

23rd April 2021

Welcome to our latest news round-up from across the Dignity Group. Can't wait for the next issue? Then go to www.dignityinside.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!)

THE INSIDE SCOOP!

It's time to say goodbye to Good to Great, and a big hello to Dignity Inside.

Around 18 months ago we launched the Good to Great website and fortnightly Digest newsletter to communicate key stages in our transformation programme.

More than 2,500 of you have since registered, with hundreds commenting and liking the content we publish for you.

Of course, in the last year the pandemic hit, at which point we started sharing broader news and information to keep you in the know. Now we've taken things a step further.

As you can see, everything has had a facelift to reflect Dignity plc's new corporate identity and bring all parts of our business together. We're also sporting a new name – Dignity Inside.

More than a makeover

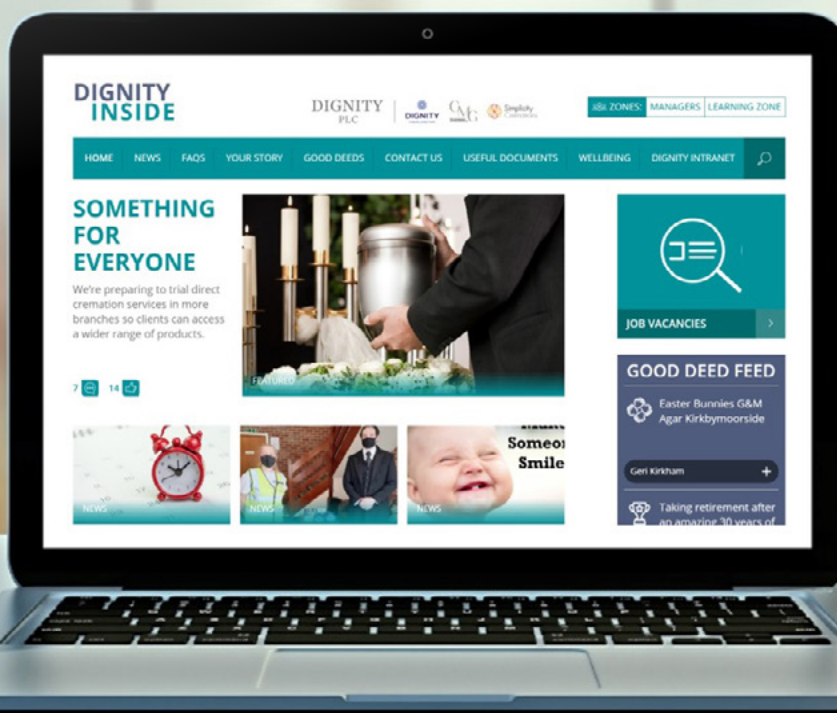
As well as the refreshed look, we've changed the website address in line with our name – www.dignityinside.co.uk

New features include a wellbeing tab, where you'll find related hints, tips and articles. News stories have tags so you can quickly see which are most relevant to you.

And watch out for our updated Frequently Asked Questions tab coming soon – it will be much easier to find details on a particular topic.

Sounds exciting, but don't just take our word for it. Have a good look around and add the new website address to your internet favourites.

We'll also continue to package up all the news and views in this fortnightly newsletter format.



Please help us by printing a copy and passing it on to any colleagues who don't have use of company email and may not be regularly accessing Dignity Inside online.

ON THE MOVE

The arrival of the Dignity Academy Portal will mean some changes for our current learning resources.

We're counting down to the big switch-on for our new Learning Management System, the Dignity Academy Portal.

As explained in our [previous article](#), the portal will be an online hub for delivering learning courses and other training items.

Everyone will have access to the system and their own continually updated training record.

This means you can track your progress across both mandatory learning specific to your role and any optional personal development work or self-study you choose to do.

With this in mind, it's worth clarifying what will happen to our existing learning resources once the Dignity Academy Portal goes live.

The Learning Zone

A space dedicated to [personal development](#) which we added to Dignity Inside (Good to Great as it was then) nearly a year ago.

We'll be transferring all the existing materials over to the Dignity Academy Portal, after which the Learning Zone will be removed.

Please consider this if you're thinking of starting any new modules in the Learning Zone around that time. Depending on how long you need to complete them, it might be better to wait until the portal is up and running.

The training section of perFORM

A big advantage of the Dignity Academy Portal is our ability to record and track the learning we do. Therefore we will no longer need to input this information into perFORM.

Existing records will be carried over, but while this is happening it won't be possible to view training data on perFORM or make any new entries in this section.

Dignity's intranet

Again in the interests of keeping all our content in one place, we'll stop directing colleagues to parts of the intranet for certain learning activities.

These include iHASCO and the Dignity Academy Learning Library that sits within the intranet's HR folders. It will make things much easier to find (and involve a lot less mouse clicking!), so you might notice the links disappearing from the intranet prior to launch.

When will all this happen?

After a successful two week pilot, the Dignity Academy Portal is on schedule to launch on Monday, 10 May.

This would mean turning off the current resources at close of business on Friday, 7 May.

Please appreciate these dates could change, but we'll keep you posted as the launch gets closer.



COMMITTING TO RESPOND

We're proud to be part of a growing initiative that ensures job applicants are always treated fairly.

Submitting a job application and participating in the subsequent recruitment process takes time.

Moreover, it can be a stressful and emotionally draining experience, made worse when candidates who are unsuccessful receive little or no feedback.

Fortunately we can say with confidence that no applicant will be treated that way when they contact Dignity.

That's because we've made a commitment via a set of internationally recognised standards called the Circle Back Initiative.

Under Circle Back, we pledge that every candidate who applies for a role with us will be responded to. In our responses, we're also signposting the charity Mind as a source of help in case anyone is struggling to cope with the pressures of job hunting during these challenging times.



of the process – first stage screening, telephone interviews and face to face (or live video) interviews.

The fifth standard relates to statements used in job advertisements. They must never say things like 'only shortlisted candidates will be contacted', or 'those who do not hear from us within so many weeks should presume they have been unsuccessful'.

Building relationships

Ensuring candidates have a positive experience when applying to Dignity benefits both parties, as Resourcing Manager Chris Rowe explains.

"Particularly in the current climate, a lot of hope hangs on every job application. We owe it to people to treat them with respect and communicate in the same considerate, caring way we do with our clients.

"It upholds our reputation and helps us build strong relationships with people who might one day have need for our services themselves."

You can find a list of verified Circle Back Initiative employers on the organisation's [website](#).



The standards

There are five in total, starting with the need to acknowledge receipt of every job application we get, which can be thousands a month.

Standards two, three and four require recruiters to communicate the outcome to every unsuccessful applicant at different stages

PAYING OUR RESPECTS

Branch displays are a fitting tribute to HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Branches of J H Kenyon came together to mark the death of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Each branch cleared space in their front windows to carry portraits of the Duke, along with a Notice of Condolence to the Queen and Royal Family.

At J H Kenyon's Westbourne Grove premises, a battery operated candle has remained lit as part of a display of archive materials paying tribute to the firm's service to the Royal Household between 1941 and 1991.

In that capacity, J H Kenyon had the honour of caring for the funerals of Princess Alice of Battenberg, the Duke of Edinburgh's mother, and his cousin The Earl Mountbatten of Burma, as well as many other members of the Royal Family.

Also commemorating the historic occasion were colleagues at John Bardgett & Sons in Ponteland, Northumberland.

Their striking window display includes a naval ensign, poppy wreath and a photograph of the Duke.



COVID-19: WHAT'S CHANGING?

As restrictions ease, we've updated the Funeral Operations guidance for each UK nation.

This month has seen an easing of some coronavirus restrictions in some areas of the UK.

If you're working in Funeral Operations or looking after people who may be travelling across the country for funerals, then please make sure you're familiar with the latest guidance.

What's new?

Northern Ireland

Wakes and receptions are still prohibited, but social contact now allows up to ten people from up to two households to meet outdoors, as long as social distancing is maintained.

The number of mourners allowed at funeral venues depends on the risk assessment for each venue, with no change to restrictions at Belfast Crematorium.

Wales

Wales has moved from alert level four to level three. Wakes and receptions are still prohibited, but social contact now allows up to six people from two households to meet outdoors.

The number of mourners allowed at funeral venues depends on size.

Scotland

As Scotland prepares to move to protection level three from Monday, it has been announced that the attendance limit at funerals will increase from 20 up to 50. We are in the process of updating our guidance.

England

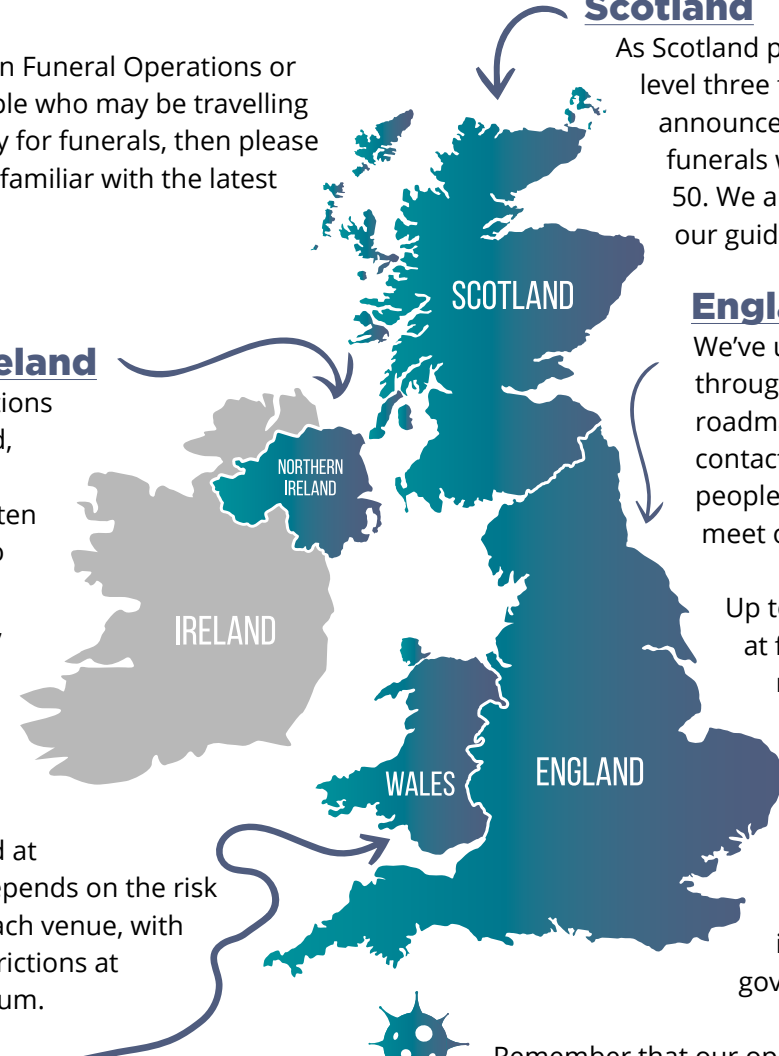
We've updated the guidance throughout in line with the step 2 roadmap out of lockdown. Social contact now allows up to six people from two households to meet outdoors.

Up to 30 mourners are permitted at funeral services, with up to 15 mourners permitted at wakes, receptions and linked events such as scattering of ashes.

There are no other changes, but we will keep reviewing and updating the guidance in line with changing government rules.

Remember that our operational guidelines are MANDATORY and we need you to follow all instructions for the safety of you, our colleagues, clients and communities.

If you have any queries, please ask your manager for help.



TEENAGE
CANCER
TRUST

TAKE THE 100 CHALLENGE

Honour the legacy of the amazing Captain Tom by fundraising for Teenage Cancer Trust.

He raised millions for charity and won the hearts of the nation by completing a fundraising walk in his garden during lockdown.









Now the family of Captain Sir Tom Moore are encouraging people to try out their own 100 challenge on what would have been the Army veteran's 101st birthday.

Challenges should take place over the Bank Holiday weekend between 30 April and 3 May.

Anything goes, as long as the activity is themed around the number 100, just as Captain Tom did when he completed his 100 lap walk. It also needs to be done in line with current coronavirus restrictions.

Fundraisers are free to choose which particular charity they want to support – and we'd like you to consider doing something for our nominated charity partner Teenage Cancer Trust.

We're sure you can dream up a suitably creative challenge, but if you need inspiration then here are a few suggestions:

-  Running 100 metres
-  Scoring 100 goals
-  Doing 100 star jumps
-  Climbing 100 stairs
-  Building 100 sandcastles
-  Baking 100 cakes
-  Flipping 100 pancakes
-  Writing a 100 word poem

There is more information about the 100 challenge on the Teenage Cancer Trust [website](#).

If you decide to get involved, be sure to let us know the details. Also contact the Internal Communications team if you need any help or advice getting started.



Valerie Chapman

RUN AROUND THE CLOCK

BDMs Valarie and Laura are getting ready for a charity event with a difference.



Laura Hope

While the pace might be more gentle jog than full-on sprint, at a push most of us could probably manage to run a mile.

But what if you had to repeat that one mile run on the hour, every hour. For an entire day.

That's the daunting endurance challenge awaiting two of our intrepid Branch Development Managers this summer.

Valarie Chapman and Laura Hope have both signed up for the P24 'The Longest Day' virtual running event.

As the name suggests, runners take part over the weekend before the summer solstice, which at least keeps the number of miles completed in the dark to a minimum!

From 8am on Saturday, 19 June, Valarie, Laura and their teammates will run one mile at the start of each hour, racking up a total distance of 24 miles by the following morning.

In doing so, they aim to raise money for our nominated charity partner, Teenage Cancer Trust.

A new experience

"I've been running for a while now, starting with Couch to 5k and building up to half marathon distance, but this will be a completely new experience," said Valarie, who supports branches in our Scotland and Northern Ireland region.

"I was looking at possible events to try out and came across the P24. It looked fun and a bit different, so

I signed up quickly before I could change my mind and then asked around to see if anyone else was interested."

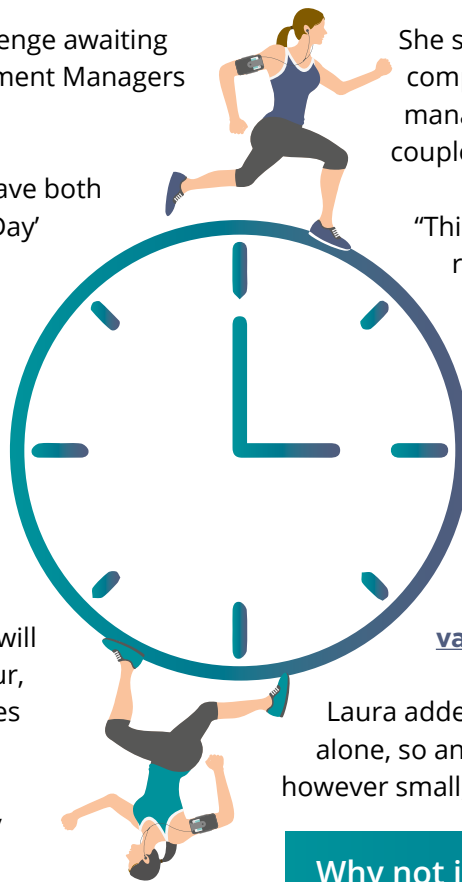
Colleague Laura, BDM for the North West region, also agreed to get involved, having recently ran in support of the cancer charity Maggie's, raising nearly £300.

She said: "In January I had a month to complete 50 miles for Maggie's, although I managed to reach the target distance within a couple of weeks.

"This is a much bigger challenge, but I've been running regularly having rediscovered it when the first lockdown began. I get out and train every week and will be practicing running repeat miles, including some later in the evenings."

The duo have set up an online fundraising page in support of Teenage Cancer Trust: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/laura-valerie>

Laura added: "No young person should face cancer alone, so any donations people can offer the charity, however small, would be greatly appreciated."



Why not join in?

Has Valarie and Laura's story inspired you to lace up and pound the pavements? There are still places available for the Virtual P24 and the equivalent 12 hour challenge taking place on the same day ([more information here](#)).

And if running isn't your thing, why not think up your own fundraising activity? From cycling, to cake bakes and crafting, there are lots of ways to get behind this fantastic cause.

"Sorry I missed that;
I was busy."

"Not now, I have
no time."

"What flying pig? I
didn't see anything."

BEING PRESENT

Are you always in a rush?

Try our mindfulness tips this stress awareness month for better mental health.

If any of the above seems familiar, then maybe you need to give yourself a few minutes and consider what it may be doing to your mental health.

If you're always thinking about the next thing, rather than paying attention to the present moment, then it can mean your mind will struggle to keep up and leave you feeling pretty rubbish in the long term.

It's not just about listening to your thoughts and feelings, but also your body and the world around you. Remember in the first lockdown when all of a sudden we were aware of the birds singing? They always were – we just hadn't listened.

This awareness – or mindfulness – can help you get more enjoyment from life and help you understand what really makes yourself tick.

By being in the moment, you can change the way you feel about life and its challenges for the better.

Here are some tips to set you on the path to mindfulness:

- **Interrupt autopilot.** As you go about your daily life, notice the sensations you experience, from the food you eat, to the wind in your hair. Just noticing small, everyday things is hugely powerful.
- **Keep it regular.** If you'd find it helpful, pick a

regular time of day to practice mindfulness, such as a walk at lunchtime or on your way to work.

- **Try something new.** Something as simple as sitting in a different seat at home or eating something new for lunch can help you notice the world in a new way.
- **Watch your thoughts.** It can be hard not to let lots of thoughts and worries crowd in. Mindfulness isn't about making these thoughts go away, but you may find that gentle yoga or walking can help if you have an over-busy mind.
- **Name thoughts and feelings.** Some people find it helpful to silently acknowledge and name their feelings as they occur, eg: "Here's the thought that I might fail that exam". Or, "This is anxiety".
- **Free yourself from the past and future.** You can practise mindfulness anywhere, but it can be especially helpful if you realise you've been reliving past problems or worrying about the future.
- **Different technique.** Sometimes a more formal approach can help. Mindfulness meditation, yoga and tai-chi can all help with developing awareness.

You can read more about mindfulness on the [NHS website](#), including steps you can take to be more mindful in your everyday life, as well as lots of other resources on our new AXA EAP programme.

IT'S BEHIND YOU!

Looking to tidy things up on Teams? Fly the flag for your business area with one of our custom backgrounds.

From sun-drenched beaches, to the bridge of the Starship Enterprise, we've seen an eclectic mix of themed backgrounds cropping up in our Teams and Zoom calls since video conferencing became the new normal.

Fun as they are, we can probably all agree that when it comes to our work related calls, it's always important to make the right impression.

Luckily help is at hand, courtesy of those clever designers in our Marketing team.

After receiving a number of colleague requests, they've created branded background images for each business area specifically for use in Teams:

- **Dignity plc (similar to what you see here in Dignity Inside)**
- **Dignity With Distinction**
- **Dignity Taking the Greatest Care**
- **The Crematorium and Memorial Group**
- **Simplicity Cremations**

So not only can you be on-point during your meetings, you can be on-brand as well!

Now we're not saying the backgrounds need to be used on every call (homeworkers, there's nothing wrong with colleagues seeing your living room / dining room / study / spare bedroom / shed).

However, there are circumstances where they do come in handy, for example when you're working in a shared space, especially areas where clients or other visitors could be visible in-frame, or having discussions with people outside our organisation.

Use them as you see fit, and if you need instructions on how to add a custom background image in Teams, just follow these steps:



1. Head to our **Useful Documents** section and find the image you want.
2. Right click on the 'Download' icon and choose the option to 'Save link as'. Then save the file to your Pictures folder.
3. When joining a Teams meeting, you will see a preview of your video. Underneath that preview, select 'Background filters'. If you are already in a meeting, click the three horizontal dots and select 'Show background effects'.
4. A sidebar should appear called 'Background settings'. Click '+ Add new' and select the background image from your Pictures. Your chosen background will then appear at the bottom of the sidebar (you may need to scroll down in order to see it).
5. Click on the background and select 'Apply'.
6. To remove or change your background, go back to step 3 and use the 'Background settings' sidebar.