Coffee</i>		

2. Friday Evening To Saturday Morning - ONLY

<i>Friday Dinner</i>	<i>.....Double Room (per couple)</i>	<i>£295</i>
<i>Friday Bed & Breakfast</i>	<i>.....Single Room (per person)</i>	<i>£200</i>
<i>Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea, Coffee & Biscuits</i>		

Saturday Lunch Is Available At £30 PP

3. Saturday To Sunday Morning - ONLY

<i>Saturday AGM: On Arrival Tea, Coffee & Biscuits</i>	<i>.....Double Room (per couple)</i>	<i>£395</i>
<i>Saturday Evening Drinks Reception</i>	<i>.....Single Room (per person)</i>	<i>£235</i>
<i>Saturday Gala Dinner – Includes 3 Course Meal, Cheese & Biscuits & Tea and Coffee</i>		
<i>Saturday Bed & Breakfast</i>		

Saturday Lunch Is Available At £30 PP

4. The Gala Banquet Dinner Only

.....£85 Per Person

<i>Saturday Evening Drinks Reception</i>		
<i>Saturday Gala Dinner – Includes 3 Course Meal, Cheese & Biscuits & Tea and Coffee</i>		

Saturday Lunch Is Available At £30 PP

5. AGM ATTENDANCE ONLY

.....Free To All Members & Students

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

Saturday Lunch Is Available On The Day At £30 PP

TO STAY BEFORE OR AFTER THE CONFERENCE B&B BASIS

Please add extra dates to booking form:

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

The 43rd BIFD CONFERENCE – 23rd – 25th October 2026

The Mercure Tankersley Manor

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 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

Reference: BIFDCONF

Tariff (3) – Sat to Sun

Double Rate: £.....

Single Rate: £.....

Mrs Margaret Dow

C/O The British Institute of Funeral Directors
National Office,
7-9 Station Street,
Meltham,
Huddersfield,
HD9 5NX

Tariff (4) – Gala Dinner Only

Total Attendees £.....

Tariff (5) – AGM Only

£ No Charge

Email: treasurer@bifd.org.uk

Total Amount Due £.....

Auden

FUNERAL SUPPLIES LTD

Passion | Pride | Quality

Lightweight
Stretchers



Removal
Trolleys



Mortuary



Coffin
Handling



BUY OUR LATEST PRODUCTS SECURELY

ONLINE NOW
www.audenf.com



First class
repairs and
servicing by
Auden



+44 (0) 1924 402080



3 YEAR
WARRANTY



FINANCE
AVAILABLE



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

**MADE IN
BRITAIN**

Elevating Excellence: My Experience with the BIFD Diploma in Funeral Service

Victoria Wells

Deputy Editor, Region C



Embarking on the Diploma in Funeral Service with the British Institute of Funeral Directors (BIFD) has been a transformative milestone in my professional journey. For anyone seeking to deepen their expertise within the profession, this course stands as a gold standard—a brilliant, in-depth exploration of the nuances that define modern funeral service.

From the outset, the curriculum proved to be remarkably thorough. It doesn't merely skim the surface of daily operations; rather, it dives deep into the sociological, legal, and emotional complexities of our work. I found the course to be incredibly engaging, striking a balance between practical application and theoretical understanding. Each module challenged me to look beyond the "how" of our tasks and truly comprehend the "why".

One of the most rewarding aspects of the diploma was how it systematically increased my knowledge of funeral service. Areas that I thought I understood well were contextualised with historical significance and modern best practices, providing a 360-degree view of the industry.

No course is without its quirks, and it is worth noting that the core funeral textbook used can feel somewhat out of date in certain sections. In an industry that is rapidly evolving with new technologies and changing consumer preferences, some of the literature reflects a more traditional era.

However, this did not detract from the overall experience. If anything, it provided a fascinating look at the foundations of our trade. It also served as a catalyst for deeper discussion with tutors and peers about how we can take those time-honoured principles and adapt them to the contemporary landscape. The engaging nature of the instruction more than made up for any vintage elements in the reading material.

In conclusion, my experience with the Diploma course has been nothing short of excellent. It is a demanding yet rewarding path for anyone who views funeral service not just as a job, but as a calling that requires constant growth and academic dedication. Despite the occasional dated reference, the course remains a pillar of professional development and a must for those looking to lead the way in our industry.



GUARDIAN®



Empowering choices with clarity and ease.

Real-time checks that remove uncertainty, streamline arrangements, and support better conversations.



STOCK
CHECK



PRICE
CHECK

Visit www.guardiancaskets.co.uk



JC Atkinson

Dear Members,

Please note our change of address to

7-9 Station Street

Meltham,

Holmfirth,

HD9 5NX

Membership renewal is due from the 1st April. Could all members (except Associate Members) please take the time to read through the Code of Ethics, before sending a signed copy back with your renewal forms. The new Certificate Membership has been included on the forms.

THE BIFD CODE OF ETHICS

All members of the Institute have agreed to be bound by the following code:

A Fellow and a Member shall not conduct herself/himself at any time in a manner likely to prejudice her/his professional status as a Funeral Director or the reputation of her/his profession.

A Fellow and a Member will treat with respect each dead human body. A Fellow and a Member will pledge a complete confidential relationship to those she/he is called upon to serve.

A Fellow and a Member shall not solicit funeral orders nor employ any person to do so on her/his behalf, nor shall she/he either offer or give any rewards for any recommendations.

I _____ have read, understood and agree to the BIFD Code of Ethics.

I acknowledge that if any concerns arise from my compliance with these commitments, the Board of Directors will assess the concerns and may suspend my membership of the Institute.

Signed _____

Date _____



BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS

BIFD National Office 7-9 station Street Meltham Holmfirth HD9 5NX

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

Email: admin@bifd.org.uk

Telephone: 0800 032 2733

2026/27 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)	£195.00		
	Full Member	£185.00		
	Certificate Member (non voting)	£ 75.00		
	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	£
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 <i>(please quote your surname as the reference when paying by BACS / Internet Banking)</i>

To opt out of allowing your personal information to be shared, please tick the box.	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	--------------------------

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.



BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS

APPLICATION FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP - 2026/27

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.

Are you or your company a member of NAFD or SAIF **Yes/No**

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:
-------------------	--------------

Please forward the completed application form to:
British Institute of Funeral Directors
BIFD National Office 7-9 station Street Meltham Holmfirth HD9 5NX
Tel: 0800 032 2733 Email: admin@bifd.org.uk Web: www.bifd.org.uk



BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS

APPLICATION FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP - 2026/27

FULL NAME or COMPANY NAME		
Address:		
		Post Code:
Telephone:	Home:	Business:
Mobile:		
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:
-------------------	--------------

Please forward the completed application form to:

British Institute of Funeral Directors
BIFD National Office 7-9 station Street Meltham Holmfirth HD9 5NX
Tel: 0800 032 2733 Email: admin@bifd.org.uk Web: www.bifd.org.uk



Bennett's Community Dance

The community spirit in Brentwood and Billericay truly comes alive at Bennett's Community Dance. Held twice a month, this joyful event is specially designed for seniors and is proudly dementia-friendly, ensuring a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere for all.

Our dance brings out the very best in our community—friendship, movement, and plenty of smiles. The sense of connection is truly irreplaceable. After two hours of constant chatting, laughter, and dancing, it's fair to say my cheeks are sore from smiling!

One attendee recently shared, *"Anna, I was smiling on and off for three days after attending Bennett's Dance."* Feedback like this reminds us just how meaningful these gatherings are.

Our professional dance teacher, Michelle, leads each session with carefully chosen music and easy-to-follow routines. She also incorporates hand dance movements for those using wheelchairs, so everyone who wishes to take part can join in and feel included.

Of course, no community event would be complete without refreshments. Guests can enjoy a cup of tea and a slice of cake, with plenty of time to relax, chat, and catch their breath between dances.

On special occasions, we are delighted to welcome Ray, who performs live for the crowd. When he sings rock and roll classics, the room fills with energy as everyone gets up to dance—creating a truly uplifting and memorable experience.



**Land Rover Defender
Hearses and
Support Vehicle**



Our Land Rover Defender hearses are built on long wheel-base chassis' enabling them to accommodate coffins/caskets up to 7 ft long. Our matching support vehicle for mourners has 7 seats.



Bennetts Funeral Directors Ltd
Call 01277 887110
www.landroverfunerals.com

Save The Date

Suicide Bereavement UK's
15th International Conference

**September
16
2026**

Different city, same light that unites us

Venue: **Titanic hotel,
Liverpool**
Time: **9am - 4.30**
More info to follow

Suicide Bereavement UK's 15th international hybrid conference is going to be our biggest and boldest yet.

Theme: Suicide Bereavement: Silence Isn't Always Golden

Date: 16th September 2026

Venue: Titanic Hotel, Liverpool (and online)

Time: 9:00am – 4:30pm

Join us for an inspiring and thought-provoking day where new research findings will be presented for the first time.

Growing International Interest

This year we're excited to host the conference in Liverpool—our first time outside Manchester! There's already a great buzz, and we're thrilled to see even more international delegates signing up. So far, we have attendees from 17 countries, including Australia, the USA, Ghana, Botswana and many more.

Pre-Conference Get-Together

We're thinking about organising an informal get-together the night before the conference. If that's something you'd enjoy, please drop a quick email to debbie.wilson@suicidebereavementuk.com. If enough people are interested, we'll make it happen

Early-Bird Extension

Good news! Following several requests, we've extended the **early bird registration deadline to 30th April**.


Exhibition Tables

We have space for **2I exhibition tables** in our Support Services Exhibition. These are *free for charities*, as long as they purchase two delegate places.

For more information and to register [CLICK HERE](#)

Hope to see you in September!

Programme

Registration		8.00 am - 8.55am
Chair: Angela Samata	Welcome to the conference	9.00am
Dr Nikki Jamieson	Moral Injury and Suicide Prevention: Conceptual Foundations and Practice Implications	
Nicole Cool	From Small Beginnings to a National Suicide Bereavement Model: StandBy's Evolution	
Coffee break		
Pete Johnson	Community as a Response to Suicide	
Dr Sharon McDonnell	Unheard, Unseen, Unspoken: The Silent Struggles of Older Adults Bereaved by Suicide	
Lunch/networking		
Chair: Barry McGale		
Workshops – Delegates must CHOOSE ONLY ONE WORKSHOP		
Those attending the LIVESTREAM , will only be able to attend Workshop 1		
Click here to see Workshops 1-4 		
1. Geoff McDonald	Addressing the Stigma of Mental Ill Health – First Step to Preventing Suicide	
2. Lisa Bourne	How Employers Can Best Support Employees Bereaved by Suicide	
3. Allison Furlong	Holding the Pieces Together: A Whole Family Peer Support Model After Suicide	
4. Madeleine Moon	How Politics Works and How to Make It Work for You	
Coffee Break		
Dr Kathryn Gardner	Strengthening Postvention: The Impact of "PABBS" Training on Professionals Supporting Those Bereaved by Suicide	
Amber Williams	Minority Suicide Loss Survivors: Interpersonal Factors, Mental Health, and Post-Traumatic Growth	
Claire McNamey	How Are You Really Though?	

The Original Colourful Coffins®

As individual as you

*Crafted by our family.
Loved by yours.*



Scan for our latest
catalogue



Colourful
Coffins®
as individual as you

Email: enquiries@colourfulcoffins.com Tel: 01865 779172



The Partnership at Its Best - When Both Professionals Are Supporting the Family Seamlessly – by Dinah Liversidge of the Celebrant Coaching and Training Academy



Families do not experience funerals in professional segments.

They do not experience “the funeral director’s part” and then “the celebrant’s part”.

They experience one day. One atmosphere. One flow of events. One overall sense of whether they felt supported or not.

When a funeral goes well, families often struggle to articulate why.

They may say, “It was exactly right,” or “Everything just flowed,” or “We felt looked after.”

What they are usually responding to is not any single action. They are responding to coherence.

To a sense that the people involved were quietly connected.

Over time, I have become more and more interested in what creates that coherence between celebrants and funeral directors. Not in theory. But in practice. Because strong partnerships do not happen by accident.

They are built, gradually, through repeated small experiences.

I have worked alongside funeral directors who, before I ever meet the family, give me a brief sense of who I am about to encounter.

Not a dossier. Not a psychological profile. Just a few gentle lines.

“She’s very private.”

“He’s quite chatty.”

“They’re struggling to agree on tone.”

Those few words shape my listening. They tune my antennae. They do not box the family in, but they help me arrive with a little more sensitivity.

I have also worked alongside funeral directors who say very little at all. Not because they do not care. But because they see our roles as separate.

They gather their information. I gather mine. We operate in parallel. In those situations, services can still be perfectly competent. But they rarely feel seamless. Something intangible is missing.

The best partnerships I have experienced sit somewhere between separation and entanglement.

Each professional is clear about their role. But there is a light thread of connection running between them. Enough to notice. Enough to adjust. Enough to respond.

One of the clearest markers of a strong partnership, for me, is predictability. Not in a rigid sense.
But in a relational sense.

I know roughly how this person communicates. I know how quickly they respond. I know whether they prefer email or phone. I know that if they say they will do something, it will happen.

That predictability reduces cognitive load. It frees up mental and emotional capacity, which can then be directed toward families.

When predictability is absent, people compensate. They chase. They double-check. They hold contingency plans.

None of this is visible to families. But it drains energy. Strong partnerships quietly conserve energy.

Another pattern I have noticed is that strong partnerships tend to involve a shared respect for each other's expertise.

Funeral directors who value ceremony understand that what happens in the chapel or at the graveside is not a "slot to be filled". It is the emotional heart of the day.

Celebrants who value funeral directing understand that the logistics, care of the deceased, and coordination behind the scenes are not mechanical tasks. They are skilled, responsible, and often emotionally heavy.

When each professional genuinely understands the weight carried by the other, a different tone emerges. Requests become kinder. Expectations become more realistic. Flexibility increases.

There is also something important about how problems are handled. In strong partnerships, issues are raised quietly, privately, without theatre. Without blame.

A sentence such as:

"Can we have a quick word about something that didn't quite work for me today?"

lands very differently to:

"That was a problem."

The first invites dialogue. The second invites defence.

Strong partnerships tend to assume goodwill. Not blind trust. Not absence of boundaries. But a baseline belief that the other person is trying to do good work. That assumption changes everything.

I once worked regularly with a funeral director who, after particularly complex services, would send a short message.

"Thanks for navigating that family so carefully today."

It took seconds to write. It made me feel seen. It made me more inclined, in turn, to go the extra mile. These small exchanges accumulate. They create relational credit. Relational credit is what gets drawn upon when something goes wrong. And something always goes wrong eventually.

Technology fails. Families change their minds. Information arrives late. Strong partnerships do not prevent these things. They soften their impact.

Another feature of the best partnerships is a shared orientation toward the family's experience, rather than toward professional territory.

In weaker partnerships, energy is sometimes spent defending boundaries.

"That's not my job."

"That's your responsibility."

In stronger partnerships, the question is more often:

"What does this family need right now?"

That does not mean people overstep roles. It means they remain flexible within them. It means they are willing to nudge something forward, or hold something temporarily, if it helps the whole system function.

From the family's perspective, this feels like calm competence. From the professional perspective, it feels like being part of a team.

I do not think seamless partnership looks dramatic. It looks ordinary. It looks like people quietly doing what they said they would do. It looks like small adjustments made without fuss. It looks like mutual courtesy. It looks like trust built over time. And perhaps most importantly, it looks like consistency.

Not perfection. Consistency. Families do not need flawless funerals. They need steady ones. They need to feel held by a process that does not wobble under pressure. That steadiness is rarely created by one outstanding individual. It is created by relationships, by people who have learned, gradually, how to work well together.

I am curious about this from both sides.

What behaviours make you relax when you see a familiar colleague's name appear on a file?

What makes you think, *"This will be fine"*?

Those answers are worth paying attention to. Because within them sit the building blocks of partnership at its best.



Have you thought about becoming one of our sponsors?

Benefits include, but not limited to:

- Advert and Editorial in The Journal
- Links in Member Communication
- Promotion at Conference and Events
- Promotion on CPD Invites and our website



**CONTACT THE
EDITORIAL TEAM FOR
DETAILS OF OUR
COMPETITIVE
PACKAGES**

JOURNAL@BIFD.ORG.UK



Supporting Families to Create Lasting Legacies as Tribute Pages Raise More Than £21M For Charity

Funeral Partners is continuing to help bereaved families honour their loved ones while supporting charitable causes across the UK, with more than £21m raised by their clients through online tribute pages over the past decade in partnership with the memorial platform, MuchLoved.

More than 60,000 tribute pages have been created since 2015, giving friends and relatives a dedicated space to share memories, photos and messages of remembrance, access funeral information and donate to a chosen charity.

In 2025 alone, Funeral Partners' clients, friends and families raised £4m, demonstrating the continued importance of meaningful ways to come together in memory of those they have lost.

Tribute pages have become an increasingly valued part of the grieving process, enabling families not only to celebrate life but also to create a lasting legacy that supports organisations delivering vital care and services within local communities.

Amongst the Funeral Partners branches, here are some examples of the amazing contributions these tribute charity donations are making, with much of the funding going to local hospices, hospitals and good causes as well as national charities:

- **Miles & Daughters Funeral Directors (Berkshire)** – tributes raising £265,700.
- **Godalming Funeral Service (Godalming, Surrey)** – tributes raising £158,200.
- **E Sargeant & Son Funeral Directors (Slough and Windsor, Berkshire)** – tributes raising £154,100.
 - **Eaves Funeral Service (Woking, Surrey)** – tributes raising £160,900.
 - **Woking Funeral Service (Woking, Surrey)** – tributes raising £152,000.
- **Howard Chadwick Funeral Service (Wallingford, Oxfordshire)** – tributes raising £141,200.
- **James Brown & Sons Funeral Directors (Northern Ireland)** – tributes raising £132,400.
- **Nicholas O'Hara Funeral Directors (Wimborne, Dorset)** – tributes raising £134,000.
 - **W Sherry & Sons Funeral Directors (West London)** – tributes raising £125,500.
 - **Knox & Son Funeral Directors (Warrington, Cheshire)** – tributes raising £126,000.

Richard Baker, Funeral Partnerships Manager at MuchLoved commented: “It has been a privilege to work alongside Funeral Partners over the last decade. The care and dedication of their teams has helped both the families they look after and the causes they wish to support enormously.”

Kelly Hailou, Marketing Director at Funeral Partners, said: “Every tribute page represents a life remembered and a family choosing to turn loss into something positive. We are privileged to support families in creating spaces where memories can be shared and where generosity can make a real difference to national and local charities, providing vital financial support.

It's inspiring to see families come together to honour loved ones in such a meaningful way, and these tributes continue to provide comfort while creating lasting legacies.”



A career path that makes a difference



Grow your skills, support families, and strengthen communities.

Choosing a career in funeral services means more than professional development, it means making a lasting impact. With clear pathways for growth and training, you'll build your future while helping others through life's most important moments.

**Discover a career that matters.
Scan the QR code to find out more.**

funeralpartners.co.uk/story



Walker & Morrell Funeral Directors Expand with Dedicated Branch for Leam Lane Estate



(Left to right) Natalie Holywell, Martin Morrell, Samantha Rutherford, Conor Walker and Aimee Hughes

A Funeral Directors that has been supporting communities in Gateshead and Washington for more than two decades has opened a new funeral home in Leam Lane.

Walker & Morrell Funeral Directors, which has been providing families with the highest quality of care since 2002, is proud to be the only funeral directors operating from the estate. The team has converted a building in Fewster Square into a welcoming funeral home for families, offering calm, private spaces to talk about the funeral plans and spend time with loved ones.

Martin Morrell, Area Development Manager, has worked in the business for more than 15 years. The company was founded by his father John Morrell, who is now retired, and colleague Lynne Walker, who is semi-retired and still works closely with the business

“As far back as I can remember we have provided funerals for the people of Leam Lane,” Martin said. “But having a physical base close to where they live is only going to help them more in what is, of course, a difficult time.

We already have funeral homes in central Gateshead and Washington, so this really was a natural fit for us to ensure we can help even more people over the coming years. The team has done a fantastic job on the building, completely refurbishing it and making it into a funeral home we are proud of.”

Walker & Morrell also recently welcomed experienced Funeral Director Samantha Rutherford onto the team, who will be joining the new Leam Lane branch

Samantha said: “I’m looking forward to working in the Leam Lane area and getting to know the local people. It’s an honour to guide families through one of life’s most difficult moments, helping to arrange the funeral service where their loved one’s memory can be honoured and providing comfort when most needed. I also love the connection I get to build with the families I serve.”

Walker & Morrell’s Leam Lane branch opened on Monday 30 March. The team welcomes anyone who would like to pop in for a cup of tea and a chat at any time for help with bereavement support or to learn more about what they do.

Walker & Morrell is a part of the Funeral Partners network, which has more than 290 high-quality funeral homes across the country. For more information about Walker & Morrell Funeral Directors visit <https://www.walkerandmorrell.co.uk/>



Martin Morrell and Samantha Rutherford



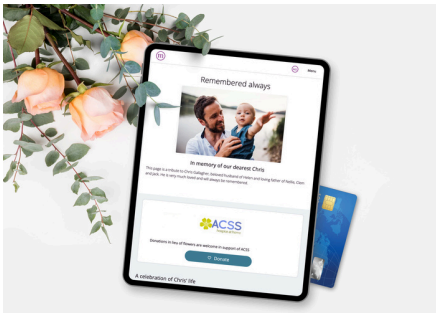
much  loved

Your place to remember

funeral notices • online donations • website services

For more information: 01494 722818 • support@muchloved.com • muchloved.com

How Technology Has Transformed The Way We Remember



From Victorian customs to today's online tributes, the way we mourn and remember our loved ones has evolved with society and technology. What has changed is not just the format, but the expectations of the bereaved families, and the role of funeral directors in supporting them.

Changing expressions of grief

Over centuries, the way we express grief has evolved. Once constrained by ritual and formality, we are now free to show grief in ways which are personal and individual. This cultural shift has paved the way for today's more connected and participatory forms of remembrance.

The emergence of online remembrance

In the early 2000s, internet access expanded and people began to mourn and share memories in new ways. Online tribute platforms like MuchLoved emerged to meet the need for online spaces for remembrance.

Funeral directors saw how technology could deepen their connection with families, enabling them to extend care beyond the funeral. Meanwhile, more geographically dispersed families needed new ways to participate in mourning. The rise of direct cremation has also created a need for families to have alternative ways to gather and remember.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, livestreamed services, digital guestbooks and online memorial pages allowed connection and participation to continue despite physical restrictions. For many families, these tools didn't just replace in-person gatherings, they added a new dimension for sharing and sustaining memories.

Looking to the future

Online memorialisation is now firmly established, with MuchLoved hosting pages for around one in five UK deaths and growing each year. Tribute pages have evolved far beyond funeral notices. They host funeral details, facilitate fundraising, enable features such as webcasts, and continue as a place to connect and share memories after the funeral.

Emerging technologies will ensure the trend continues. QR-enabled memorials may allow visitors to instantly access a person's story. Advances in multimedia and immersive storytelling could enable richer, more dynamic ways to preserve memories. Integration between funeral services and digital platforms may become more seamless, reducing administrative work while improving the experience for families.

Most importantly, the role of remembrance in society is expanding. Families are no longer limited to a single funeral event. They increasingly seek experiences that are personal, inclusive and enduring, through spaces where stories can be shared, revisited and treasured.

As technology continues to evolve, its value will not lie solely in new features, but in its ability to help people feel closer, remember more clearly, and continue their bond with the person who has died.

DON'T FORGET!



Our next conference runs from Friday 23rd - Sunday 25th October at Tankersley Manor Hotel.

Remember to book your places soon to secure your place.

Letters To Heaven

Last month, we reported on Sheryl Smorthit and her campaign to have Letters to Heaven Post boxes installed in as many places as she can by fundraising for them.

This month, we can confirm that the third postbox has been installed at Huddersfield Crematorium and she has hit her target for a fourth box, which will be placed at Whinney Hill Cemetery in Brighouse.

Well Done Sheryl!



Secure, professional Live Streaming

With our specialist technology and team, we can professionally stream a funeral service and make it available for a further 28 days. This gives people the chance to attend and pay their respects, even if they can't make it in person.




Music | Streaming | Tributes | Keepsakes



BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS

REGION K MEETING

To be held at the Ship Inn, Faversham

 **The Ship Inn**


 12 Ospringe Street,
Faversham, Kent,
ME13 8TL



Wednesday 29th April 2026

 **6:30 PM for 7:00 PM START**

 **PRE-BOOK** by Monday 27th
(for menu)

 Replies to: admin@bifd.org.uk

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NETWORKING



& PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



bifd.org.uk

BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS CPD EVENTS

**May
6th**

Lelly Fields Crematorium

Sproatley Road, Preston, East Riding of Yorkshire, HU12 8FX

full day of networking, talks and educational sessions

**May
13th**

Hanson Carriages

Raikes Lane, Tong, Bradford, BD4 0RL

Meet James and his team of horses, Children welcome

**June
24th**

Obitus visit and insight to the service they provide

Unit 29, Presidential Buildings, Saville St East, Sheffield, S4 7UQ

Limited numbers, book early to avoid disappointment

**Nov
18th**

OrthoMetals talk

Parkwood Crematorium, Huddersfield

A zoom link will be available for this if you can't attend in person

**Nov
25th**

Ghost Walk social evening in York

York's local Ghost hunter will be giving a tour of Yorks ghost history followed by a social catch up in a local pub

**meet new people, share knowledge and network,
come together, connect & add to your CPD portfolio**



Enquiries & further
information contact
hayleyowenfd@gmail.com



A Last Journey - Built With Love



Mercedes E-Class W214 Hearse
Built in Britain - Trusted Worldwide



Bentley Flying Spur Hybrid
A Bespoke Funeral Conversion by Wilcox

01942 259 860 | Enquiries@wilcox.uk | wilcox.uk


WILCOX
— SINCE 1948 —