

31 January 2020

Welcome to our round-up of news from the Good to Great programme. Can't wait for the next issue? Then go to www.dignitygoodtogreat.co.uk to see the news, comment and get involved.

(P.S. Don't forget to print out a copy for any colleagues who don't have email!)

A TAILORED CHOICE

Just want a burger but it only comes with fries and a drink? Or having to buy a whole suit when you just want a shirt? Sometimes we simply don't want the whole package.

A man walks into a shop to choose a new shirt. He knows what he wants, something that would work with the cufflinks he got for Christmas and that gives off a little *je ne sais quoi* (in other words, that looks mint).

He sees a suited and booted mannequin wearing exactly his style of shirt (nice slim-fitting number in a shade of pink), finds it on the shelf and goes to the till to pay. The shopkeeper puts the shirt in a bag, along with a three-piece suit, a pair of shoes and a tie.

"That'll be £595 please," says the shopkeeper.

"But I don't want all that," says the man, puzzled. "I just want the shirt. I don't want or need a new suit. And I don't wear ties."

"Oh, but you can't have the shirt on its own," explains the shopkeeper kindly. "If you want the shirt, you have to buy it all, and



besides it would cost more if you bought them all separately."

In the past, we liked to buy things in a package – holidays, broadband and phone, shirt and tie – but now, many of us like to pick and choose.

When you think about it, funerals are no different. Clients liked that our Full Service Funeral included a wide range of services which met their needs and those of their loved ones. But times have changed. Fewer clients ask for a church service or to spend time with their loved one - and many

now use online donations rather than a traditional collection. You've also told us that our clients say they want more choice over their loved one's funeral, with more personalised touches becoming increasingly popular.

That's why we introduced the **Tailored Funeral** - a new, flexible product that provides all of the essential elements of a funeral but also allows clients to choose and pay only for the additional services they want, or put another way – they **don't pay** for the services they don't want.



With 50 branches in the North East trained and going live with the Tailored Funeral rollout this week, we caught up with a colleague who is already using it to see how it's been working for them so far...

continued on next page »

**Case study: Trish Hogg,
 Funeral Arranger, Alfred R. W.
 Connock, Shepton Mallet**

When my colleagues and I first heard about the Tailored Funeral, we were very pleased. It took several arrangements for staff to get used to it (and even now we have to remind ourselves to put some of the items on the costing, such as the 'out of hours into care' fee) – but it offers much more flexibility to our clients.

I think it's improved morale because we're now more competitive with other Funeral Directors and we are offering more choice to our clients. With more clients shopping around these days, clients are finding us very competitive and, in some cases, cheaper. They're only paying for services they need or want and we're even seeing an increase in funeral numbers in some areas.

My advice to colleagues changing to Tailored: Be open to the changes, forget the past and move forward with an open mind. It has been a great change for both staff and our clients.

I have been employed by Dignity for eight years and I

can honestly say the Tailored Funeral has been one of the best changes, making us much more competitive.

About the Tailored Funeral

Following its introduction last year, the Tailored Funeral is being introduced on a phased basis, with the ambition all areas will have been trained to go live with it by the end of this year.

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What's included?	What can be added?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring deceased in to care during working hours and dress in gown or own clothes • Viewing during working hours • Funeral Director support on process and administration • Arrangement of service • Arrangement of extra services • Ability to choose coffin • Hearse to committal • Ability to add on Services • All personnel necessary on day of funeral • Funeral Notices • Payment of disbursements in advance – remainder 7 days after funeral • Ashes can be collected at branch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embalming • OOH collection • Delivery of Ashes • Removal of pacemakers • Viewing OOH • Celebrants/Minister • Limousine • Any alternatives required e.g. alternative hearse, additional service venues, reception into home, donations, personalised procession



So, how's it going?

It's early days in terms of data, but all indications show that the new Tailored Funeral is being received well by our clients. They're appreciating the transparency, the flexible choice and knowing exactly what they're paying for.

And at a time when we're there to make a difficult time as easy as

possible, that can only be a good thing.

Got a question?

If you have a question about our pricing strategy, check out the **FAQs** on the Good to Great website, comment below, or drop a line to goodtogreat@dignityuk.co.uk.



OUR DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

In his first blog of 2020, CEO Mike McCollum reflects on what we're learning from our pilots, and from his visits and conversations with colleagues.

It's only a few weeks into the New Year and I feel that we're already making real progress, especially with new technology that will support you, and ultimately our clients.

From the new Resource Management System we're testing in the pilots (more on that later on in the newsletter), to the plans for a new Source-to-Pay Amazon style procurement system, to the tablets that we will be using in arrangements, it certainly feels that we're starting to make great use of more modern tools, which is really exciting.

We're keeping a close eye on the pilot areas, and feedback

from colleagues there is that the tablets have been very well received. Clients really like it, and this is just one tangible example of the exciting stuff that we're working on to help us modernise and streamline the business, so we can give our clients an even better service. After all, that's what it's all about.

Looking ahead, we expect the CMA to share the results of their investigations this year. Although we don't know what they're going to say, their report will be a significant event for our business because it may lead to regulation of the industry, may lead to price controls and a variety of other things that could potentially change the way we think about

the way we do things.

When you look at the industry in this context, all the work being done by the Good to Great transformation team is even more necessary.

I remain confident that our direction of travel is the right way to go. We are trying to give better value to clients through competitive, clearer pricing, and better service through technology at both a customer-facing and service delivery level. We are in good shape to deal with whatever the CMA throws at us.

The business is busy at the moment and my thanks go out

to all of you for continuing to provide an excellent service at this time. Last year's client survey results show a small but important increase in the percentage of people who would "definitely" recommend us to 91%. Maintaining such a high level of service is very important, so thank you. I can see how hard you're all working when I am out in the business.

Recently, I visited a number of branches which have had the new branded signage. I thought it looked great – and I'm pleased to say that both colleagues and clients alike have also given it a thumbs up. As well as those interesting visits, I visited Phillips in St. Albans and Powell's in Ware. They're two of our biggest

individual businesses and I couldn't help but marvel at how strong they are, how well led and how well they are integrated into their local communities.

“
When you look at the industry in this context, all the work being done by the Good to Great transformation team is even more necessary.
”

I have also enjoyed visiting our crematoria in Lancaster, Rotherham, Stockport and Grenoside. I especially enjoyed walking around the gardens. Even though it's not the best time of year, I was really impressed at how, even in winter, they are beautiful places to be. They are kept to such an amazingly high standard.

I'm looking forward to attending the third Dignity Employee Forum soon. I've been to two so far and they remain a great way to hear what people have to say and get feedback back into the business too.

Speaking of which, I get that it's an unsettling time for many of you, and you want to know what's happening. Rest assured that two months in we are continuing to carefully watch the pilot and take them very seriously – after all, they're a key part of our ambition modernise the business while creating a better, more competitive service for our clients. We've already learned lots of lessons, can see that the new technology is working well and that everyone is coping even at a very busy time, so it's fair to say that we're pleased with the results so far.

We will do our very best to keep you posted on how we're doing and what you may expect. And of course, we will be taking the greatest care to do this in a professional, sensible and progressive way.

Warm regards,

Mike McCollum
CEO

FIGHT OR FLIGHT?

Change is hard. It can make us want to run away, cover our eyes, or even confront it head on. But why is that? Here, we explore why our cavemen ancestors have a lot to answer for.

What would you do if you were faced with a sabre-toothed tiger?

Would you run as fast as your legs will carry you, or try and put the beast in its place?

In fact, our reaction to change

(and prehistoric predators) is all down to a primitive part of our brain, as expert Fiona Cameron from Sticky Change explains in our latest video. Just click play or log on to the Good to Great website if you're reading a printed copy of this newsletter.



ALL SYSTEMS GO

We're moving with the times – and that includes movements of our people, vehicles and those in our care, thanks to a revolutionary, brand-new system.

Bits of paper, post-it notes, whiteboards, diaries...

These are just some of the many different ways we currently track and manage those in our care, as well as our colleagues and large fleet of hearses and limousines.

Of course, this means we don't have a true view of what's happening across our business, which in turn means we're not being as efficient as we could be for a company of our size.

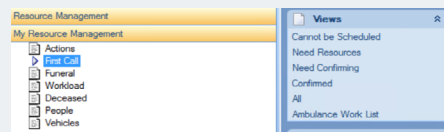


But what if there was a more modern, less manual way of doing things? A way of seeing where we have vehicles available across networks, where colleagues have capacity, and the status of those in our care?

Over in the pilot networks, the service delivery teams are using a new online Resource Management System (RMS) that gives us this ability.



Developed after months of planning between Funeral Operations, IT and Transformation teams, the system works with Compass to allocate resources throughout the customer journey. Right from the first call, it allows us to allocate Funeral Service Operatives and ambulances to bring people into our care, to moving them for doctors and

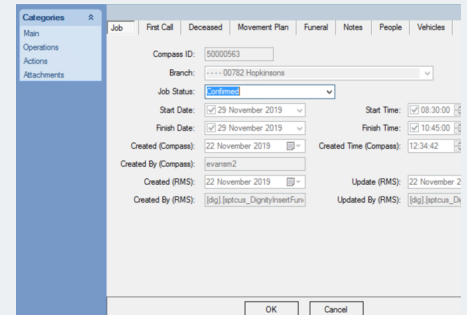


family viewings, through to allocating colleagues and vehicles on the day of the funeral.

“It gives real time visibility of the support we need to make a difference to the families we're caring for,” explained Regional Change Manager, Anthony Molyneux. “It features a calendar, diary, ceremonial duties reporting and ambulance work lists. The pilot team have done extremely well in embracing the new system.”

The new system is being put through its paces in the pilot networks so we can learn what can be improved for any future rollouts.

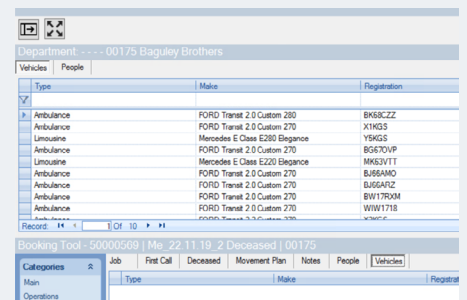
Richard Staniland (pictured), who is responsible for diary management,



has been one of the first colleagues to use the new system – and as a former paper diary user, is finding it easy to use.

“I now have a complete digital system that gives me visibility,” he said, adding, “I'm finding it an organised and efficient way to track and monitor staff and vehicle movements, which is also helping to serve chapel visit requirements and help colleagues with out-of-hours enquiries.”

Although recognising that its early days, Richard is optimistic about the potential of RMS, saying: “Looking back over the short period of time I have been using it, it has definitely made a positive difference.”



We're looking forward to enhancing our use of RMS, so watch this space.

SIMPLICITY THE BEST FROM START TO FINISH

Several colleagues at Head Office who support our Simplicity Cremations business have recently found themselves getting to grips with the operational side of Simplicity by visiting a local Funeral Director and crematoria. Let's find out how they got on...

Simplicity offers clients a much 'simpler' funeral offering with low-cost alternatives compared to a more traditional funeral. With pre-need and at-need sales increasing, a number of training sessions were organised to provide a detailed insight into how Simplicity funerals are conducted from start to end – bringing together colleagues from both office and operations to provide a better experience for our clients and their families.

Going through the Simplicity process meant the attendees were also able to offer insights and suggestions on how we can improve and make the journey more efficient – or in other

words, go from Good to Great. Simplicity Account Manager Natalia Kyte found the training invaluable. She said: "The training was fantastic. It was really good to see how Simplicity works from the Crem and Ops perspective."

Likewise, Sarah Aggarwal, Account Manager, felt more confident following the training. "The training we received has given me the confidence to know that from the moment a family contacts us, they are the highest priority within every division of Dignity."

Shaun Fitzharris, Account Manager, added: "I feel as though the training is a great opportunity for us to see how other divisions operate and it has given us a greater understanding of the overall process of arranging a funeral and a cremation."

Watch this space for more news from Simplicity.



Natalia Kyte
Account Manager



Sarah Aggarwal
Account Manager



Shaun Fitzharris
Account Manager

BACK FROM THE BRINK

With Storm Brendan having made its way across the UK and Northern Ireland, one branch in particular was particularly glad to see the back of it.

Berry and Jagger Funeral Directors in Prescot, Merseyside recently got handed back the keys to their refurbished (and watertight) branch having been closed for 16 months due to flood damage.

The building had fallen victim to heavy rainfall on three previous occasions with the worst yet to come in August 2018. Freak summer weather meant the building was once again flooded, but this time with water caused considerable damage. The whole premises had substantial amounts of damp, with moisture penetrating both the internal and external walls, and all floor coverings sadly destroyed.



Paul Lambert, Area Manager for Merseyside, said: "The flooding just caused too much damage, and we had to take the branch out of service.

"Fortunately, we have another branch in Prescot and thanks to the hard work and dedication of Funeral Director Stephen Morris, and Funeral Service Arranger, Rachel Wilson, we were able to

continue to serve and support our clients with the greatest of care."



Stephen and Rachel are now back in their newly refurbished branch, which has also had an impressive flood defence system installed to keep any future floods at bay.

Funeral Director Stephen said: "We have a fantastic facility here now. With its subtle décor and contemporary look it's a real pleasure to welcome our clients and continue to serve the local Prescot community. And to be honest, the new flood defence system does give us that reassurance that we'll continue to be here for years to come."



Anthony Driver, Regional Manager for the Northwest added: "The attitude and compassion of our employees is second to none, and I'd like to thank the staff at Gornall's, Prescot for welcoming their colleagues Stephen and Rachel, who were in an unfortunate situation of having to move from their usual branch.



"The team came together, shared resources and continued to serve the local community. I am delighted with the refurbishment, which further demonstrates the Dignity's commitment to providing 'great' facilities through the transformation programme."

In fact, the Berry and Jagger branch retained their usual funeral volume despite the branch being closed for the year.

A service of rededication will be held soon.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

You've been giving some useful feedback on new supplier, Office Team. We answer some of your most commonly asked questions here.

It's been a few weeks since we changed supplier from Lyreco to Office Team for our stationery and consumables, and we've had a few common questions come in from colleagues:

Help! My delivery didn't arrive on the day I expected it to.

Tackling climate change is front of mind for many people, which is why we have moved to weekly deliveries. You can see this on the system when you place your order. Not only does this reduce our carbon footprint, it also helps support our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agenda.

We know that a couple of deliveries didn't arrive on time. We're sorry. We're working with Office Team to understand why and to make sure their drivers are able to find us.

If you continue to have delivery problems, please contact the Office Team Account Manager

Lewis Shoob, as follows: **lewis.shoob@officeteam.co.uk**,

0151 236 8060 or mobile 07710084104.

Help! I can't find what I want to order in the catalogue.

So that we can become more efficient and buy better, we looked at all the products colleagues were ordering. There were lots of very similar items, so we have reduced the list to the most popular and most cost-effective. This may mean that you can't find your usual brand, but you should be able to find an equivalent.

If you can't find what you're looking for, get in touch with Office Team Customer Services in the first instance on 0151 236 8060.

Help! The quality of what has been delivered is poor.

We definitely don't want to compromise on quality. We're working closely with our Office Team colleagues and in some cases will replace with alternative products that will offer both value for money and quality. If you have any feedback on the quality of products received, get

in touch with the procurement team.

Help! I'm struggling with placing an order.

We've experienced a few hiccups with the ordering system and making sure the coding is correct. Our techie gurus are working to resolve this as quickly as possible.

If you continue to have problems, get in touch with our Office Team Account Manager Lewis Shoob, as follows: **lewis.shoob@officeteam.co.uk**, 0151 236 8060 or mobile 07710084104.

Help! Who can I get in touch with about Office Team?

If you have any questions, issues, or challenges about Office Team, please send an email to **purchasing.team@dignityuk.co.uk**.

Thank you for all the feedback we've received so far. Your insight is helping us to continuously improve the service.





seconds with...
Craig Stephenson
AREA MANAGER - EAST YORKSHIRE
& BRIDLINGTON.



This week we headed to Hull to have a coffee with Area Manager Craig Stephenson. Here's his 60 second interview...

What's your role?

Area Manager - East Yorkshire & Bridlington.

Where are you based?

A. Shepherd & Sons Funeral Directors, Hull.

What was your first ever job?

Joiner.

Where did you go on your last holiday?

Menorca - Cala Galdana.

What does a typical day look like for you?

I am sure everyone says this, but there is no typical day for me! I am an early riser, so I am normally either in the office or on the road by 7am. The days vary, from attending meetings with internal colleagues, visiting colleagues in the branches, to responding to emails and providing operational support. I contact my team of managers throughout each day to understand what's happening within the business and offer support if required.

How and why did you get into the funeral industry?

My dad worked for the company as a Funeral Service Operative / Team Leader. Once I finished my apprenticeship and gained my qualification as a joiner, I joined the company. I was attracted to the industry as I was keen on the customer service elements and making a real difference for people.

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

My job is to help people say goodbye to the person they love.

Tea or coffee?

Coffee.

Favourite film?

Home Alone: Lost in New York.

What's the highlight of your day?

When I receive the client surveys from my Regional Manager. Reading through the comments that our clients have made about the wonderful caring service our staff have provided.

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

Embrace the changes. A lot of hard work and planning has gone into how Dignity can go from Good to Great. Be positive and understand that we must work in collaboration with other teams and departments to ensure we achieve our objectives.

Are you excited about the future of Dignity?

Yes, as with any changes there is naturally some nervousness. However, we must trust the transformation concept and be confident that the changes will help us on our journey from Good to Great.

TAKING CARE OF YOU

You'll be familiar with our commitment to taking the greatest care of clients, but it's important to remember this approach extends to how we look after each other too.

All Dignity employees have access to a number of benefits, which is our way of showing that we value our people and the work you do.

Among these is the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). It's a free and confidential service that includes access to information and expert advice 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

While the business pays for it, the programme is operated independently by Workplace Wellness. This means nobody else at Dignity will know who has used the service (or why), no personal details will be shared and therefore confidentiality is assured.

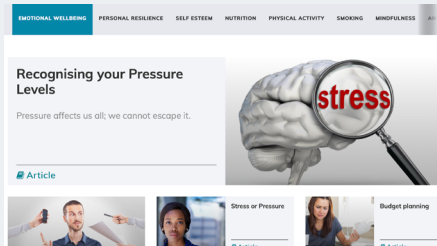
You'll find a wealth of useful articles and videos presented on the EAP website, accessible at www.my-eap.com with the username DFLwell. Resources are split across three categories:

- Homelife (e.g. relationships, parenting, financial worries, loss

and bereavement)

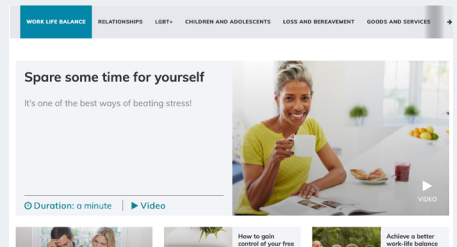
- Worklife (e.g. skills development, working relationships, taking on new challenges)
- Wellbeing (e.g. physical and emotional health, mindfulness, coping with anxiety).

The programme isn't limited to these areas, plus you can call an



EAP advisor whenever you need to on 0800 111 6387. They are able to discuss any matter that is causing you concern.

Of course there's no obligation to use the EAP, but if you are experiencing difficulties then please seek help from other organisations, for example Citizens Advice or your GP. Above all, don't struggle by yourself and don't let the



situation escalate to the point where it causes you distress or even ill health.

Tracey Rose, Head of Human Resources, comments: "We can all benefit from good advice at some time in our lives, either for an existing issue or to enable us to plan effectively for the future.

"What really matters is helping to ensure your wellness and wellbeing both at work and at home and this includes helping with any challenges or concerns that may arise."

If you have any queries about the EAP, or other benefits for colleagues at Dignity, please email HR.SharedServices@dignityuk.co.uk.



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 leave a comment on the website or drop us an email at goodtogreat@dignityuk.co.uk.