

2nd July 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!)



MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN

How our strategy and organisational structure are going to evolve.

Last week saw the staging of Dignity's Annual General Meeting (AGM), a gathering of shareholders and an opportunity for our Directors to provide an overview of business strategy and performance.

The themes discussed build on many of the points raised by Executive Chairman Gary Channon when he wrote to all colleagues to outline his future vision for Dignity and the organisational culture we want to establish.

We have therefore summarised the main outputs from the AGM as well as the structural changes introduced across our leadership team.

For further reading, you can find a copy of our market announcement on the plc [website](#).

The need for change

We recently explained to colleagues that Dignity has been losing its way somewhat in terms of strategic direction.

In his address to shareholders, made virtually due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, Gary delivered the same message, pointing to the former emphasis on growing our share of the market by acquiring other funeral businesses.

Since then new competitors have emerged across different parts of the sector and we have started losing market share, particularly in the provision of at-need funeral services.

These challenges can and will be addressed through changes in our approach and

behaviours, with steps to ensure there is also a robust capital structure underpinning the organisation which gives us strong foundations for future growth.

" We want to empower our teams to deliver the best quality, service and experience for families locally."

Continued on next page >

Funeral plans: penetrating the market

The way funeral plans are structured and sold is already going through major change thanks to incoming regulatory governance controlled by the Financial Conduct Authority.

It is change for the better designed to protect consumers so they can make informed decisions and therefore has our full support.

We believe there is still a huge opportunity for greater penetration in the funeral plans market among the over 50s who are looking to make financial arrangements for later life and end of life.

Our job is to increase awareness of how funeral plans can help people prepare for their future and then make more use of our branch network in providing quality products to those who want one.

At-need funerals: leading on service and price

We know colleagues are deeply passionate about their work and always treat clients with compassion and respect. But being at our best has to cover all aspects of what we offer.

Many branch locations require investment to bring them up to standard. Our products need to be competitively priced across the estate and designed with choice and flexibility in mind.

Our vision is to reverse the decline in market share and return to a position of growth. We want to lead in all aspects of what we do and empower our teams to deliver



the best quality, service and experience for families locally.

We continue to learn a great deal from trialling new product propositions and will be exploring different price points and funeral packages to help define our strategy moving forward.

Crematoria: maximising our network

There is a strong opportunity for us to increase business volumes for our crematoria. In particular, we want to have a leading role in the provision of direct cremation services, since Dignity is the only owner of a national network of crematoria.

This gives us the necessary infrastructure to transport and care for the deceased in locations all across the country.

Where needed, we will continue to invest in creating a better client experience at our crematoria and build additional capacity onto

existing facilities, such as service chapels. We also intend to build brand new sites, with planning permission already secured for up to six future projects.

Further opportunities

During the AGM, Gary spoke of a bold ambition to improve Dignity's environmental credentials and operate in a more sustainable manner, including reducing energy consumption and emissions.

We recognise opportunities for enhancing the value and contributions from both our Property and Manufacturing divisions. Across our central support functions we need to embrace more efficient, innovative and cost effective ways of working.

We will also consider how best to utilise the fantastic assets across our crematoria division and network to tap into additional resource and capabilities, while still retaining the strength of being one group.

Continued on next page >

Restructuring the leadership team

As you can see, the presentation addresses plans and aspirations for each business area in turn, however this is really just to help with clarity.

In terms of organisational structure, the intention is for us to be far more joined up in how we act and move away from having such a traditional divisional approach. It will make Dignity agile and quicker to respond to changing client needs.

We can now share with you an overview of how this new structure will look, albeit there are still a few details and individual roles to finalise.

Perhaps the most notable change is the formation of an Executive Committee (ExCo) who have a shared responsibility for running the business. This means we don't have to channel every major decision through a single person such as a Chief Executive or Executive Chairman, which can create a bottleneck and slow us down.

ExCo will be supported and informed by the Operating Board and that ensures all business areas are actively feeding into the decision making process.



We also have a new Standards, Regulation and Compliance function which has elevated priority as we strive to become a benchmark for the industry in these specific areas.

At Board level, certain vacancies remain, but we are making good progress in getting them filled. It is important to attract the right candidates with proven experience in areas where we really need it, for example regulated markets, financial products and cultural transformation.

Putting the client first

Formulating and delivering an effective business strategy takes time and it is the responsibility of the newly formed ExCo to finalise, deploy and oversee it.

"Our guiding principles will create a deeper sense of pride in what we do and who we work for."

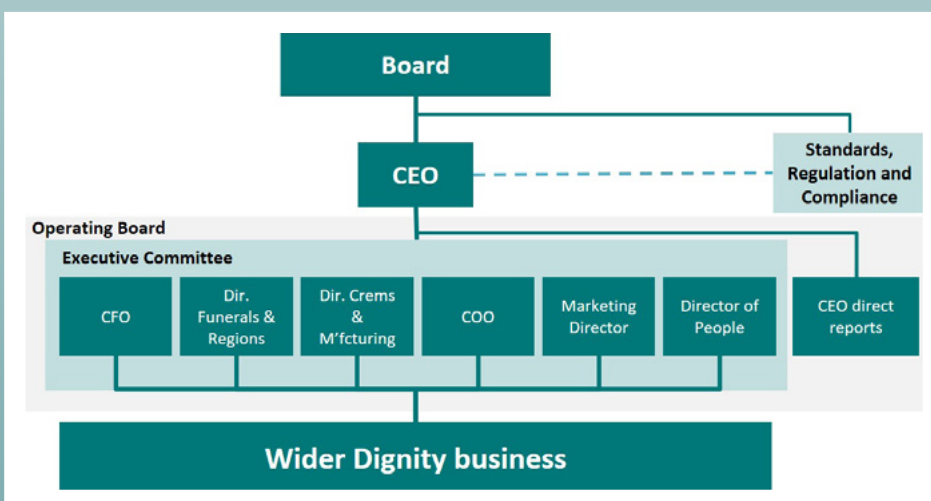
We have only been able to provide a general overview at the AGM – and in this communication – but you'll be hearing lots more about our plans and the part we need you to play as things progress.

At the heart of it all are our clients. Their needs will influence the decisions we make at each level of the organisation and we must always do our best to serve them well.

We also need to set our guiding principles, something which ExCo will lead but with contributions and agreement from across the business. Not only will this help make our roles and responsibilities clear, it will create a deeper sense of pride in what we do and who we work for.

These changes were warmly received by our shareholder community and they have the full backing of our leadership team.

We hope they are welcomed by you too as we embark on this next exciting chapter in Dignity's development journey together.



UPDATES TO COVID-19 GUIDANCE

New rules for attending funeral homes,
wakes and commemorative events.

COVID-19 restrictions are continuing to be relaxed in many areas of the UK, and as a result we've updated our level four guidance.

The updated **operational guidelines** now allow the use of funeral service rooms and ease restrictions for clients visiting funeral homes and chapels of rest.

Due to changes in restrictions for events, we've also been able to update the summary guidance for England and Wales:

• **England.** New guidelines for wakes and commemorative events, as well as funerals and commemorative events held in the gardens of private homes.

• **Wales.** New guidelines reflect the change in national restrictions from alert level two to alert level one, including the advice for receptions, wakes and social contact.

There are no changes to the current guidance for Northern Ireland or Scotland.

When do we move between levels?

We keep a close eye on levels of infection across the country and as always, make our decisions with our colleagues' safety in mind.

Most of the country is using level three now. We would only move to level four restrictions again if infections reach 200 and above in every 100,000 people.

Therefore, the general rule of thumb is that level four equals over 200 infections per 100,000 people, and level three is below that.

Our Regional Health & Safety Officers will monitor local rates and inform Area Managers every Tuesday and Friday.



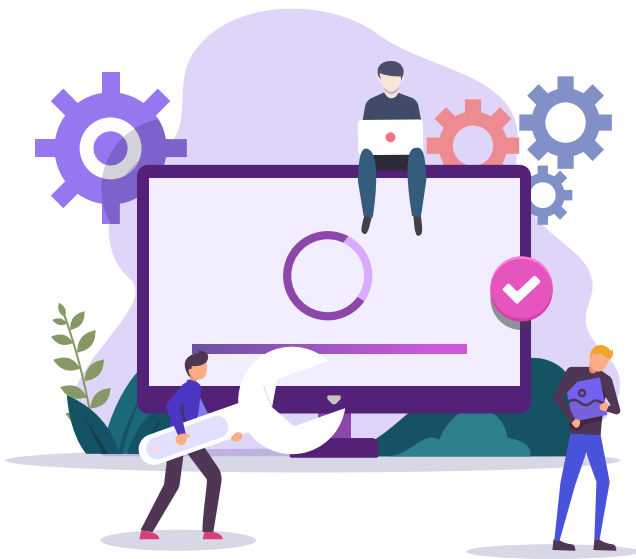
What do I need to do?

Please make sure you read all of the updated guidance to understand what's changed and what the changes may mean for you and your clients.

Please continue the great work you're doing to prevent infection, by following all instructions for the safety of you, your colleagues, clients and communities, and continue to follow the hands, face, space guidance.

If you have any queries, please ask your Area or Regional Manager for help.





SEE WHAT'S IN STORE

There have been some welcome improvements made to the Just Digital Dignity Store.

It's a go-to resource for much of Dignity's funeral and business stationery, but the next time you visit the Dignity Store you may notice a few changes.

Our partners at Just Digital, who run the online ordering portal, have recently completed some major updates to improve the store's look and functionality.

These include new page designs, visuals and updated company branding.

The portal has a better layout and clearer product categories to make navigation more user-friendly, while our 10 per cent corporate discount message is shown clearly throughout the site.

Just Digital have been carefully reviewing all the Dignity products so that anything obsolete and out of circulation gets removed. User access and assigned cost centres have also been checked.

And the Dignity Store now has an informative FAQ section to help resolve your queries quickly and easily.

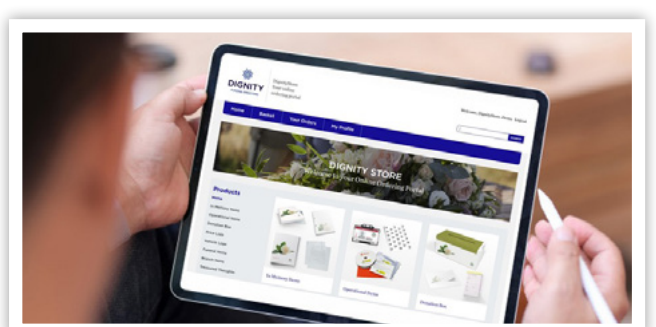
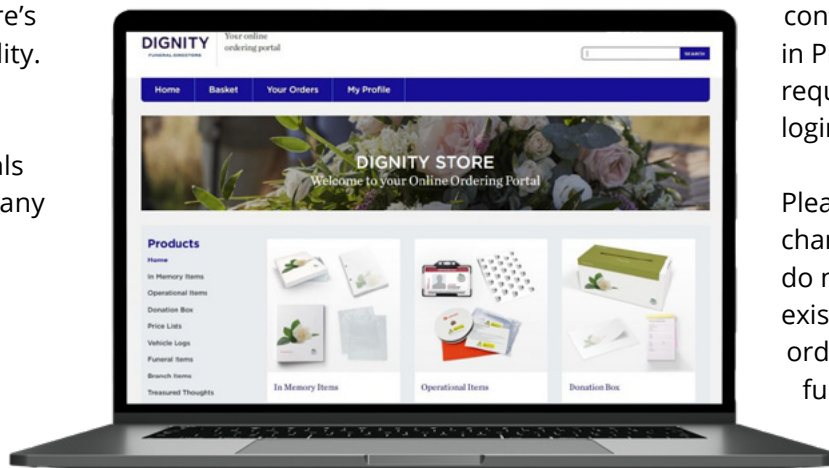
How do I access the store?

Go to www.dignitystore.co.uk. There is also a direct link from the Procurement section of Dignity's intranet (see 'Supplier Information').

Registered users will be prompted to change their existing password when they log into the revamped store for the first time. Any

new users should contact Jennifer Walsh in Procurement to request their own login details.

Please note that the changes to the portal do not affect our existing process for ordering personalised funeral print items, such as orders of service or hymn sheets, bookmarks and memory cards. You should request these in the usual way via an email order form.



QUICK AND EASY

Now we can add unique QR codes to a client's order of service sheet, making online donations a doddle.

Sometimes a small idea can deliver big improvements. And if that equates to a better experience for our clients, then we're all ears.

A good example comes from colleagues in the South West region, whose suggestion has now been adopted and made accessible to the rest of our funeral service arrangers.

They wanted to find a way of making it easier for mourners attending a funeral to access the relevant Funeral Notice and donate to the family's nominated charity via Just Giving.

We put this information on our order of service sheets, but getting to the Funeral Notice had meant manually typing in the full web address – typically something like this:



A little clunky if we're being honest, hence the idea of replacing the long URL with a quick response (QR) code.

You'll have seen these barcode-style labels cropping up everywhere (especially nowadays with the need for checking in when we're visiting places to support Test and Trace).

They contain data – in this case a link to the relevant Funeral Notice – and can be read using the camera on any smartphone or tablet. No typing required.

Instant access means someone could make an online donation there and then, plus we think you'll agree the printed code looks much neater on the page:



Requesting a code for your client

Our partners at Just Digital are able to add QR codes to any service sheets you need to order.

When placing the order, double check you are linking to the correct Funeral Notice and then simply provide Just Digital with the full long URL (you'll find it at the top of your web browser when viewing the notice).

Please remember that the Funeral Notice page needs to have been approved by the client before you share the address.

You'll also need to provide some wording for the service sheet explaining what the QR code is for (ie donations to a particular charity). The sample text on the image above is a good starting point.

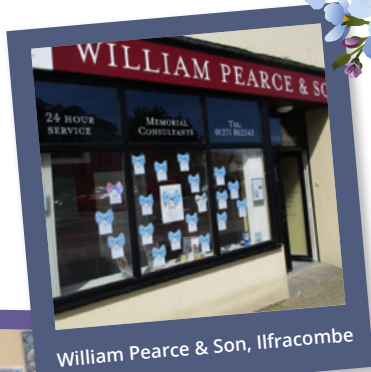
That's it. Quick and easy for us, quick and easy for our clients. A perfect combination!





DISPLAYS TO BE PROUD OF

We had a great response
to our Remembering
Dad campaign
for Father's Day.



William Pearce & Son, Ilfracombe



Joseph Swift (Uppingham Road),
Leicester

Heartfelt and poignant displays
have been on show at Dignity
branches in support of those
grieving for the loss of a loved one
around Father's Day.

Many teams joined in with the
Remembering Dad campaign and it
was a popular talking point on our
social media channels too.



E Hurton & Son, Retford



Griffiths & Booth, Holmes Chapel

The forget-me-not bow ties were filled
out with messages of remembrance
from our clients and some had
been specially coloured in by family
members themselves.

We've received lots of photographs
showing just how much time and
effort went into creating striking
window and in-branch displays.

You can see some examples here,
and more in our [online gallery](#).
Well done and thanks
to you all!



H J Whalley & Sons, Preston



Middleton & Wood, Wigan

MILES AND SMILES

Colleagues raise nearly £1,600 for Teenage Cancer Trust in an epic 24 hour running challenge.



When the longest day of the year comes around, it's important to make it count.

That might mean enjoying a trip out with the family, meeting up with friends or just lazing around in the garden (make that a beer garden for some of us!).

Not so for Dignity colleagues Laura Hope and Valerie Chapman. Their day – and night – was a much more active affair, resulting in them running an incredible 24 miles while also raising money for our nominated charity.



The pair, both Branch Development Managers supporting the North West and Scotland & Northern Ireland regions respectively, took part in the P24 'The Longest Day' virtual running event.

donations, which goes to Teenage Cancer Trust to help provide specialist care to young people and their families.

Starting on the Saturday before the summer solstice, they had to run one mile at the start of every hour and continue pounding the pavements until the following morning.



"We started our 24 hour journey as strangers, but by the end we were the best of friends."

Laura said: "We both had an amazing time. Valerie and I were running as a team of five and some of us hadn't met before. We started our 24 hour journey as strangers, but by the end we were the best of friends."

Their fabulous efforts generated almost £1,600 in



To keep their spirits up, the team decided to adopt themes for a number of the miles.

"We organised a family mile, where family and friends came out to support us and join in," Laura explained.

"Then there was the sprint mile and we each had a go at running our fastest time. During the night we opted for fancy dress, including disco outfits, Hawaiian skirts and even a very early Christmas celebration!

"It was terrific fun, plus sorting out the costumes was a welcome distraction from feeling tired.

"We're proud to have completed the challenge and hugely grateful to everyone who has donated to this fantastic cause."

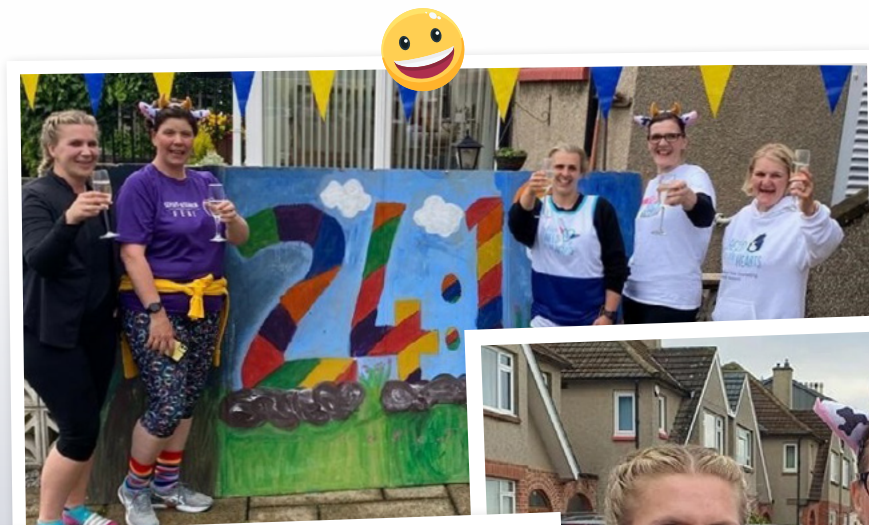
The best treatment

Thea Karavasili, Corporate Account Manager for Teenage Cancer Trust, added: "We're so pleased to be supported by Laura, Valerie and the whole team at Dignity. Every penny you raise really does make a difference.

"Through their running, Laura and Valerie have collected enough sponsorship money to pay for more than 40 hours of care from a Teenage Cancer Trust nurse, who will specialise in the best treatment for the cancers that affect this age group."

If you've been inspired by our fast-footed BDMs, there's still time to make a donation. Simply head to <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/laura-valerie>.

And if you're thinking of taking on a fundraising challenge of your own, get in touch with the Internal Communications team and we'll help you get started.



"We're proud to have completed the challenge and hugely grateful to everyone who has donated to this fantastic cause."

