

Life

in the community with Funeral Partners
Autumn 2021

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Sam Kershaw

Chief Executive Officer

Three years ago, Sam Kershaw took over as Chief Executive Officer of Funeral Partners, having joined the business in 2016 as Chief Operating Officer. Sam has over 35 years' experience in the funeral profession, having worked his way up from Trainee Funeral Director to senior management.



It's amazing to think how spending time with the ones we love may have been taken for granted before the pandemic. Now, it's truly time to treasure as lockdown restrictions ease across the UK.

However, it's important to appreciate that as the country opens up and life becomes more normal, Covid-19 has not gone away. For now, we must continue to adapt and protect those around us.

We all have a personal and collective responsibility to look after not only our own families, but also colleagues, clients and their families as we follow government guidelines. We are therefore continuing to use PPE such as face masks, and I appeal to everyone to do so diligently.

It has been great to see so many members of the Funeral Partners family raise money for charity over the past few months as lockdown restrictions lifted. From Jamie Groves' star-studded football match to Sandra Murphy's daring wing walk, thousands of pounds have been raised through fundraisers at a time when charities are most in need,

paying testament to both the creativity and generosity of our Funeral Partner teams.

It's needless to say the funeral profession is having a busy year. Not only as a result of the pandemic, but also from preparations to comply with additional regulatory requirements from both the Competition Markets Authority (CMA) and Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).

The CMA order which came into effect on 16 September deals principally with online and in-branch funeral professional services, third-party services and product price transparency. However, there are also new requirements for relationships and arrangements with third parties, as well as information that must be shared with families by law.

We fully support the CMA's aim of providing bereaved families with open and transparent information. It is part of our commitment to providing choice and the highest quality service.

I also want to highlight the importance of everyone taking care of their mental



“ It has been great to see so many members of the Funeral Partners family raise money for charity over the past few months as lockdown restrictions lifted. ”

health at all times, especially after what has been a demanding year-and-a-half. To help support and aid the mental well-being of our teams, we have been appointing Mental Health Champions across the network for easy access to advice and support. I encourage anyone who is feeling anxious or needs a bit of support for their mental well-being to contact professional supports teams – just having a friendly open chat can really help.

I cannot thank our funeral homes enough for consistently going above and beyond for families across the UK. Let's remain safe, diligent and prepared as we head towards more changes this year.



Proud to be working in association with Funeral Partners

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DARING SANDRA STRAPPED TO STUNT PLANE FOR HOSPISCARE



Thrill-seeking Area Development Manager Sandra Murphy rode on the wings of a plane during heavy rain to support people with life-limiting illnesses.

Sandra, based in **Torbay & District Funeral Service**, Torquay, raised over £1,346 for Hospiscare, which includes Gift Aid donations, after being fastened to a Boeing Stearman biplane as it performed daring manoeuvres from 500ft through the rainy skies of Devon.

She said: "Rain against the skin at about 100 miles per hour while at 500ft felt like razor blades, but it didn't take away from the overwhelming joy I felt about raising money for Hospiscare."

"As a Funeral Director, I understand the importance of supporting people living with life-limiting illnesses, so I couldn't be happier to go through this literal whirlwind of a ride for Hospiscare."

Torbay & District has supported Hospiscare for over a decade, such as by giving bereavement awareness talks to the families of its service users and organising fundraising events. However, restrictions imposed by Covid-19 made traditional activities challenging to carry out.

Being no stranger to skydiving, Sandra decided to take her thrill-seeking to the next level and raise funds for Hospiscare through a sponsored, Covid-secure wing walk from Dunkswell Airfield.

She said: "Hospiscare were over the moon with the idea, so they designed a poster advertising my fundraising page for us to hang in the window at Torbay & District, as well as a t-shirt for me to wear during the flight."

Sandra lost three stone in preparation for the wing walk and received overwhelming support from the local community, including donations from Torquay Crematorium, Barton Bouquets, CCG Contractors and the families served by Torbay & District, to exceed her £1,000 target.

She was able to see all over Devon as she rose to 500ft despite the wind and rain, before nosediving into a series of stunts. She described: "It was all very surreal, and even peaceful until I started turning sideways and vertically. But with my family watching below, I put on a brave face!"

Sandra is now considering a joint wing walk with her daughter, Jade Cross, Funeral Arranger at **Maunders Funeral Service** in Paignton, who has inherited her mother's adventurous streak.

Sandra concluded: "Jade was very jealous of my wing walk, so we'll have to plan a mother-daughter fundraiser soon."

Sandra Murphy flying high for Hospiscare



Martin Stokke, Events Fundraiser at Hospiscare, said:

“ THE MOMENT I SPOKE TO SANDRA, HER ENTHUSIASM AND INTENTIONS WERE OBVIOUS. SHE WANTED TO MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE TO THE LIVES OF LOCAL PEOPLE, WHILST TAKING ON THE CHALLENGE OF A LIFETIME. SHE DIDN'T DISAPPOINT! THANKS TO SANDRA, HER COLLEAGUES AT TORBAY & DISTRICT AND EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED HER FANTASTIC FUNDRAISING EFFORTS. ”

Sandra circling Dunkswell Airfield on a stunt plane



Funeral Partners has continued to acquire respected businesses across the UK, including the expansion and development in new areas of the country.

Farthing Funeral Service

Preserving historical community ties by joining Funeral Partners

Farthing Funeral Service, which has funeral homes in Ipswich, Felixstowe and Debenham, sees Funeral Partners expand into the East of England.

Undertaker Stanley Farthing, the grandfather of Business Principal Luke Farthing, acquired two Felixstowe building firms in the early 1950s before his son, Donald, transformed them into Farthing Funeral Service in 1955.

The family business expanded in 1960 when Donald and his wife, Margaret, purchased Hasting & Sons and later Singletons, two Ipswich funeral homes that had served their local communities since 1876 and 1840, respectively, before combining them under one name.

The funeral homes' long histories have seen the business place great emphasis on community support and involvement, which was strengthened when Luke's wife, Liz, began helping in the business around the time that Luke became a partner along with his parents and brother in 1985.

By 1997 the business had expanded to three communities across Suffolk. However, as Luke and Liz became sole owners in 2015, they found there was less time to engage with the various local charities and organisations as necessary administrative duties increased.

The couple discovered Funeral Partners shared an affinity with their goals and were excited about the prospect of receiving support and investments to expand their service to bereaved families as well as their vital community presence.

Luke said: "Liz and I thought about our future and realised that regulations, requirements and paperwork were only going to increase as the funeral homes became busier and busier.

"With community being central to all of our branches since they were founded, we didn't want to trade one thing for

the other, and we felt very comfortable about Funeral Partners helping us achieve the best of both worlds.

"I'm excited to continue supporting the growth of Farthing Funeral Service, its community outreach and its hardworking teams as Business Principal, with Liz by my side as a Community Consultant."

Liz added: "Funeral Partners showed a real empathy with Farthing Funeral Service and we're delighted to take this next step in our journey. It's great to see how much the Funeral Partners network gets involved with their communities."

Simon Roberts, Regional Development Director at Funeral Partners, said: "There's a real connection between Farthing Funeral Service and Funeral Partners that we can't wait to see blossom over the coming years as we help Luke and Liz engage with charities and organisations around Suffolk."

Sam Kershaw, CEO at Funeral Partners, said: "This is an exciting time for both Farthing Funeral Service and Funeral Partners, with Suffolk being a new area of expansion and development for us. We welcome Luke, Liz and their teams to the Funeral Partners family and look forward to working closely with them."



From left: Funeral Partners CEO Sam Kershaw with Liz and Luke Farthing outside Farthing Funeral Service.

“Funeral Partners showed a real empathy with Farthing Funeral Service and we're delighted to take this next step in our journey. It's great to see how much the Funeral Partners network gets involved with their communities.”

W. Storey Funeral Service

Century-old funeral home enjoys the benefits of joining Funeral Partners

W. Storey Funeral Service in North Yorkshire received significant benefits, including upgrades to its IT systems and administration processes, after joining Funeral Partners.

The near century-old funeral home in Guisborough used to work with pen and paper and a laptop, but is now supported by a range of digital tools such as video conferencing software and new computers.

Founder William Storey created the business in 1927 as a joiner, wheelwright and undertaker after finishing an apprenticeship with J.J. Pybus Joiners and Undertakers.

The business moved to Redcar Road, Guisborough in 1934, with the premises also becoming the family home. William's son John then joined from school in 1946, followed by his brother Peter in 1957.

John's son, Ian, followed in his father's footsteps and joined the family business after leaving school in 1969. The business began concentrating solely on funeral directing in 1990 and Ian took charge after his dad retired. His wife Sharon and son John then joined, marking the fourth generation of Storeys to have worked in the family business, along with Ian's friend and Operations Manager Tim Hardwicke in 2004.

W. Storey Funeral Service prides itself on offering a modern, comfortable and dignified premises for Guisborough and North Yorkshire families and their loved ones and is now pleased to see its technological capabilities also meeting modern standards after joining Funeral Partners.

Tim said: "Our way of working has been dramatically streamlined, especially when it comes to the administration



From left: Funeral Service Operative (FSO) Simon McDermott, Funeral Director Carlo Capaldi, Operations Manager Tim Hardwicke, FSO Jonathan Bishop and FSO John McIntosh of W. Storey Funeral Service outside the funeral home in Guisborough.

“I'm very excited about our future with Funeral Partners given the level of support we've already received.”

side of things, and there is always someone around to help with our Area Development Manager making regular visits.

"I'm very excited about our future with Funeral Partners given the level of support we've already received."

Michelle Beveridge, Area Development Manager, said: "Within a week of joining Funeral Partners, the team at W. Storey Funeral Service started using the new funeral management systems, and it's as if they've been using them all along.

"I look forward to working with Ian, Tim and their dedicated team to help continue W. Storey Funeral Service's well-deserved reputation for many years to come."

Sam Kershaw, CEO of Funeral Partners, said: "W. Storey Funeral Service is a great addition to the Funeral Partners family. We hope these investments help continue the positive legacy it has created over the last 95 years and to continue serving the Guisborough community with care."



Funeral Partners CEO Sam Kershaw with Michael Gamble

Michael Gamble Funeral Directors

Welcoming Michael Gamble Funeral Directors to the family

Funeral Partners is delighted to welcome **Michael Gamble Funeral Directors** after its 13 years of proudly serving the Stroud community in Gloucestershire.

Former owner Michael Gamble opened the business in 2008 with his wife Clare after spending more than 20 years as a landscape gardener before deciding to train as a funeral director.

Michael has lived in Stroud for all of his life and is deeply involved with the local community, being a proud member of the Stroud Chamber of Commerce committee, and now joins Funeral Partners as Principal Funeral Director. He said: "By joining forces with Funeral Partners my time will now be freed up to do what I enjoy most, which is serving the families of Stroud, and seeing the business grow and flourish under their guidance.

"Stroud is a unique area and Funeral Partners understood the importance of us being able to continue serving our families in the way we do."

Judi Edwards, Deputy Regional Development Director, said: "Michael is still the face of Michael Gamble Funeral Directors along with his team. We are here to support them and the excellent reputation they have every step of the way."



GOALS 4 GOSH

STAR-STUDED CHARITY FOOTBALL MATCH

RAISES £40,000



IN AID OF
GREAT ORMOND STREET HOSPITAL CHARITY

What started as a kickabout between friends to raise money for Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity quickly turned into a star-studded football match at Crystal Palace FC, with celebrities like Omid Djalili and ex-pros such as Russell Martin, Paul Hayes and Sergio Torres delighting spectators to help raise thousands for the children's hospital.

The Goals 4 GOSH event organised by Jamie Groves, Regional Development Director of Greater London South, saw the Flamingo Falcons and Palace Panthers, both named after different wards at Great Ormond Street, go head-to-head at Selhurst Park Stadium to raise over £40,000, more than doubling Jamie's original target of £15,000.

Jamie said: "I was absolutely blown away by how keen these celebrities and football legends were to get involved with Goals 4 GOSH, and even more so by the amount we ended up raising for Great Ormond Street.

"Everyone from former England player Lianne Sanderson to actor Tamer Hassan got a chance to play in a roll-on, roll-off system, and the crowd loved every minute of it. I hope what we've raised can go a long way in helping Great Ormond Street continue their hard work and make unwell children feel better again."

FULLTIME AT CRYSTAL PALACE FC'S SELHURST PARK STADIUM



Jamie originally suggested the idea of Goals 4 GOSH to family friend and retired footballer Allan Cockram, which was then to be a small, local match with an ambitious goal of raising £15,000 for Great Ormond Street.

However, with Allan's support, Jamie ended up reaching out to a number of other ex-football pros and celebrities who quickly expressed an interest in playing. He described: "It was a snowball effect; I'd speak to a couple of stars who would mention it to their circle of friends, and then they'd mention it to their group of friends."

Jamie received interest from over 30 high-profile players, so he set about finding a sizeable venue for the match. Crystal Palace FC offered their Selhurst Park stadium, as well as a jersey signed by its players for a raffle at half-time.

Jamie came up with a number of other ways to raise funds for Great Ormond Street, including sponsorship



ACTOR AND COMEDIAN Omid DJALILI TAKING A BOW FOR THE PALACE PANTHERS

opportunities for businesses to see their logos featured on players and the match day programmes.

He said: "We managed to sell every sponsorship opportunity, more than 500 tickets and pay-per-view livestreams, meaning we actually passed our £15,000 fundraising target about a week before matchday.

"Ultimate Fantasy Merch was also kind enough to provide exclusive trading cards based on each player, some of which were included in an auction and raised a lot of money."



JAMIE GROVES TAKING POSSESSION FOR THE FLAMINGO FALCONS

The Flamingo Falcons, captained by Jamie, claimed a 9-5 victory on the day, while Omid Djalili won 'player of the match' for the Palace Panthers through a poll on social media by pulling off some impressive tricks.

Jamie said: "We called Omid the Roberto Carlos of the Palace Panthers as he managed to perform some crazy back heel passes and step overs. He was a real crowd pleaser throughout the whole match."

Lianne scoring with an assist from Jamie was another highlight of the day that saw the former England star play for the first time in front of some of her family and friends, who were watching from the stands. Jamie described: "It was a big moment for Lianne and the crowd was going wild."

Jamie also managed to make his mark on the scoresheet by scoring a cool, calm and collected finishing goal.

Members of Danson Sports FC and girls from Beckenham Town Junior FC were brought onto the pitch at half-time along with children from Brentford Penguins FC, who were able to score with some impressive shots into the goals after the match.

Tamer Hassan said: "It was a pleasure to be a part

of the Goals 4 GOSH football match in aid of Great Ormond Street Hospital. It was lovely to see supporters enjoying themselves on the day, and seeing plenty of smiling faces. Brilliant efforts by Jamie for arranging this."

Paul Hayes said: "I really enjoyed myself playing in the Goals 4 GOSH football match. The organisation and the support of the event was incredible and so professional. Can't wait to play in the next one, well done Jamie."

Lily Coombs, Senior Fundraising Executive at Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity, said: "A huge thank you to the organisers, sponsors, participants and attendees of the Goals 4 GOSH event!"

"Great Ormond Street Hospital has always depended on the support of Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity to help transform the health and wellbeing of seriously ill children and young people. The support means so much to us and we



THE FLAMINGO FALCONS WIN THE GOALS 4 GOSH CUP



FORMER ENGLAND PLAYER LIANNE SANDERSON GOING FOR GOAL

are delighted with the exceptional fundraising that has been achieved.

"For more information about Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity, please visit www.gosh.org. To talk about fundraising for GOSH, please email community.events@gosh.org."

Jamie looks forward to organising another Goals 4 GOSH event in 2022, with many of this year's players having already committed to a rematch.

He concluded: "Everyone in the crowd had smiles on their faces and it filled me and the other players with such joy, especially after thinking about how tough the last couple of years have been. We simply must and will do this again."



Funeral Partners in the community

To find your local branch visit funeralpartners.co.uk

Tackling poverty and isolation with computer tablet donations

Ian Brown Funeral Directors, South Lanarkshire, donated Amazon Fire tablets to a charity supporting residents who live in poverty and have become isolated as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

After seeing the effects of the pandemic on the village of Carstairs and its surrounding areas, Ian Brown used its community fund to order two Amazon Fire tablets for the Carstairs Junction Welcome All Hub (CJWAH) and help it address poverty and isolation.

Funeral Director Joe Fletcher said: "Having technology and internet access is essential in the modern world, whether it's to look for jobs, receive support or socialise, yet it's something a large number of people can't afford."

Dot Watson, Community Development Coordinator at the CJWAH, said: "The donations made by Ian Brown Funeral Directors will be a significant boost to people looking for ways to reach their loved ones during this pandemic when they have little means of doing so on their own."



From left: Hubs Administrator Jacqueline White and Community Development Coordinator Dot Watson of the CJWAH receiving Amazon Fire tablets from Funeral Director Joe Fletcher of Ian Brown Funeral Directors.

Turning crisp packets into foil blankets for the homeless

The Barnet community donated over 5,000 crisp packets to Lorraine Gould, Funeral Arranger at M M Broad & Sons Funeral Directors, who turned them into warm foil blankets for London boroughs with some of the highest levels of homelessness.

Lorraine has so far created six blankets, using 75 crisp packets each, for rough sleepers in Tower Hamlets and Lewisham after appealing for people to drop off their leftover packets in a wheely bin outside the funeral home.

She mails the completed blankets to the Tower Hamlets and Lewisham Facebook groups run by the Crisp Packet Project, along with any excess crisp packets that she can't use immediately, who then distribute them and other foil items sent in by supporters.

She said: "Each blanket takes me about four hours to make, as I need to take the crisp packets home then wash, dry, and iron them so they fuse together. I'm now never short of crisp packets thanks to the Barnet community."



Lorraine Gould holding up a completed foil blanket made from crisp packets sent by Barnet locals to M M Broad & Sons Funeral Directors.

Schoolchildren transform Banfield & Pomphrey with wildlife display

Banfield & Pomphrey Funeral Directors, Hastings, was transformed with a wildlife display by Ore Community Land Trust (Ore CLT) and pupils of Sandown Primary School to help protect North East Hastings' last green area, Speckled Wood, from urbanisation.

Ore CLT Chairman Jim Breeds approached Funeral Director Tony Hart with the idea of utilising Banfield & Pomphrey's prominent location to raise awareness for the initiative and was met with overwhelming support.

He then asked Sandown Primary for the help of its pupils in making colourful woodland drawings, models and paintings to display at Banfield & Pomphrey, and received more than he expected.

Tony said: "Banfield & Pomphrey is very fortunate being situated on Old London Road. Not only do we get a great view of the last green lung in North East Hastings, we're also in a very busy area and can stand out with our window display."



Wildlife window displays created by pupils of Sandown Primary School at Banfield & Pomphrey Funeral Directors.

Going the distance in memory of baby Mimi

Victoria Fallon, Funeral Director at William H Painter Funeral Directors in Birmingham, walked 10,000 steps a day for a month to raise funds for life-limited and life-threatened children after conducting the funeral of a baby called Mimi.

Victoria was inspired to take on the 10,000 steps per day challenge by Acorns Children's Hospice, the specialist palliative care provider, after Mimi's family chose the charity as the recipient of donations related to their child's funeral.

Colleagues, friends, neighbours and even strangers rallied to help Victoria beat her fundraising goal of £500 by donating £530, most of which was donated through her Facebook Fundraiser.

She said: "Everyone I spoke to was so inspired by Mimi's bravery and how hard her family fought to care for her. The support the fundraiser received was incredible."



Walking 850,000 steps in memory of mum

Charlotte Ambler, Diary Manager of Wm. Dodgson & Son Funeral Services in Harehills, walked 850,000 steps around Leeds to help fight Alzheimer's at a time when traditional fundraising activities haven't been possible.

Charlotte had previously organised cupcake sales and community walks to help raise money for the Alzheimer's Society using a MuchLoved online tribute page in memory of her mother, who passed away due to the disease in 2018.

Friends, family and others from the Harehills community sponsored Charlotte's three month-long walk through the MuchLoved page, bringing its total amount raised to £1,703.

Limitations such as the pandemic and even bad weather left Charlotte undeterred in her mission, who stayed motivated by setting her own personal goals.

She said: "When I began this challenge over three months ago there wasn't much to do except walk and stay fit. Now, having finished, I feel overwhelmed by the support, as well as healthier."



Charlotte Ambler walking 850,000 steps for Alzheimer's Society.

Safety remains the watchword as Covid-19 restrictions ease

Families welcome larger funerals but recognise virus threat remains

While the lifting of the majority of lockdown restrictions across the UK nations has been welcomed by families and funeral homes alike, Funeral Partners' teams have never been more safety conscious.

Right from the start of the Covid-19 outbreak, Funeral Partners introduced policies and guidelines to protect families and funeral teams.

Supported by the Operational Planning Group, a taskforce of senior decision-makers including Director of Central Operations Richard Van Nes and Change & Compliance Director George Meudell, Funeral Partners implemented capacity limits, secured PPE and installed protective screens, taking into account government guidance when it was available.

George said: "We worked closely with institutions such as the National Association of Funeral Directors, the Royal College of Pathologists and the Royal College of GPs in order to inform our decisions. Guidance booklets and posters were produced with straightforward information on PPE, social distancing and interacting with clients and the deceased."

For Victoria Fallon, Funeral Director at William H Painter Funeral Directors

in Yardley, Birmingham, the changes meant she and her colleagues had to quickly adapt to a new way of working. She described: "Only a couple of family members were allowed in-branch to arrange a funeral whereas, before the outbreak, families would often arrive in big groups. We therefore had to start facilitating virtual funeral arranging."

Jon Baird, Business Principal of Bairds of Antrim Funeral Directors, had a similar experience in Country Antrim, Northern Ireland. He said: "We had strict policies and procedures laid out by the business which safeguarded ourselves and the families we were dealing with."

"For example, following the guidelines in Northern Ireland, we had sheets collating the names and contact numbers of all those who entered the premises. We had a touchpoint cleaning rota to ensure all surfaces

"We had strict policies and procedures laid out by the business which safeguarded ourselves and the families we were dealing with."

William O'Neill, Senior Funeral Service Operative at Bairds of Antrim Funeral Directors, County Antrim, checks a list of people attending a funeral service.



were regularly cleaned at different times throughout the day."

Eighteen months later, the government's lifting of many lockdown restrictions over the summer marked a welcome return to something more normal for families, businesses and workplaces. But for Funeral Partners' funeral homes, there was no sudden change.

Victoria said: "Given the nature of our industry, we can't afford to let our guard down and risk the safety of colleagues and families."

"The virus is still very much out there, so we still maintain capacity limits, facemasks, ventilation and hand-washing."

Jon added: "We have kept all our policies in place. There has been no light switch moment where everything goes back to normal, and I don't think there will be."

That isn't to say funeral homes haven't made changes. In line with government guidance, visitors are now asked, instead of required, to wear face coverings, as well as to maintain a safe distance of one metre instead of two from those around them.

Fortunately, this is rarely an issue for families, despite becoming used to more relaxed procedures in other businesses.

Victoria said: "We've seen no noticeable change in people's attitudes when visiting our premises since lockdown restrictions lifted. In fact, families are still video calling us and we are having

requests for smaller gatherings. They're just as aware of the risks as we are."

While facemasks remain a staple in Funeral Partners' funeral homes along with other precautions, perceptions around social distancing have noticeably changed when it comes to funeral services.

In County Antrim, Jon has seen services gradually getting larger in line with more relaxed rules set by crematoria, cemeteries and places of worship. He said: "Families are grateful that certain aspects of a funeral service can now be implemented, such as more people being allowed to attend and pay their respects."

"As a result, there is definitely a bigger attendance at funerals, and some people will wear masks while others won't. However, when it comes to services in our funeral home at Bairds of Antrim, we have been sticking to a maximum capacity of 30 people with mandatory face coverings."

Both Jon and Victoria expect funeral services to continue getting back to normality, albeit with small gatherings still remaining a popular option amongst some families for now. Having friends and family at funeral services is such an

integral part of saying goodbye to loved ones and a key part of the mourning process that our bereaved families have missed out on over the pandemic restrictions.

Victoria concluded: "It's great to see the local community transitioning so easily between businesses that have few restrictions to ours. Restrictions have been going on for so long now that I believe they've integrated into the way people think and act."



The team from William H Painter Funeral Directors, wear masks as they prepare for a funeral procession with a horse-drawn carriage.

Ways to pay for a funeral



Funeral costs can differ greatly depending on individual circumstances and needs. As a result, Funeral Partners offers ways for families to spread costs, make manageable repayments and focus on giving their loved ones the send-off they deserve.

● Funeral Safe

Funeral Finance is a financing option to pay for the funeral of your loved one, if you need a helping hand or are awaiting probate.



Funeral Safe offers interest-free no payments for three months following the funeral of a loved one, after which there will be affordable monthly instalments until the full amount has been covered with terms between one and five years. For example, a £4,000 funeral loan can be paid for with 12 instalments of £360*.

In order to reduce the cost of repayments, families can partially pay for the funeral within the first three months of this plan. They can also pay above the minimum that's asked for in monthly instalments. Additionally, it's possible to cover the total cost in the first three months and avoid repayments altogether.

Funeral Finance is currently available across the Funeral Partners network. Please visit our funeral home website for more information on how to apply or visit www.funeralsafe.co.uk

* Your personal circumstances affect the interest rate Funeral Safe can offer, which may differ from the representative APR. They will do a credit assessment of your circumstances when you apply. Credit available subject to status to UK residents aged 21 years and over. Funeral Safe finance is available over terms of 1 - 5 years with (fixed) APR rates from 15.9% - 24.9% based on circumstances. Funeral Safe Limited of Alton Business Centre, Valley Lane, Wherstead, Suffolk, IP9 2AX. Funeral Safe Ltd is the lender and is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Correct as of 01/10/2021

● Probate

Applying for probate to help finance the funeral of a loved one can sometimes be a long process that doesn't conclude until after a funeral has taken place.



There is no need to wait for probate to pay for the funeral. If sufficient funds are available, settlement can usually be made directly from the deceased's bank account without having to wait for probate to be completed.

Funeral Partners has partnered with the National Bereavement Service to offer all clients their professional Probate & Legal support. This not-for-profit organisation specialises in complex and sensitive bereavement circumstances, including the question of probate, and is available **24 hours a day** on **0808 164 2239** for free advice about the validity of wills, estate administration, tax matters and more to help expedite the application process.

Visit www.thenbs.org for more information about applying for probate.



An apprenticeship for the best job in the world

Lauren Calvert, 19, joined **John G Hogg Funeral Directors** in Sunderland in November as an **Apprentice Funeral Administrator**. She explains why she chose to work in the funeral profession and why she loves her job.

Lauren's first visit to John G Hogg's Pallion funeral home left a lasting impression. Sadly, she had come to see her grandmother who had passed away.

"I just couldn't go in, I ran out and was really upset. One of the team came to comfort me and I said 'I don't know how you can do this job.'" Gently he replied: "When you're older you'll realise it's the best job in the world."

Lauren had left school and was training in a pharmacy when she saw the Funeral Administrator apprenticeship advertised at John G Hogg. After a thorough interview process, she was really happy to be chosen to work in the business that had taken care of all her grandparents' funerals.

Lauren explained: "I've been through losing my grandparents. I don't want people to feel as bad as I felt."

Her Business Administration apprenticeship includes online learning, coursework and a final presentation and exam and her aim is to secure a distinction. Lauren says it is a great way

for anyone to find out if the funeral industry is the right choice for them.

Lauren has no doubts at all. Joining the business at such a busy time, as the second wave of the pandemic took hold, she has had to learn fast. In addition to administrative duties, she has supported families visiting the branch and the chapel of rest.

"I feel every day is different," she said. "You get so many families that really appreciate what you're doing." Lauren hopes to work her way up in the business and to train as an embalmer.

Michelle Beveridge, Regional Support Manager for Funeral Partners, said: "From the first time I met Lauren at her interview, I knew we had found someone very special. Her passion for wanting to be in the industry and the desire to give that lasting impression to her families, as she had once received, was so amazing, especially for someone so young.

"John Hogg and I, as did the business, wanted to give someone the opportunity to join the industry and learn all aspects of it, and who better to do it with than John Hogg himself, who has three decades' experience in the industry.

"Lauren joined at the most incredibly challenging time. She has worked



incredibly hard, learning new skills, having to deal with difficult situations whilst delivering the impeccable high standards of the John Hogg brand, and all whilst studying for the apprenticeship. She is receiving incredible feedback from families too."

Lauren concluded:

"John Hogg has really helped me and I've already had a lot of training. I couldn't imagine myself working for any other funeral directors."

"My family have said even if I went to a different job, they would still go to John, they think so highly of him."

For anyone interested in a job at Funeral Partners please visit our career page on our website for the latest vacancies: corporate.funeralpartners.co.uk

Plan Now & Save with our pre-paid Funeral Plan



Why buy a Funeral Plan?

- Guarantees Funeral Directors' costs at today's prices
- Gives you the opportunity to express your personal wishes
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Thank you messages

Our teams regularly receive messages of thanks and testimonials from families they have helped. Here is a recent selection of them via MuchLoved, the bereavement charity.



Our team also regularly receive five-star reviews for their services via Google and Yell, here are some recent ones.

A N Abraham Funeral Directors, South Kirkby

Bad times were made better. What wonderful and professional people, we could not have chosen better for mum. Everything was handled with the utmost care and attention. Thanks to everyone for making this time a little easier.

GP

Turners Funeral Service, Mexborough

Sadly, I lost my beloved dad on 5th May. This was not expected and all happened very quickly. Leanne and the whole team at Turners Funeral Service have been so supportive. They made things so easy to deal with at such a sad time. When you are struggling to concentrate due to grief and loss, they just step in and deal with all those things that you just can't think about. They are the ultimate professionals, who really do care about your loved one and the family/friends left behind.

I found it comforting to know that my beloved Dad was in totally safe hands and being looked after with care.

AG

Hammerton's Funeral Directors, Nottingham

My mum deteriorated so much during her last 24 hours in hospital that it literally broke my heart. After she passed, I was pondering if I should come and view her. Thank goodness I did, because my final memory of mum was whilst she was in your chapel and not in that hospital bed. You are real professionals and honestly, I will never forget what you did for us, especially the extra care you provided my dad with his disability and getting him through each of the steps.

SS and family

Wm. Dodgson & Son Funeral Services, Leeds

At every stage in what the pandemic made an even more difficult process than usual, the sensitive and efficient attention of Wm Dodgson & Son staff was a huge help. Both Geoff in the Moortown office and David during the funeral itself were exemplary and greatly appreciated. The MuchLoved website, additionally, proved an ideal solution to the access and participation problems posed by the pandemic.

RD

Gillman Funeral Service, Carshalton

You made a sad time so much easier. The kindness and professionalism of the staff at all stages of the funeral planning was very much appreciated by the family. The funeral day was as perfect as it could be. Thank you.

TH

Diamond & Son Funeral Directors, Lymington

I cannot thank Diamond & Son enough for the way they arranged and handled everything for my late father's funeral. At all times they were helpful, professional and most importantly understanding and kind. Helen, who was my main source of contact, was amazing, very patient, kind and supportive at what was an emotional time. The arrangements which were made gave my father, in my opinion, the best send-off we could have wished for.

KS

Kavanagh & Coates Funeral Services

I cannot praise Kavanagh & Coates highly enough for the wonderful funeral they organised for my uncle Tom. They went out of their way to ensure that everything was personalised and perfect for Tom in every way, even amid Covid restrictions. Thank you so much for your professional, respectful and caring service. You gave us a day to remember that was as special to us as the man it was for!

SS

G W Turner Funeral Directors

Lovely, caring, professional service. Great attention to detail. Thank you.

DB

John Gray & Co Funeral Directors

During a very sad time for our family, Barbara gently walked us through the difficult process of making decisions for the funeral and burial of my dear wife. Everyone in the John Gray team was professional and respectful and acted appropriately in everything they did and in the way they communicated with us.

M

Wombwell Funeral Services

I cannot fault Dawn and the team. They had great empathy for me in such a stressful time that I knew I could trust them to give my mum a good send-off. Everything was explained and I had time to have conversations with my siblings to make appropriate decisions. The day of the funeral was professionally organised and every effort was made. Dawn and the team made this so much easier. Five stars isn't enough for what they did. Thank you so much.

SM

Adair & Neely Funeral Directors

There are simply not enough thank-yous that could be conveyed for the gratitude we have towards John and his colleagues. A beloved Husband, Father and Grandfather died suddenly, and they were caring, professional, empathetic and organised everything seamlessly, which made a difficult time much easier to get through. They spoke about him as if they'd known him with the humour we wanted, and the send-off was perfect! It was such a relief in many ways to have John on the end of the phone organising everything for us. Thank you is not enough.

NF and the R family

Miles & Daughters Funeral Directors

I would highly recommend Miles & Daughters. The team were marvellous, caring and sensitive during what is a very challenging time. Special mention to Lucie, who was wonderful and took care of all our needs.

R family

Graham J Clegg Funeral Services, Mqghull

This was an outstanding service, at such a difficult time. All the details were arranged and coordinated in a highly professional and caring way. When the funeral party was led by Ian, down the avenue, and all the neighbours stood outside, it was so nice. I would have no hesitation in recommending this service..

PW

A Mind Full of Grief:

A bereavement guide for teenagers and young adults

Clare Shaw, author of
A Mind Full of Grief

Teenagers are exceptionally good at putting on a brave face when someone passes away - I know I did when both my brother and grandfather died. However, this could be the reason why I've heard so much about them being overlooked when grieving.

Teens can pretend everything is fine while deep inside, their head is spinning. If they say they're OK enough times, those around them will often assume it's true, leading to them to either grieve alone or not at all.

At a time when they're already undergoing so much change, experiencing death can really challenge a teenager's cognitive, physical and mental wellbeing. After all, imagine trying to grieve while believing you need to do it alone.

It's also clear that children and teens copy the behaviours of those around

them, which is partly why death and the emotions surrounding it can be especially taboo in their presence. However, being unable to learn from such necessary feelings can be damaging and go a long way in explaining why they choose to bottle their thoughts.

I recently read an article by Professor Sir Al Aynsley-Green, the first National Clinical Director for Children in government and the first Children's Commissioner for England, who claims "... as late as the 1980s there were doubts as to whether children could grieve at all". Children and teens certainly feel the pain of grief, however, often without the understanding of adults. If such feelings aren't dealt with and released at the right time, they can fester and come out later in life.

I have personally struggled with mental wellbeing throughout adulthood as a result of not being able to grieve

properly when I lost my brother and grandfather. There are a number of statistics on child and teen bereavement that stick with me, such as that 41% of young offenders have experienced a bereavement, and 25% of under 20s who die by suicide have lost someone close to them.

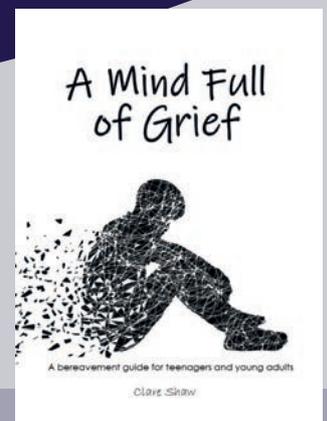
These statistics could be very different with early intervention and support at the right time. I wrote *Love Will Never Die* in 2017 to help young children avoid going through what I did, and since its publication, I've lost count of how many people have asked about a teenage version, while commenting on how little is available for teenagers.

I too was astonished at the lack of readily available resources, so I did some research, started to write some notes, and along came *A Mind Full of Grief: A bereavement guide for teenagers and young adults*.



To order a copy and help teenagers through what could be the most difficult part of their lives, see www.cskidsbooks.com/shop, with 40% off as an introductory offer if you use the code DDA25 at checkout.

If you wish to buy multiple copies, or discuss a trade account, please email debbie@cskidsbooks.com



For more information about all the funeral homes in the Funeral Partners family visit www.funeralpartners.co.uk or contact Marketing Director, Kelly Hailou: Kelly.Hailou@funeralpartners.co.uk

We welcome your feedback and comments about this issue of Life magazine, or if you would like to contribute, please get in touch with Gemma Taylor, Community & Communications Manager: Gemma.Taylor@funeralpartners.co.uk

Please note: Social distancing guidelines were respected during photography for this issue.