

Friday 4 December 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](http://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!)



## CHRISTMAS TREE

The Crematorium and Memorial Group is reaching out to bereaved families to help them remember their loved ones.

**It's one of the most recognised visual symbols of the season, but the Christmas trees appearing outside our crematoria this month are for more than just decoration.**

Colleagues at The Crematorium and Memorial Group (CMG) wanted to come up with a special remembrance campaign after their traditional carol concerts had to be cancelled because of coronavirus restrictions.

Instead, each of the 46 sites has installed a large outdoor tree with a commemorative plaque bearing the words:

*'In dedication to all those who have shown strength in 2020'.*

They have also written to families offering them a star-shaped tree tag, which colleagues will then fill out with the name of a loved one and display on their behalf.

Joy Edgington, Manager of Wyre Forest Crematorium and Cemetery, who has helped to coordinate the campaign across the CMG network, said:

"We all felt it was really important to continue our tradition of contacting families ahead of

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**Planting the tree at Lichfield & District Crematorium are Cremator Technician Robert Callaghan (left) and Groundsperson Sam Woodhead.**

Christmas and offering them our support and best wishes.

“It can be a difficult time for anyone who has experienced a bereavement and while our memorial trees are not specifically about remembering those lost to COVID-19, we are trying to acknowledge just



how challenging this year has been for many people.”

There’s a charitable element to CMG’s campaign too. Staff at each crematorium have chosen a local charity and will make a minimum £500 donation, plus any additional contributions families decide to offer.

That equates to at least £23,000 across the country helping vital causes including life limited children, mental health, heart disease, homelessness, animal welfare, food banks and the air ambulance service.

We’ve asked colleagues at the CMG to send us photographs of their trees as more memorial stars get added and we’ll include a special image gallery in the next edition of Dignity Digest.



## SIMPLICITY WEBSITE UPDATED

We’re letting at-need clients know they’ll receive their loved ones’ ashes within four weeks.

**Returning ashes to loved ones quickly and respectfully is the final step in fulfilling our promise to clients – especially important when they choose a less traditional route such as direct cremation.**

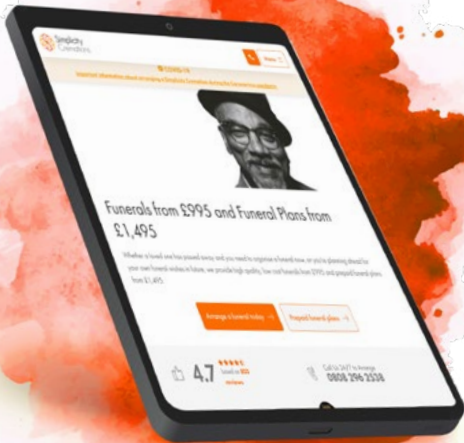
Following our recent successful trial, we’ve updated the Simplicity website to let at-need clients know they’ll receive their loved one’s ashes within four weeks of cremation. And to make it even easier, when the ashes are ready, we now offer two options whereby clients can choose the time and day of the working week to receive them.

Working with colleagues from Funeral Operations to

make sure our processes are consistent, the delivery promise helps make Simplicity a clear choice for clients seeking a low-cost or no-fuss alternative.

Of course, the uncertainty of COVID-19 means we may face delays beyond our control, so the website also includes a caveat to help manage clients’ expectations – just in case!

If you have any questions, or suggestions to improve Simplicity processes and services, please email the Product and Client Experience Manager, [rebecca.long@dignityuk.co.uk](mailto:rebecca.long@dignityuk.co.uk).



## SETTING OUT A TIMETABLE

There's been further progress in the move towards government regulation of the funeral plans market.

**The eagle eyed amongst you may have spotted announcements over recent months regarding major changes to the pre-paid funeral plans market.**

(If you missed them, we'll forgive you - it's been a turbulent year to say the least!)

It all centres on regulation, with funeral plan providers due to come under the watch of the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).

In fact, any firm wishing to sell funeral plans will, in time, need to be authorised by the FCA and conform to their standards.

### **When will this happen?**

Last week, the FCA said it expects to take responsibility for regulation of the sector in summer 2022.

There will be consultation with providers regarding the proposed rules and approach to authorisation next spring, a process we'll be sure to participate in so that Dignity's voice is heard. The rules themselves should then be finalised later in 2021.

Regulating the funeral plans market is about ensuring good outcomes for consumers, such as getting the product they've paid for and looking after the funds they invest.

Another important aspect is protecting people from any firms who make misleading claims in their advertising or use aggressive sales methods.

### **Welcome news**

Dignity has been calling for regulation for a long time. In fact, we played a key role in getting the government to review the sector after commissioning related research by the consumer group Fairer Finance.

Director of Pre-Arrangement Paul Toghill said: "We welcome this step towards a safer market

and better service for people who choose to purchase a funeral plan and we're looking forward to engaging with the FCA as we work towards regulation coming into effect.

"We are proud of the choice and value for money our products offer those who want to plan ahead for their funeral.

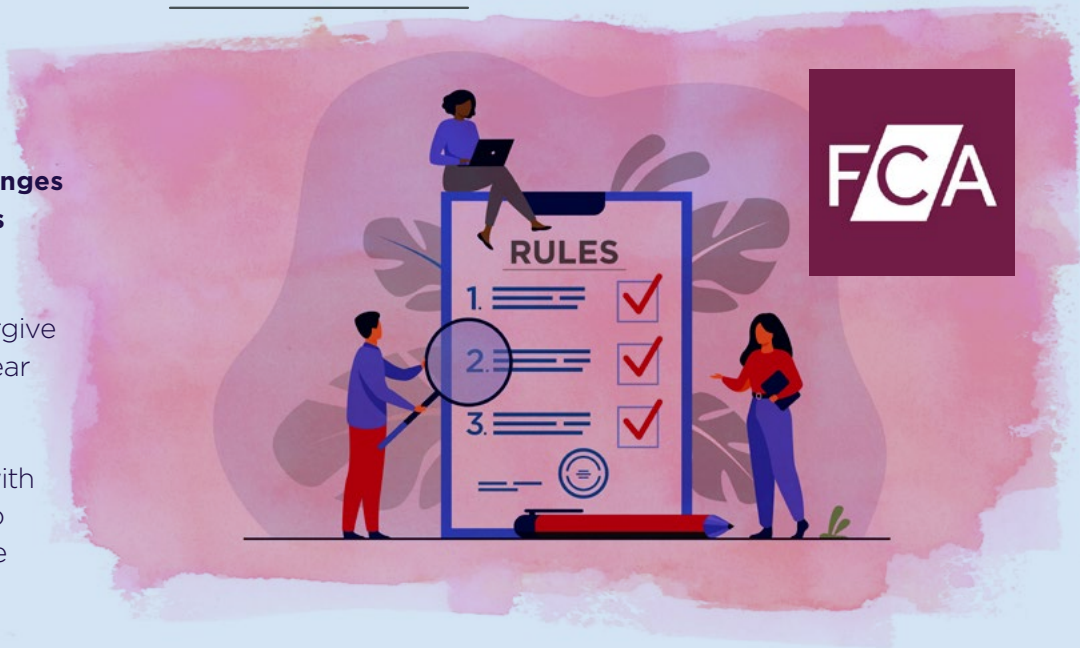
"Being part of a regulated industry will add extra reassurance for our clients that they are dealing with a provider who is best in class when it comes to quality standards and care."

“

*We welcome this step towards a safer market and better service for people who choose to purchase a funeral plan and we're looking forward to engaging with the FCA as we work towards regulation coming into effect.*

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**PAUL TOGHILL** Director of Pre-Arrangement



## CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE COVID KIND

Not sure whether you need to self-isolate or not? Check out our handy flow charts to guide the way.

### Are you suffering from coronavirus confusion?

Are lockdown rules sending you into a spin? Is your local tier system leading to tears? If so, we get it.

It's hard to know what's a close contact, what counts as exposure and when exactly you should self-isolate.

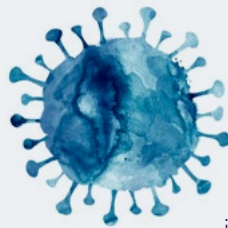
To keep us all safe and to make sure we can keep delivering our unique services to those who need us, the HR and Health & Safety teams have put together a handy guide to help you make the right decisions.

The simple flow charts [posted here](#) will help you navigate the twists and turns of COVID-19 regulations when it comes to the question of whether to self-isolate or not.

While we can't cover every situation, we believe these guides capture most possible scenarios.

Make sure you follow them to keep us all safe. If you are unsure, please call your line manager to discuss.

If you're in Funeral Operations, you should by now have received a letter at home confirming the process, with copies of the flow charts.



### TEST & TRACE

With cases rapidly rising, the national Test & Trace system is under strain and perhaps not as efficient as we'd like.

As you'll see in the flowcharts, we've introduced our own contact assessment, which may mean we ask you to self-isolate before you are contacted by the national Test & Trace systems. This assessment would be carried out by your manager.

### TAKING THE GREATEST CARE

Please make sure you follow this guidance to take the greatest care of our colleagues, clients and communities.

Put simply, if you have COVID-19 symptoms, have been exposed to a positive case or been tested, you must **STAY HOME**.

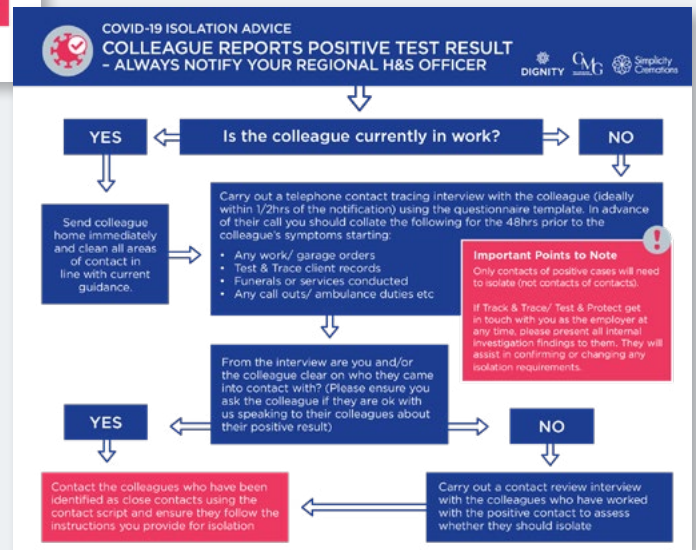
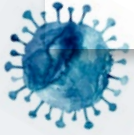
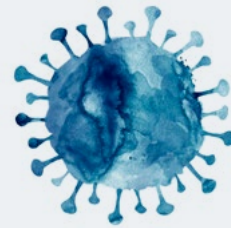
If you have any questions, or think we've missed a common situation, please ask your Line Manager or HRBP for help.



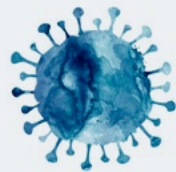
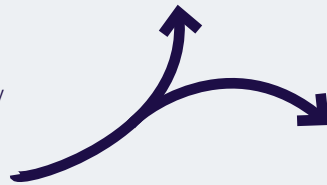
**Safety Starts With You**



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Two examples of the flow charts available.



## CAN WE TALK?

We're looking for a few volunteers to have a chat about how we communicate with you.

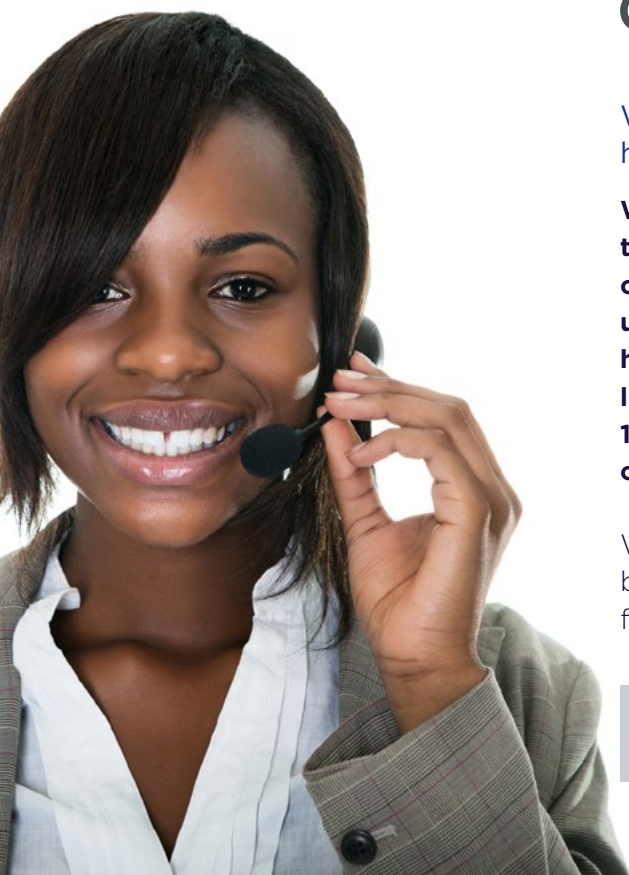
**We'll soon be asking colleagues to complete a short survey about our communications, but to help us really get under the skin of how we're doing, we'd really like to have an informal 10-minute chat with some of you.**

want to understand what we're doing well, and what we could do better.

If you'd like to share your feedback over the phone, please let us know the best number and time to reach you on over the next couple of weeks. We'll then arrange for an impartial third-party to give you a buzz at a convenient time.

Whether you're on the frontline, based in Head Office, working from home or taking calls, we

To volunteer, or if you have any queries, please drop a line to [internal.communications@dignityuk.co.uk](mailto:internal.communications@dignityuk.co.uk)



## LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER

Anyone can struggle with their mental health, so it pays to know the tell-tale signs that a person might need help.

**We're a caring bunch here at Dignity. It's at the very heart of what we do for our clients, showing them compassion at one of the most difficult times in their lives.**

We also place enormous value on teamwork and that relies on us forging strong and supportive relationships with our colleagues.

But what if someone was struggling to cope? Do you think you could spot the signs - and more importantly, would you know what to do?

This year in particular is putting considerable strain on people's mental health and a colleague reaching out and offering a friendly ear could make all the difference.

We therefore wanted to share this insight from the Samaritans and wellbeing experts BelievePerform to continue raising awareness of the issue and develop that caring culture of ours even further.

### Recognise the clues

Poor mental health is sometimes referred to as a hidden illness because the symptoms are not always outwardly visible.

There are, however, a number of clues in the way people behave or interact that suggest they might be finding things difficult.

Here are a few examples:

- Lacking energy or feeling tired all the time
- Finding it hard to manage everyday tasks
- Lacking concentration or expressing being overwhelmed
- Being emotionally distant and not engaging with other people
- Not wanting to do or share things they usually enjoy
- Variations in mood.

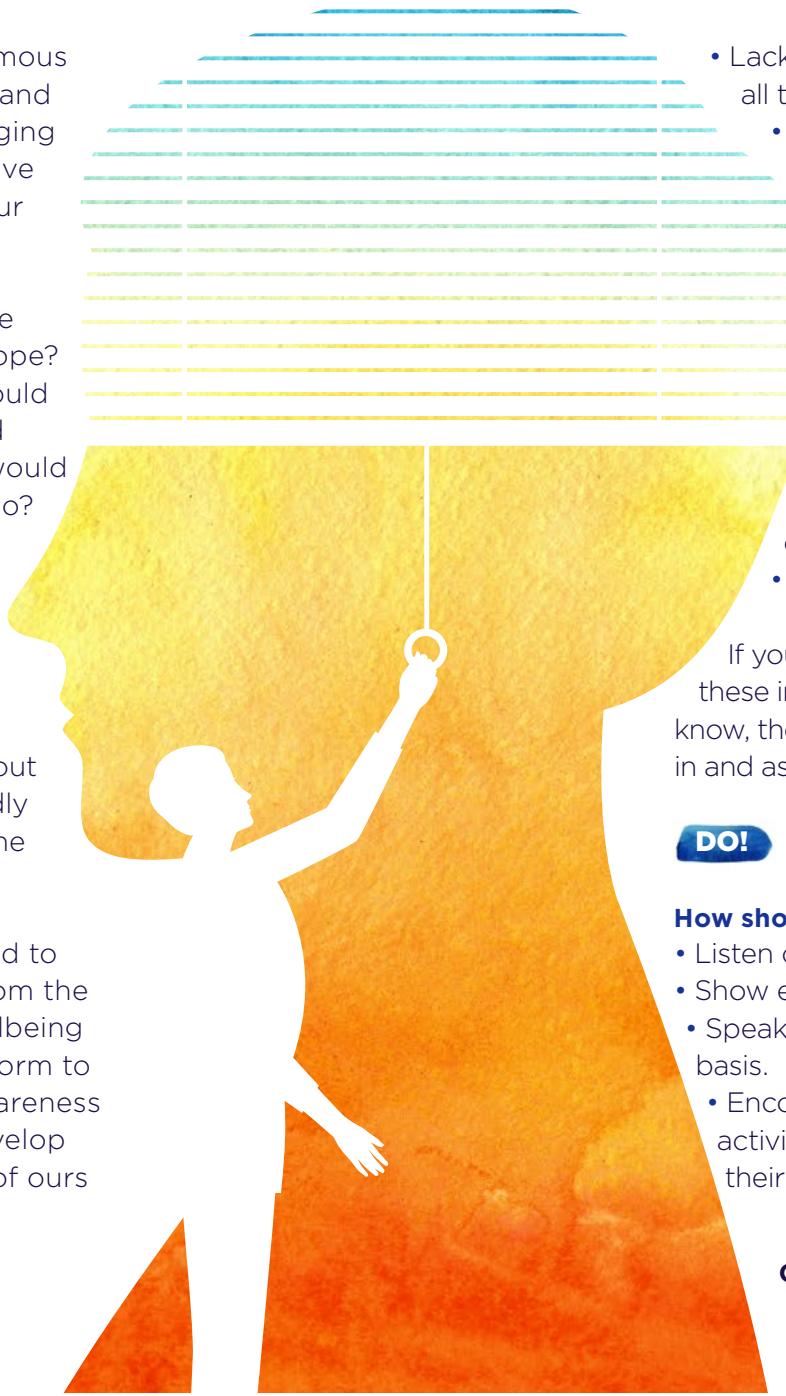
If you can see some or all of these indicators in someone you know, then it's a good idea to check in and ask how they are doing.

### DO!

#### How should you go about it?

- Listen carefully to their needs.
- Show empathy.
- Speak with them on a regular basis.
- Encourage them to try activities that could boost their mood.

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- Signpost where they can access **support**.

## DONT!

- Try to problem solve; you're not expected to have all the answers.
- Be judgmental over who is right and wrong.
- Draw comparisons to your own experiences; keep the focus on them.
- Make light of the situation or say it will soon go away.



- Force the issue – not everyone is comfortable talking openly about their feelings, so give them time.

Above all, it's about letting someone know they can always speak to you and that you care about their welfare.

Your intervention could be the vital first step towards an issue getting resolved, rather than escalating and causing more harm.

## J H KENYON'S ROYAL APPOINTMENT

The business was engaged to provide services for a funeral at The Chapel Royal.

**It was a very special day for colleagues at J H Kenyon when they were called upon to direct a funeral at Her Majesty's Chapel Royal, St James's Palace.**

The team worked tirelessly to ensure the turnout for the funeral was immaculate, led by hearse driver Claudio Pereira Da Silva and chauffer bearers Beppe Mancuso, Igno Rizzo and Sergio Pereira Da Silva (all pictured opposite, from left to right).

Business Manager Philip Smyth said: "It was a huge honour to oversee such a prestigious occasion, but this is just one example of what we do.

"As a company we are proud to serve clients from all walks of life, treating every family with

the same care, compassion and respect in their hour of need."

J H Kenyon was founded in 1880 and has carried out many notable funerals across the generations.

Its involvement in the funeral of Sir Winston Churchill is well

known, plus the firm has been entrusted with the arrangements for the funerals of many senior members of the royal family.

These include HM King George VI in 1952, Queen Mary in 1953, the Duke of Windsor in 1972 and Earl Mountbatten of Burma in 1979.



## PORTRAIT OF A PANDEMIC

Photography project tells a powerful story of those who have continued working throughout the COVID-19 restrictions.

**They say a picture paints a thousand words and when it comes to this particular account of the coronavirus pandemic, we'd have to agree.**

Leamington photographer Karen Massey has been capturing images of frontline and essential workers throughout lockdown, which she has now collated for a project called Portrait of a Pandemic.

Each of the subjects provided a testimonial on how they have been coping and what the experience has meant to them.

Not surprisingly, Karen spent time with members of the local emergency services, such as doctors, nurses, paramedics, midwives and fire crews.

But the project also celebrates some of the unsung heroes in our communities – delivery drivers, farmers, vets, charity workers, members of the clergy, rail staff, shop assistants.

And yes, those working in the funeral profession who have continued to care for the deceased and support bereaved families.

Karen met with colleagues from



**Sarah Dewsbery with colleagues (from l-r) Lindsey Duncan, Craig Edser, Louise Morris and Brian Buckley.**

Grimmett and Timms in nearby Coventry, taking their photo at a specially arranged shoot over a weekend.

Funeral Director Sarah Dewsbery offered her thoughts on the challenges of 2020:

“Working through COVID-19 has been harder than I can put into words. Everything in the world changed. But our care and pride for our job did not.

“I am so very proud of how brave and strong every member of my team has been throughout this more than challenging time.”

Sentiments we can all relate to wherever we work – our funeral homes, crematoria, Customer Service Centre and head office departments, both on site and remotely. Remaining fully operational has been an incredible team effort.

Karen Massey intends to hold a public display of her photographs when restrictions are eased, but in the meantime they can be viewed on her

**[Facebook page.](#)**

Local newspaper the Leamington Courier has also published **[this report.](#)**



## INTERNAL COMMS SCOOPS FIVE AWARDS

Our Good to Great channels are recognised for excellence at a prestigious virtual ceremony.

**Usually the ones bringing the news to you, the Internal Comms team recently became news themselves as they scooped five awards at the celebrated Institute of Internal Communication (Central & North Awards).**

Hot on the heels of their Awards of Excellence for Best Change Communications campaign at the national Institute of Internal Communication awards in September, the team competed against big brands including Jaguar Land Rover, Luton Airport and Manchester University.

They won Awards of Excellence for:

- **Strategic Communications:** Best Campaign – Taking Dignity from Good to Great
- **Channels:** Stand-out Communication – Little Book of Dignity
- **Channels:** Employee Event of the Year – Good to Great Live (Management Conference 2019)
- **Changemakers Central and North Communicator of the Year** – Runner-Up – Kate Goodman, Transformation Internal Communications Manager



If that wasn't enough, the Dignity Time Machine series, where we imagined the world of Dignity in 2022, took home top prize in the **Skills: Writing** category, being named as Class Winner.



In a separate awards ceremony, the team were also recognised for the fantastic coffin factory film, as they made the judges' shortlist in the glittering EVCOM Industry Awards – up against glamorous big names including Vogue and big budget brands such as Shell Oil.



The team are naturally thrilled at being recognised at such high profile ceremonies, but of course, it's your opinion that really matters!



Tell us what you like, or what you'd love to see in your communications, and we'll do our best to make it happen.



## ONE LESS THING TO REMEMBER...

Due to popular demand, we've introduced Single Sign On for the Good to Great website.

**If having 73,478 passwords gets on your last nerve, then you'll be pleased to know that we have one less for you to remember!**

Last week, we went live with Single Sign On technology on the Good to Great website. You won't notice any difference, except that it will automatically remember your login details and you won't be prompted to enter them anymore.

This is just the first step in our long-awaited Single Sign On journey. The aim is to continue its rollout so you eventually only have one password for all your work systems. Now we know it works, the team are busy working on the next steps, so watch this space.

### Getting online

Single Sign On means that if you're already logged into the Dignity network or are working on your company device, you can go straight to Good to Great ([www.dignitygoodtogreat.co.uk](http://www.dignitygoodtogreat.co.uk)) without having to enter any additional information.

If you have a Dignity group email address (that's one ending in Dignityuk.co.uk, dignityfunerals.co.uk, thecmg.co.uk or simplicity.co.uk) but are not logged into the network, go to the site and enter your details in the box under the

header 'Dignity account holders'.

Remember, these are your network login credentials, not the separate password you may have had previously for Good to Great.

For colleagues who don't have a Dignity email address and have been accessing Good to Great using a personal email account, you'll need to continue logging in the way you did before.

Click the link that says: **If you don't have a Dignity email, click here for the classic log in.**



### Not registered yet?

If you've not visited Good to Great before, we'd love you to get on board.

As well as up to the minute company news, you can like and comment on articles, submit and read Good Deeds, view and download useful info and watch video updates on your PC, phone or tablet.

Thanks to Single Sign On, Dignity email users can simply go straight to the site and start browsing.

Otherwise please speak to your manager and give them the personal email address you'd like to use to access Good to Great.

This can be any email address - Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo - you name it, you can use it.

Your manager will send your email address, name and payroll number to [it.administration@dignityuk.co.uk](mailto:it.administration@dignityuk.co.uk) to arrange your access.

You'll get an email from IT letting you know when everything has been set up. Then just follow the instructions above.

If you have any issues, please get in touch with Internal Communications who will help you get started.

## LET'S GET DIGITAL WITH E-SIGNATURES

We've been searching for the right supplier to help us introduce digital signatures and allow us to legally digitally sign contracts with our suppliers. Great news – we found them!



**Now you might think that this was an odd thing to tender for, but when you think about it, using digital signatures with our suppliers (and we have a lot of them) brings with it a lot of benefits.**

For one, it allows contracts and agreements to be signed without the need to physically print off and sign the document – minimising face-to-face contact (sound familiar?). As long as there is an internet connection in place, the transactions will be much quicker and secure. And of course, it will drastically reduce the need to print out reams of paper, with multiple copies of documents usually needing to be signed. Not to mention, digital signatures (or e-signatures as they are widely known) are fully compliant with the Financial

Conduct Authority's rules and regulations.

The preferred supplier is OneSpan, and our Procurement and IT teams will now be working with them to make sure their e-signature solution works for Dignity, before we sign any agreements.

Paul Lockwood, Head of Procurement, said: "Digital signatures are really the way forward in reducing risk of fraud to the business, and of course, reducing our carbon footprint.

"We'll be looking at areas across the business where we can introduce capturing digital signatures. One area we've already identified is how we can integrate the e-signature software onto our arranger tablet so our operational colleagues can use it directly with clients."

There are no changes to how we do things at the moment, but look out for updates over the next few months as we start to use the software for third party agreements/contracts. And if you have any ideas of how digital signatures could help the area in which you work, email [P2P@dignityuk.co.uk](mailto:P2P@dignityuk.co.uk)

Paul Simpson, IT Director said "Using electronic signatures reduces manual processing and complexity whilst speeding up our internal processes. With OneSpan we have chosen a market leading solution to support us on our digital integration and modernisation journey. OneSpan Sign is used by many banks and government agencies across the world to provide security and reduce fraud, which is ever more important as our business moves towards further regulation."