

Friday 28 August 2020

Welcome to our latest news round-up from across the Dignity Group. 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!)

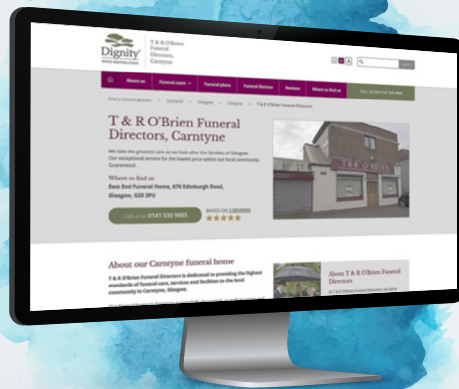
AN INFORMED CHOICE

We're putting more localised information about our products, prices and third party costs online.

Nobody wants to find hidden extras on their bill, like service charge in a restaurant, or booking fees when buying concert tickets.

And while funerals are clearly a very different type of purchase, people still want to know in advance what the various elements are going to cost.

This is why we've been making enhancements to our local branch webpages, creating detailed overviews of the products and services that can make up a funeral package in order to support potential clients with their decision making.



Such openness and visibility echoes one of the key findings from the recent market investigation [report from the CMA](#).

A complete picture

After visitors have clicked through to our service pages they can start accessing pricing information for coffins, hearses, limousines and urns.

Next comes a breakdown of essential third party costs, including fees payable to the doctor, minister or celebrant. We also provide guide prices for the three nearest crematoria and helpful facts about their typical service length and seating capacity.

Finally we've captured a number of optional costs, such as memorials, floral tributes and personalised orders of service.

Gathering the pricing data to populate each webpage is a major exercise, but definitely

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We're already seeing some great results with increased site traffic and call volumes. A recent client who found our details from a Google search commented that the website was 'brilliant' and that pricing was 'clear and really easy to understand'.

Sam Poote,
Local Head of Digital Marketing

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worthwhile, as our Local Head of Digital Marketing Sam Poote explains: “As people increasingly use the internet to help plan a funeral, we are presenting information in a way that is far more comprehensive than many of our competitors.

“It sends out a strong message that we’re transparent and easy to deal with, paving the way for a great experience once clients start having conversations with our experts in the branch.”



Another benefit is better visibility for our local sites on the web, since the enhanced content can help them feature more prominently in

search results.

“The easier we are to find online, the more potential there is for funeral enquiries to our network,” Sam adds.

Fully-priced product pages are now live on nearly 250 of the 800 localised websites we manage on behalf of our branches. Further rollout is expected to mirror the wider availability of our Tailored Funeral, so look out for future updates on this topic.



SIMPLICITY: RETURN OF ASHES PILOT RESTARTS

Last week saw the return of ashes pilot for Simplicity clients restart following a pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Last month we advised you that we were back in the driving seat for speeding up our ashes delivery for Simplicity clients following a pause in the pilot due to COVID-19. And although we’ve managed to deliver two thirds of ashes back to our clients within four weeks of the cremation throughout the pandemic, we’re now ready to ensure all of our Simplicity clients receive the same service. Since Wednesday 19th August the pilot and updated process have been back in full swing.

TRAINING SIMPLICITY COLLEAGUES

Since you last heard from us, we’ve been busy pulling together and distributing training guidebooks and Simplicity colleagues from within the network are now set to kickstart

the pilot again.

Simplicity Cremations often have no service, which means the return of ashes may be the only tangible link to the funeral of their loved one. So, in order to meet the reduced timeframe of delivery of ashes within four weeks, from time-to-time we may need to call on the help of funeral operations colleagues in branch.

If the Simplicity Care Centre is not local to where the client has requested the ashes to be delivered to, the Simplicity Co-ordinator will contact a more local branch to help make the final delivery to the client.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR BRANCH IS CONTACTED

If your branch is contacted, either you or a colleague will

be asked to return the ashes directly to the client within four weeks of the cremation.

It’s not anticipated that this will happen often, but if it does the Simplicity Co-ordinator will liaise directly with you and provide the client’s delivery details so you can do this safely and swiftly. Remember, Simplicity clients are Dignity clients who have simply chosen a different style of service. We all have a part to play in providing an excellent Simplicity experience.

If you have any questions about the return of ashes process or the delivery timeframe for Simplicity Cremations, comment online or email Rebecca.long@dignityuk.co.uk.



BAC TO SCHOOL

As schools start to re-open and operate on different timetables, here's how we're going to support you and your families.

There is no doubt about it, going back to school looks very different to what it did a year ago. And with some schools already having reopened and adjusting to bubbles, social distancing and staggered start and finish times, we want to support you and your families as much as possible.

Here are a few examples of how we will be supporting our colleagues and their families over the coming weeks. Please speak to your line manager and HR Business Partner if you have any questions or would like advice.

Cancelled: breakfast club and after-school club

If your child regularly attends breakfast club or after-school club, it's likely that they will have been postponed for the time being.

If your role allows (such as if you are able to work from home, or

you work part-time), you'll be able to work flexibly to allow you to look after your children and complete your working hours (just in a different working pattern to ensure you fulfil your hours). This will have no impact on your pay.

Not sure if this will work for you? Talk to your line manager and HR Business Partner.

Staggered start and finish times

Some schools will be reducing the number of hours, or possibly even days that certain year groups attend.

If you will be doing later drop-offs and earlier pick-ups and will then be the main caregiver at home; or perhaps are unable to arrange childcare for the days your children are at home, you may wish to discuss a temporary reduction of hours to accommodate childcare

arrangements. Have a chat with your line manager and HR Business Partner so we can discuss how best to support you and your family.

Just not sure?

Until your child (or children) are back at school, it may be difficult to plan exactly how the next couple of months will work when it comes to childcare and work. We understand that, but it's important to start to think about potential scenarios as soon as possible so that we can support you and continue to deliver the best possible service to our clients.

There are a number of options to work through so you can balance your family and work lives. From working flexibly, temporary reduction of hours or even parental leave - we'll help you however we can and discuss what works best for you. Have a chat with your line manager and HR Business Partner.



BLOOMIN' GOOD TO BE BACK

The floral tribute button is back on our Funeral Notices.

The eFlorist service is now back in action following a pause during the COVID-19 pandemic. Good news for our clients and arrangers alike when creating Funeral Notices.

As before, when your client requests floral tributes you can add this feature to their Funeral Notice. Any friends or family who visit the Funeral Notice can order flowers by clicking the 'send flowers' button.

Upon order completion a confirmation email will be sent to the branch, followed by a call from eFlorist to organise a suitable delivery time so you know exactly what and when floral tributes will arrive.

What you need to know

- If 'flowers welcome' or 'family flowers only please' is selected in the Funeral Notice application, the 'send flowers' button will be visible and can no longer be removed.
- If 'no flowers please' is selected, the 'send flowers' button will not be visible.

Benefits for our clients and you

- It allows family members and mourners to easily order floral tributes – giving them more flexibility about how and when they choose to do this.

- Due to processes in place with eFlorist, it assists the Funeral Director by informing them when floral tribute orders have been made and allows them to arrange a suitable delivery time or make alterations if funeral arrangements change.
- As with newspaper obituaries, specific flower instructions can be included (but please note, this does not prevent mourners from sending flowers if they wish to do so).



Funeral Notices for funerals that are yet to take place

The 'send flowers' button will now appear if 'family flowers only' or 'flowers welcome' was selected by the arranger at the point at which the Funeral Notice was created.

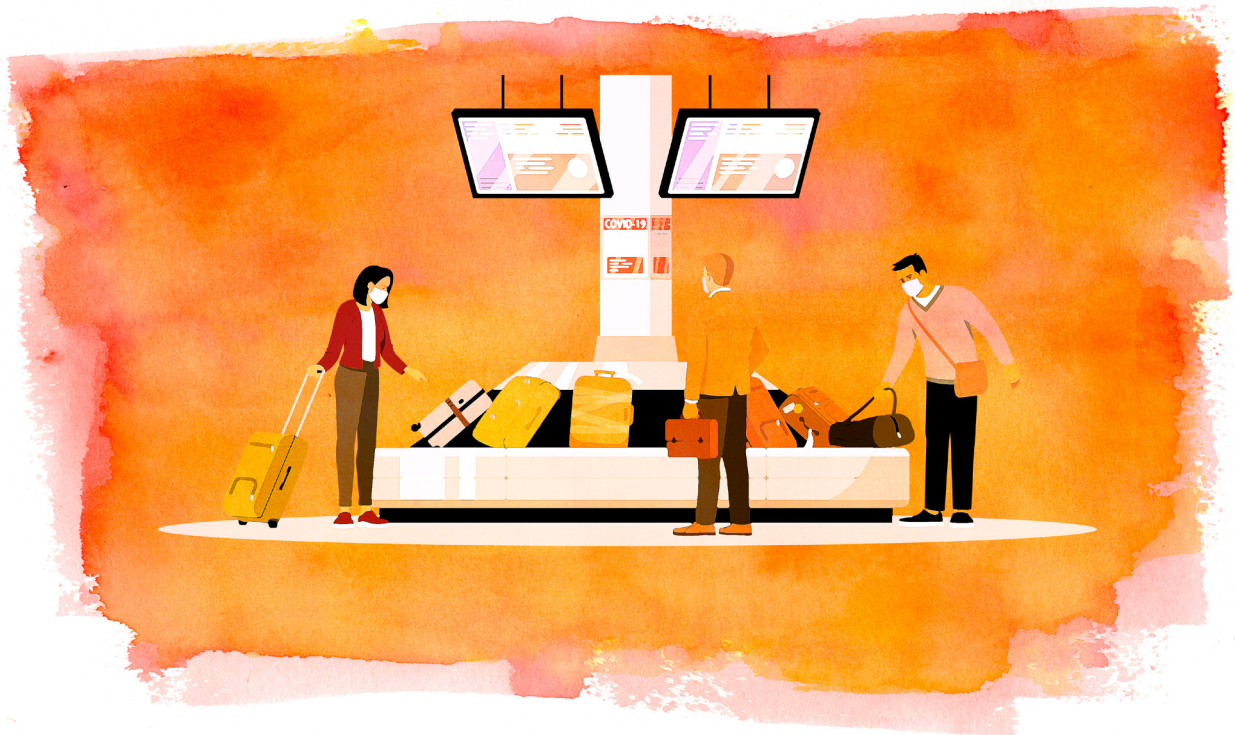
You may wish to let your clients know that this option is now available, so they, and friends/family of the bereaved can order flowers if they wish via the Funeral Notice.

If the client changes their mind and wishes to reinstate or remove the 'send flowers' button, the arranger will need to make this change on their behalf. This is something the client is unable to change in their 'My Dignity' admin area.



CHECK YOUR TRAVEL PLANS

Popular tourist spots such as France, Malta and Croatia are now subject to quarantine measures due to rises in the number of COVID-19 cases, the government has said.



Anyone arriving in the UK from these locations is required to self-isolate for a period of 14 days.

Aruba, Austria, The Netherlands, Monaco, Trinidad and Tobago and Turks and Caicos are also affected. Czech Republic, Jamaica and Switzerland will be added to the list of countries requiring quarantine from this weekend (effective 04:00 on 29 August).

With it being peak holiday season, many of us are gearing up for a much deserved break. But if your plans include a trip overseas, it's important to be aware of the latest **official travel advice** and any subsequent restrictions that could affect your work.



We shared some useful information on this subject last month when Spain was named as a UK quarantine country (which it still is). You can read the article again by clicking [here](#).

Please keep your line manager informed if you're due to holiday abroad, especially in a country where special quarantine measures will apply when you get back.

In more positive news, it has been confirmed that passengers coming back to the UK from Portugal no longer need to self-isolate. The same applies to Cuba from 29 August.

However, the situation is being monitored closely and travel advice could change at short notice.

BEING BRAVE



It's official! We're delivering an award winning experience when customers visit our websites.



People tend to have lots of questions when arranging a funeral – and they're increasingly turning to the internet to find answers.

That's why the continual development of our websites is such an important part of our business strategy, particularly the content we make available when customers pay us a virtual visit.

Get it right and you increase the chances of generating new enquires, or better still being chosen as the preferred service provider.

So we should take great pride in this latest external recognition from The Marketing Society, who presented Dignity with Highly Commended in the Digital Marketing category of their annual **Brave Awards**.

SHARING GREAT CONTENT

Our entry showcased many of the enhancements we've made over the last 18 months to our Dignity and Simplicity websites, which have resulted in significant increases in traffic and service enquiries.

We demonstrated how the user experience has improved, especially when it comes to learning more about what



a funeral entails. Alongside essential information like the role of a funeral director, we expand into broader topics including registering a death, funeral etiquette and coping with grief.

Marketing Director Mark Hull said: "We were the first provider to start doing this. People couldn't access such a detailed level of insight from a single source, which means the materials we collate and share really stand out.

"As well as releasing up to 30 new pieces of content a month, the team have also taken steps to improve Dignity's visibility in search engine results and encourage more site visitors to contact the experts at their local funeral director after completing their initial research."

BREAKING THE TABOO

The aptly-named Brave Awards are all about celebrating businesses that deliver bold and

inspiring marketing campaigns. The judges were impressed by Dignity's approach to promoting funerals, a subject we know is often considered taboo.

Mark said: "We talk openly about death and funerals in our content, but in a very natural way that is never insensitive and never designed to scare people into taking action.

"Not everyone is immediately ready to pick up the phone or go into a branch when they're grieving. We help them get the answers they need online, taking the first steps to planning a fitting funeral for their loved one."

As for the awards themselves, it's worth mentioning how competitive they are, attracting entries from some big-name brands.

We were up against campaigns from Chelsea Football Club and O2 and although Chelsea pipped us to win the category overall, receiving Highly Commended means it was a really close call.

"I was delighted for us to just be finalists and getting this recognition for our work is a fantastic achievement," added Mark.

REMINDER - SAFER PAYMENTS FOR CLIENTS

Paying for Dignity funeral services online is the safest way for us to accept payment from our clients – and the safest way for them to pay.

The **Client Payment Portal** was set-up in 2019 to allow our clients to pay safely and securely online for the funerals of their loved ones. In fact, we currently take about 6% of our payments using the portal but this could be much higher. It's convenience and safety credentials should make it a popular payment method for our clients.

It's easy to use and all funeral operations colleagues should be encouraging their clients to use it instead of cash or cheque. All they need is their credit or debit card and a Wi-Fi connection. Plus we've now made it even easier for clients to access the portal by adding a quick-link to the homepage of the Dignity website.

USEFUL LINKS

When someone dies
Arranging a funeral
Our funeral services
Memorials
Legal services
Pay Online

Funeral Plans
Funeral advice
About Dignity
Dignity PLC
Crematoria & cemeteries

Here's what to do:

1. Client visits <https://payments.dignityfunerals.co.uk> (or uses the new quick-link on the homepage).
2. In the 'Find Your Invoice' tab, they should enter the invoice/ Op ID in the invoice reference field (no suffixes needed). Enter the invoice date and invoice value. Click next.

3. On the next screen, they should then enter the amount they wish to pay and press 'Confirm'.

4. This will take them to the billing details screen. Here they can carefully enter their credit or debit card details to complete the transaction.



WHO'S WHO? MEET ALAN LATHBURY

In our latest 'getting to know you' feature, we catch up with the person responsible for developing our business, Alan Lathbury.

Name: Alan Lathbury.

Role: Business Development Director.

What are you responsible for?

Driving the business forward commercially, incorporating acquisitions and new business developments.

How long have you worked for Dignity?

20 years.

What does a typical day look like for you?

It's never the same! I look at modelling, evaluating and presenting new business opportunities.

What has been your most memorable day at work?

Any day we get a planning permission granted for a new-build crematorium or complete an acquisition on a funeral business.

Where have you previously worked?

Foseco, Mercury Communications, Simoco.

What makes you feel you've done a good day's work?

Overcoming challenges presented and helping colleagues overcome their challenges.

What was your first ever job?

School Saturday job at Co-op butchers.

What is your biggest challenge at work?

Dealing with the unknown and valuation of opportunities to Dignity.

Tell us something people wouldn't guess about you:

I used to be a train spotter.

Why do you love your job?

The variety of activity and the challenges presented as well as the ability to work across all parts of the business.

I would describe myself as... introverted.



How do you like to relax?

Road cycling and reading.

What's the first thing you'll do once lockdown is over?

Meet family and friends.

FIGHTING THE FRAUDSTERS

Financial crime is on the rise as scammers use coronavirus to prey on the vulnerable.

There have been many heroes created during the pandemic, from frontline keyworkers to intrepid fundraisers like Captain Sir Tom Moore.



But for every hero, expect a villain. In this case, scammers who are ruthlessly using COVID-19 to trick people into parting with their cash and banking details.

It's important for us to be aware of the traps, not just for our own safety, but to help clients protect themselves too.

Industry body UK Finance estimates £1.2 billion was stolen through financial fraud during 2019. Now they've produced a list of ten known money scams directly linked to coronavirus. Here's how to spot them:

Financial support

- Fake government emails offering grants of up to £7,500
- Invitations to fill out a form and access a 'COVID-19 relief fund'
- Emails with government branding offering a 'council tax reduction'
- Offers of help applying for Universal Credit in exchange for an advanced payment.

Health

- Phishing emails claiming to be from NHS Test and Trace;

- recipients are told they have been in contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19
- Fake adverts for hand sanitiser and face masks.

Lockdown

- Emails and texts from TV Licensing offering a six month rebate; victims are tricked into sharing their Direct Debit payment details
- Emails from TV subscription services saying payment details need updating

- Fake profiles on dating and social media websites designed to manipulate people into handing over money
- Online adverts to 'take advantage of the financial downturn' through investments in non-existent companies.

REAL OR FAKE?

Fraudsters pull out all the stops to make their adverts, texts and emails appear convincing, but there are usually some tell-tale signs.

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Look out for spelling and grammatical errors, along with inaccurate company logos. There might be an urgent call to action with an unreasonably tight deadline for you to respond.

Check the sender's phone number or email address (hover over it to see if it looks real) and be wary of clickable links and downloadable attachments.

Above all, take your time and don't be pressured into doing anything until you're satisfied the message is genuine. If in doubt, simply hit delete.

YOUR FINANCIAL WELLBEING

Privacy and security is one of several money-related topics covered in the Neyber Financial Wellbeing hub.

This comprehensive resource forms part of our employee benefits package and is available to everyone.

As well as tips and advice on good money management, Neyber also offers a selection of exclusive financial products.

Access is via the **Oracle system** (where payslips are held). It's a

link that's definitely safe to click on; and it might help you save some money too!



IT SURVEY REMINDER



You can still take part in our IT survey and win one of three shopping vouchers.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed how we all work at Dignity. The IT team want to capture this change and find out how you're feeling about the kit you have and the support you've been given from the department (amongst a few other topics).

To be in with a chance of winning a £50, £25 or £10 shopping voucher of your choice, all you have to do is give your contact details, i.e. your name and number on the last page of the survey. You'll then go into a prize draw. And the good news is, the survey will only take a few minutes to complete.

If you're not interested in being entered into the prize draw, that's OK too. We'd still love to hear what you think of IT and how you've found the tech support over the past few months.

And with a drumroll please.... Click here to take the **2020 annual IT survey**.



THERE'S STILL TIME TO SAVE

We're offering colleagues £200 off the cost of a Dignity prepaid funeral plan until 30 September.

There's only a few weeks left to take advantage of the double employee discount currently available on Dignity prepaid funeral plans.

We've increased the discount from £100 to £200. All Dignity colleagues qualify and you can extend this opportunity to family and friends as well.

Plans already represent great value because they fix funeral costs at today's prices, but the extra discount improves this even more.

To find out about how prepaid plans work, the different features included, what they cost with your discount added and how to apply, take another look at our previous article [here](#).

More than 60 people have requested application forms for staff funeral plans since the promotion began in July.

If you, family members or your friends are interested, then the offer lasts until **Wednesday, 30 September**. After this date, the staff discount reverts to its usual amount of £100. Don't miss out!

MONEY OFF FOR MOVIE BUFFS

Grab some popcorn and get those 3D glasses on – your FilmPass discount is back!

Whether you're into Hollywood blockbusters, cartoons for the kids or something more theatrical, a few hours spent at the cinema can be a great way to relax and StayWell after a stressful few months.

With movie theatres opening back up across the country, we thought it was time to remind you about the fantastic discounts you get with FilmPass.

Available for every Dignity employee at Odeon, Empire and Cineworld, simply sign up for your exclusive discount here: www.FilmPassClub.com/join and enter employer code 'MOVIE' to get FREE access.

Make sure you check out your chosen cinema's COVID-19 security measures before you go!

