

Update

Transformation Programme newsletter



Welcome to your latest newsletter about our Good to Great plans. We've changed the format slightly in response to your feedback so that it's easier to print for colleagues without email. In each issue you'll be able to meet the team, find out what's going on and understand what our journey will mean for you. Let us know what you think!

Supporting our Support Functions



Whilst deciding on what I would write about the Transformation Plan for this newsletter the thought crossed my mind as to how many times I have, or maybe should have, said the word 'transformation' in the twenty years I have been with Dignity. What I do know is I have said it very many more times in the last six months that I ever did in the previous nineteen plus years and I guess I will be saying a whole lot more in the next three years.

My role as Corporate Services Director means I have responsibility for many of our key functions that support our client facing staff and operations. What I have found is that the Transformation Plan is now completely intertwined with my day to

day, or what might be termed business as usual, responsibilities in particularly in areas such as HR and Property and it's something I have to bear in mind with every function that reports to me, even places like our factory in East Yorkshire. You cannot consider one without the other and it is important to remember that at the end of the Transformation Plan we will have fit for purpose support functions for the future which of course is one of its objectives.

Personally I think the Transformation Plan is the right course of action for Dignity. The cynics might say we should have done this years ago but hindsight is always a perfect lens through which

to view the world and let's not forget that Dignity has been and continues to be a very successful business that delivers an outstanding service to our clients. We are realigning the business to continue to be a least as good as we are and hopefully better in the future by providing our clients with more choice delivered more efficiently

by our first class staff. ...and I only said 'transformation' six times in this brief update!

“
What I have found is that the Transformation Plan is now completely intertwined with my day to day.
”

Richard Portman
Corporate Services Director

Under Pressure!

Safety Inspection and Assessment of Memorials



Ever since a tragic incident where a child was killed by a falling headstone, it's been a legal requirement to check the stability of memorials in every cemetery on a regular basis.

Using a new, innovative phone-based app developed by our IT teams, colleagues from the Crematorium & Memorial Group go out and make sure our cemeteries are safe with some robust testing. Originally paper-based, IT have been working with the business to move the process as part of an on-going Health & Safety programme for headstones.

The supporting app allows them to take a photo of a headstone, read the memorial details that have already been entered into the CROPS system, record its exact location using satellite mapping and determine the level of risk as low, medium or high. With over 100,000 inspections to do to meet health and safety guidelines, the app is helping the

team and our processes become far more efficient in the field.

Gary Partner, Cemetery Memorial Technician, said, "Doing the memorial testing on the phones is really good because we don't have to rely on lots of paper and the GPS is a good idea to help re-locate the memorials more efficiently, especially for large locations like Tottenham Cemetery, which is over 60 acres in size. In most cases it gives us an area from 1 to 20 metres of accuracy and will come into its own at locations that do not have grave numbers."

We've worked with the app since the very beginning and it has not only made life easier and more efficient, but has evolved to meet expected industry standards and needs."

The secure mobile system links to our internal database, while the enhanced data collection



*at time
of writing

100,
000
to test
every
year

6375
pictures
taken*



Headstones
must be
tested every

5
years

Used
6102
times*

means we've been able to handle enquiries more efficiently, as well as being able to send letters to grave owners, when their memorials show signs of concern and provide instant proof we've done the testing if asked.

We went to Beckenham to meet Gary and his team, who have completed inspections at three of our cemeteries so far. With the London area heavily affected by bomb damage in WWII, you might expect the older memorials to be problematic, but as Gary explained, "Newer memorials, particularly from the 1980s, tend to have the most movement as they were usually fixed to a lower standard than what we would expect today."

"When a memorial inspection highlights a risk, we record the details and secure the memorial immediately and do our best to contact the families. It can take a bit of detective work though!"

The testing has meant that colleagues have come across some quite unusual headstones, many of which may prove interesting to historians. For example, in Beckenham alone, there are memorials for the legendary cricketer, W.G. Grace, the inventor of the components used in modern sanitary-ware and often mis-credited the inventor of the loo, Thomas Crapper, and Frederick Wolseley, who produced the first motor car in the UK.



“

Doing the testing on our phones is really good because we don't have to rely on lots of paper and the GPS is a good idea, especially for large locations like Tottenham.

”

Did you know?

The team don't just inspect headstones – in the future they'll be working with our crematoria sites that do not have cemeteries checking the safety of bird baths, benches and anything else over two-foot (60cm) tall.

Going from Good to Great with Pre-Need



Providing peace of mind for loved ones at the most difficult time is a key reason for their success, which is why we've taken the decision to bring pre-need into scope for our Good to Great programme.

We've identified big overlaps with many of our taskforces which we'll need to make sure are carefully managed. After all, pre-need sales are strategically important to our future and we need to make sure that it doesn't get overlooked as we progress with all the exciting plans we have in store.

So what are the overlaps?

Firstly, there's the work we're doing on **brand building**. As we refresh the Dignity brand and advertise pre-need, we expect our sales to grow. As well as improving perception of our brand, this work aims to recover our market share, so

it's important we make sure pre-need is fully aligned with the brand and **pricing** work we're doing.

Secondly, we're aiming to create a seamless **customer journey** and therefore need to work closely with CSC to make sure this happens at whatever point our customers get in touch with us. Similarly, with pre-need sales forming an important part of how we work in future, we need to understand how this fits into future arranger and branch **roles and responsibilities**.

Finally, it's no surprise that **technology** is a common theme. Funeral operations and pre-need have a shared use of common systems (such as CRM and Client Portal) so we need to make sure that whatever improvements we make work for everyone.



Did you know?

In some branches 90% of the funerals we conduct are from pre-need plans.

Is there an area of Good to Great you want to hear more about?
Get in touch with goodtogreat@dignityuk.co.uk



60 Seconds with... Sima Tudor



Name:

Sima Tudor

Role:

Programme Manager

Where are you based?:

Between Duke St and KEC

How long have you worked for Dignity?:

3.5 months

What does a typical day look like for you?

In the office for about 07.30 – I'm a little grumpy first thing, so this gives me time to shake it off before the team get in. Then spending the day continuing to stitch the programme tapestry together before ending with a to-do list for the next day. Aim to be home by 6pm, to give me time to get some exercise (which I hate) and cook some dinner (which I love).

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

How would you explain your job to a three-year-old? I'm the glue that holds the rest of the Programme Team together

What's the most unusual/most eventful thing that's ever happened to you at work?

18 years ago I was working on a project with a guy that went onto be my husband. Pretty sappy I know, but you don't get much more eventful!

If you could change one thing about your job, what would it be?

I'd have a few years of funeral industry experience under my belt. Luckily the programme team is augmented by some great Dignity colleagues, in the form of Business Leads, who are able to provide that all too crucial industry experience

What song/piece of music would you choose for your own funeral?

In Da Club, by 50 Cent....ultimate party track!

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

No person or company achieved greatness without taking risks. Let's be bold, and take some calculated risks.

Who would you like to hear from in the next 60 seconds feature?

Get in touch with goodtogreat@dignityuk.co.uk



Did you know?

One in four of the 'selfie generations' (that's under 25s to you and me) would like their ashes turned into a vinyl record, according to a Simplicity Cremations study. What record would you choose?



Jargonbuster

Don't know your BAU from your ROI? Then we're here to help!

EBITDA

This stands for Earnings before Interest, Tax, Depreciation and Amortisation and is a measure of a company's operating performance. Essentially, it's a way to evaluate how we're performing without having to factor in financing decisions, accounting decisions or tax environments.

RACI

This stands for Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed. A RACI chart is a way to view the participation by various roles in completing tasks or deliverables for a project or process.

POAP

This stands for Plan on a Page and is a concise, one page overview of the key elements of an approach or project.

The Rumour Mill: True or False?



We were expecting some refurbishment work to be done at our branch but it hasn't happened. I've heard it's been stopped as the business needs to save money.



The property element of our Good to Great journey programme is a complex mix of over 750 individual projects including acquisitions, refurbishments and new fit-outs. Over the past two months we have worked through the entire list of buildings with our Regional Managers to understand the level and type of activity needed to transform the estate. We have also identified a number of properties which require attention sooner rather than later and will, therefore, most likely form the first phases of refurbishment works. We are still planning how we prioritise these, but rest assured we will be in touch with you locally to let you know.

New! Listen in!

If you want to hear about transformation in more detail, why not listen in to our Good to Great dial in? Simply call free on **0800 0086371** to hear Transformation Director Paul Turner speak – don't forget leave your question or feedback at the end (10mins).



Contact us



If you have a question about transformation, have some feedback or a suggestion for the next newsletter, then drop us an email at goodtogreat@dignityuk.co.uk