

12th July 2019

Welcome to your latest newsletter about our Good to Great plans. In each issue you'll be able to meet the team, find out what's going on and understand what our journey will mean for you. Let us know what you think!

ADAPTING TO MEET OUR CLIENTS' NEEDS



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The needs and tastes of the clients we serve have changed over time and so we have transformed our practices and techniques to meet them.”

I recently had the pleasure of recognising the 35 years of service that Kevin Banham Regional Manager for Anglia has given to the company and our clients. Always a champion of putting care of the deceased at the very top of the funeral operations agenda Kevin like so many colleagues across the entire business has seen many changes during his time with the company.

In 1984, when Kevin joined L. Fulcher as a driver bearer (after being a casual gravedigger for two years to supplement his full time nursing job), I was doing my O levels, the miners were on strike, there had been a terrible fire at London's Oxford Circus Underground station, the Grand Hotel in Brighton had been bombed and Bob Geldof inspired Band Aid to release a single (on vinyl!!) to raise millions for the Ethiopian famine disaster.

On a lighter note, it was actually the Pound Note that was replaced by the new Pound Coin, Torvill & Dean won Olympic gold in Los Angeles, children were in a frenzy for cabbage patch dolls and anything 'A' Team, whilst Frankie Goes to Hollywood were telling their parents to relax!



Reflecting on the many changes we have witnessed since then brought to the forefront of my mind the Good To Great Transformation and the impact and change that it is bringing to us all wherever we work in the business.

The needs and tastes of the clients we serve have changed over time and so we have transformed our practices and techniques to meet them.

Take service stationery as an example. When Kevin joined the business having a Hymn Sheet at a funeral service



Good to Great Update

Transformation Programme newsletter



was rare and typically comprised of one sheet of fragrantly inked paper printed and folded by the vicar in the vestry of the local church. Today we see high quality digital printing unlimited colours and designs brought to life with nostalgic photographs digitally reproduced and enhanced to tell a story beyond words. We have embraced new technology and learnt new skills in scanning, cropping and emailing to adapt and meet our clients needs.

designs, coffins woven from wicker, bamboo, banana leaf and even wool.

Hearsees were usually based on saloon cars and almost always black – nowadays your final journey can be in almost any colour hearse you want, or in a Land Rover, VW campervan, motorcycle sidecar, lorry or even a London bus!



On the go we had an A-to-Z and no sat navs or indeed mobile phones. It was a pager that would bleep (not sensors on your car) to alert us that we were needed and we would stop at a payphone and put in 10p to call the business to find out why.

And the changes have not been limited to Funeral Operations. Our Crematoria have transformed the choices for music at a funeral service from something the resident organist may have chosen on entry and exit, to an unlimited media opportunity for families to playback bespoke audio visual tributes to their loved ones that can be webcast to family and friends around the globe.

Funeral Plans didn't exist and it was not until 1985 that Dignity launched the first nationally available offering. Today we help thousands of

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clients every year to choose from a range of pre-need funeral plans that complement our at need services both in branch, via the Client Service Centre and online.

And so it is by looking at our past that we can find encouragement for our future. We have been and remain a client focussed business putting those we serve at the very heart of what we do.

As our clients have adapted to the changing world around them so too we have risen to meet their changing needs. To do this we have had to evolve, adapt and change in ways we probably never thought we could, would or even should.

Our transformation journey will take us from good to great by learning new skills, embracing new technology and finding new ways of working to better serve those who call on us in their hour of need.

In fact, just as we have for the last 35 years!

Andrew Judd
Operations Director



We used to place obituary notices for our clients in the local newspaper and only those that purchased the publication would see it. Now we can help our clients share details of a funeral instantly around the world with our Funeral Notices Online service immersing ourselves in the digital age to better serve our clients.

Similarly, what was traditionally a restricted range of wood-based coffins has become a cornucopia of almost unlimited choice and individuality. Our clients have options unimaginable in 1984, including bespoke printed



PILOT NETWORKS REVEALED

To test the plans we have made to take Dignity from Good to Great, we are piloting our proposed new ways-of-working in three pilot networks: Dinnington, Lincoln and Sutton-in-Ashfield.

These networks include Nottingham (the Gregory's & Baguley's Group) and Hurtons in Retford (pictured) and have a total of 19 branches.



WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

For generations we've treated Britain's deceased and their loved ones with care. We are a caring network of people, with a proud heritage of serving communities and families at their greatest time of need. However, we need to transform the way we work because as we've acquired more businesses and the number of competitors has increased we have started to lose market share, meaning competitors are taking our business.

WHY THESE NETWORKS?

We've chosen these networks because they already operate in a way that is similar to our new

ways of working, so we can test our proposed new processes with minimal disruption to our clients. We will be working with Regional Manager Ian Studd and Area Manager Paul Hudson to ensure we use their expertise and local knowledge as we develop our plans.

We intend for the pilot networks to start testing the proposed ways of working in Autumn of this year. And if they are successful, we will continue the rollout into 2020 and beyond.

💬 If you have any questions, please contact your Regional Manager or email goodtogreat@dignityuk.co.uk.



A TRIP TO 2022: CARE CENTRES

In the first of our time travel series, we pay a visit to one of our new care centres. So strap yourselves in while we fire up the flux capacitor and take you on a journey to a care centre near you in 2022...

...We arrive outside a well-presented building and have no problem finding a place to park the Dignity DeLorean – there's plenty of spaces here.

Our new blue signs show exactly who we are and we feel a sizzle of pride as we approach the entrance. The new brand and TV advertising has created quite a buzz and we are becoming known as the funeral director of choice for the UK,

with awareness of who we are increasing every month.

Inside, it immediately feels like Dignity. The fresh new décor is calming and professional and we get talking to Ben, an Operating Network Manager, who has agreed to show us around.

When Ben finds out we're from 2019, he laughs and shakes his

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head. “I don't miss those days at all!” he says, as he shows us the clean and spacious garage. “It's so much easier now we can plan our vehicles and people according to demand, and the facilities we have here are second-to-none.”

As we move into the mortuary, we see the people we're caring for in a bespoke refrigeration space. We wonder if such a large facility to care for the deceased sits comfortably with the families we work with. **Don't the families mind them being away from their local branch? Doesn't it feel a bit, well, impersonal?**

Ben points out that we can still happily arrange viewings at local branches. We simply prepare their

loved ones at the care centre and take them to a local chapel of rest for viewings if that is what families want. **But what about the staff? Don't they miss being on high streets with their old colleagues?**

Ben nods. "Yes, that was a difficult change for some people. But we have much nicer working conditions here, plus finding somewhere to park is much easier than on the High Street. Some people may have a slightly longer journey and others may not, but most people are still in touch with their colleagues – after all, we're not a million miles away and we still have team nights out. And, now that my time is freed up from loads of admin, I can spend much more time supporting my team, so they're seeing far more of me than they did before. Umm...they may not see that as a good point though!"

Ben continues his tour and points out a bright area by the kitchen. "This is our comms zone," he explains. He shows us the noticeboard with the latest internal news, a couple of posters and some information for the care centre itself. "We know that a lot of our people need to know what's going on but as they're not in front of a computer we

need to bring the info to them. This area helps," he explains, before pointing out a screen where colleagues can access e-learning, payslips and the intranet whenever they need to.

It's all very nice, but I can't help wondering if we really needed to move to this kind of swish, large centre. After all, we still delivered great funerals in 2019 from the heart of our communities. **Has it been change for change's sake?**

Ben nods again. "Yes, it worked OK before and believe you me, I was as cynical as the next person. But, we had no overall sight of our resources so we couldn't plan even at a local level. Now we are working much more collaboratively, by sharing our fleet and people it's much easier to plan what we need for each funeral. Our buildings needed urgent attention. Our processes weren't the same from one end of the country to the next which meant we couldn't share best practice or have a clear career plan. And because of this we were spending far too much on silly things like stamps and expensive local plumbers.

"So yes, it worked, but it wasn't great, or efficient or world-class like a company like ours should be. The changes mean

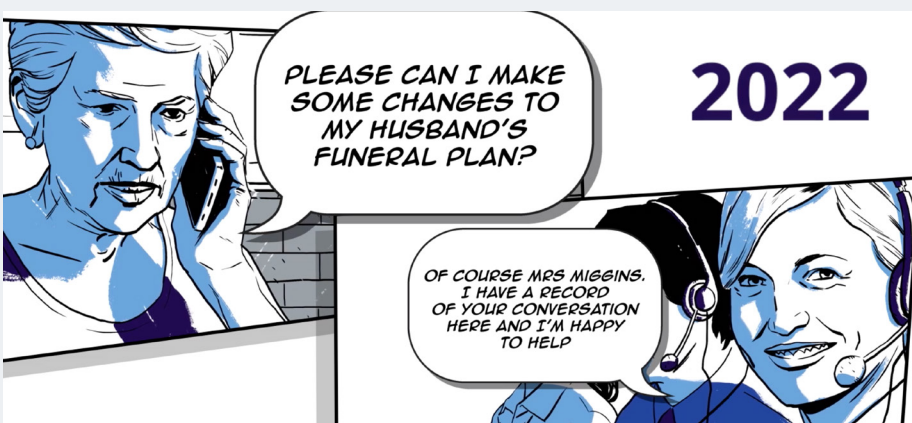
we are now taking the greatest care throughout all areas of the business from head office right through to care of the deceased and beyond."

We grab a cuppa and as we walk into Ben's office, it seems remarkably clutter-free. I ask him where all the white boards, papers and diaries are for planning the fleet movements – **there seems to be a lot less paper in 2022.**

Stirring his coffee (two sugars!) he leans over and smiles. "Well, we have an online Resource Management System now, so we don't have to rely on paperwork anymore." I ask how that makes a difference – isn't it just the same thing, but on a computer? "Not quite!" laughs Ben, "It's so much easier now to plan fleet, as the system helps us allocate people and fleet to vehicles and we can even see where fleet is across other neighbouring networks too. It means that if we ever need extra fleet, we can see the possibilities." Amazing.

As we go to leave we suddenly realise what's missing – we haven't seen or heard a fax machine since we got here! "That's right," said Ben. "We use them a lot less now. We're paying suppliers online, clients can pay us online if they want and we can order supplies online. The new systems simply mean we're much easier to do business with. **We really are a funeral director for the 21st century.**"

Look out for the next article in the Time Travel series to see where (or when!) the Dignity DeLorean takes us next. And why not view [this video](#) to see where we expect to be in 2022?



THANKS FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

A few weeks ago we asked you how we're doing for transformation communications and we wanted to say a big thank you for your input and suggestions.

You said: We want more clarity on what Good to Great means for me



We say: We hear you, we know how frustrating it must be to wonder what all of this means for you. The fact is, there are some areas we don't have answers for yet and because we want to make sure we get it right; there is lots of planning to do before we can make any announcements. This is not only the right thing to do by you, but also the legal process that we need to follow. Rest assured, as soon as we can tell you more details about what may change for you and your role, you will be the first to know.

You said: We want better communication from our managers



We say: We agree – and in fact we've been working on a new Team Brief cascade tool to help your managers communicate

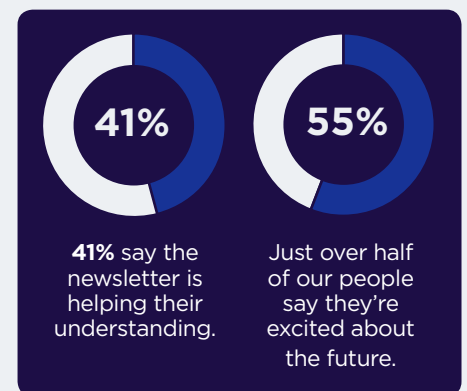


consistently and regularly with you. Read more about it later in this newsletter.

You said: We want Good to Great news to be more accessible.



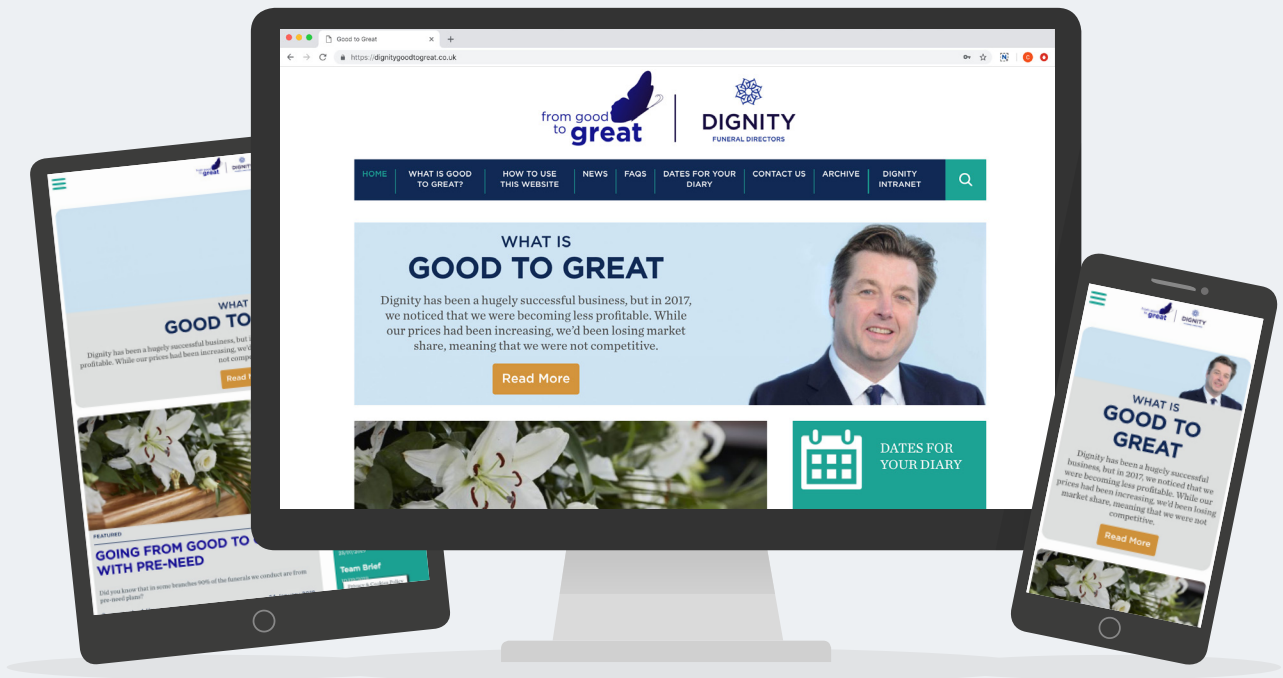
We say: Good news – this is already happening! We've been working on a dedicated website for Good to Great news where you'll see news, FAQs and be able to like and comment on articles. We've been working hard to make sure that any Dignity colleague can access this from any device, whether they have a Dignity email address or not. Read more about it below.



You said: How can I get in touch with the Good to Great team?



We say: We always want to hear your suggestions, feedback and ideas, so keep them coming to goodtogreat@dignityuk.co.uk.



GOOD TO GREAT WEBSITE: COMING SOON

Do you want to know what's happening with the Good to Great programme?

Can't wait for your next newsletter?

Then look out for our brand new Good to Great website, going live this month.

You'll be able to access the website from any device, whether at work or on your own smartphone and has been created exclusively for Dignity colleagues - whether you're at Head Office, a casual FSO or in branches.

Designed to keep you informed as we progress on our transformation journey over the next few years, you'll be able to rate articles, leave comments

and check out what's going on as our plans start coming to life.

Look out for details on how to login, soon.





A NEW **TEAM BRIEF**

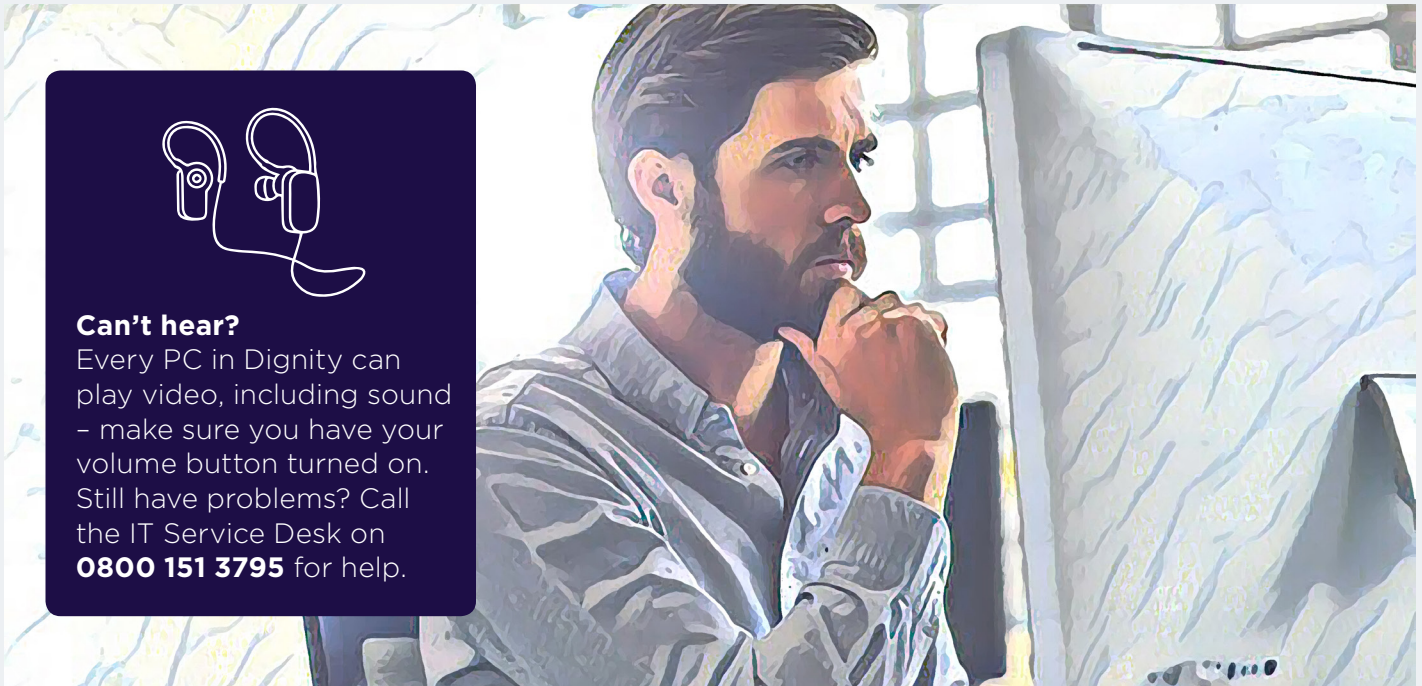
Reports show that people managers are employees' most trusted line of communication. In fact, our own surveys have proved that, with colleagues saying they wanted to hear more, more regularly from their manager.

So, with all the change and challenges we are seeing on our Good to Great journey, we are introducing a new monthly face-to-face cascade tool to help your managers communicate more effectively with you.

Team Brief will launch next week and will help your manager communicate information and your feedback consistently through the organisation. Each briefing should only last half an hour or so and can form part of your existing team meetings. Although an in-person brief is best, we understand that this may not always be possible, so we will be providing help and guidance to managers to help them make this happen.

Find out more about Team Brief in this [short video](#).

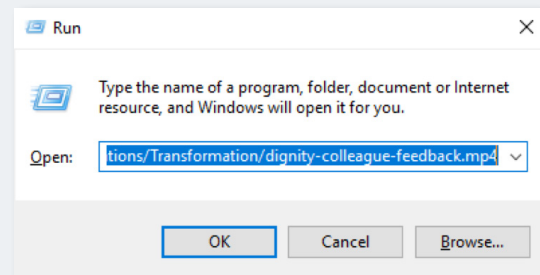
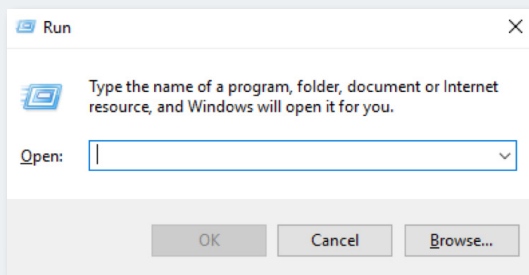




WATCHING VIDEOS ON RDS?

If you're on Remote Desktop Services (RDS) and want to watch one of our videos, then follow our top tips below:

- 1 Right-click on the video link in the message and select **'Copy Hyperlink'**
- 2 Press and hold the **'Windows'** key on your keyboard (this is located at the bottom left between the **'Ctrl'** and **'Alt'** key)
- 3 While holding the **'Windows'** key press the letter: **'R'**



- 4 This will open a **'Run'** window (as shown above); press and hold the key: **'Ctrl'**, while holding **'Ctrl'** press the letter **'V'**
- 5 Now press: **'OK'**
- 6 Your video will now load and run.

NEW SIGNAGE: DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

After the first new signage was installed at Hazels in Sutton Coldfield a couple of weeks ago, we're continuing the rollout of our smart, newly branded signage.

Check out the next installation dates here:



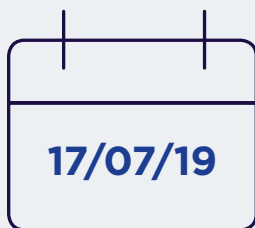
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Thompsons Funeral Directors
F. J. Tresidder
Talbot Funeral Directors



00066
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Middleton & Wood
Coyne Brothers
Hooley, Watson & Buckley



00125
01233
01238

J. C. Clarke & Son
George Hall & Son
S. Wellens & Sons



00080
01515

Thompsons Funeral Directors
S. Wellens & Sons



seconds with... **Rob Hiden**

Name:

Rob Hiden.

Role:

National HR Business Partner.

Where are you based?

As I do a national role I don't really have a base, unless you count my car.

How long have you worked for Dignity?

Four months.

What does a typical day look like for you?

There is no such thing as typical for me; it varies and I'm not sure it exists if I'm honest. I spend most of my days helping to shape transformation and supporting my team of HRBPs.

How would you explain your job to a three-year-old?

I try my best to make sure that people love the job they do.



If you could change one thing about your job, what would it be?

I'd like to spend more time with my team.

What song/piece of music would you choose for your own funeral?

Mr Brightside.

What would your top tip be to take Dignity from Good to Great?

We should all be more curious about what our future holds.

What's the most unusual/most eventful thing that's ever happened to you at work?

I once opened a Homebase store and the then Prime Minister John Major visited. Before his visit we had the army in for safety checks.





Jargonbuster

Don't know your BAU from your ROI?
Then we're here to help!

Leverage

Sometimes you may hear us talk about leveraging the business. This simply means us taking maximum advantage of who we are. So, leveraging our brand to get better awareness amongst clients, or leveraging our size so we can get better value deals from our suppliers.

SLA

This stands for Service Level Agreement. An SLA is the minimum level of service that someone will deliver to you as per your agreement. It is not a guarantee or an assurance that you will get that service. It means that when the service dips below that level, you can open a query. So if an SLA is an expectation that you receive service in 5 days, and you haven't had this in 7 days, then you have a right to question that.



What's bugging you?

If you're about to give your PC a good thrashing, or there's a gremlin in your systems, then our IT Director, Paul Simpson wants to know! We want to make life easier for you, so tell Paul what your everyday IT frustrations are at bettercallpaul@dignityuk.co.uk and he'll see what he can do.



New Listen up!

If you want to hear about transformation in more detail, why not listen in to our updated Good to Great dial in? Simply call free on **0800 0086371** to hear Transformation Director Paul Turner talk about progress being made, what Taking the Greatest Care means to all of us, and how IT is enabling our success. Remember you can leave your questions or feedback at the end (8 mins).

Get in touch 

If you have a question about transformation, heard something on the jungle drums, have some feedback or a suggestion for the next newsletter, then drop us an email at goodtogreat@dignityuk.co.uk.