

27th August 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!)



Like any responsible business, Dignity needs to help safeguard the environment in order to maintain the quality of the communities in which we work.

It's a natural extension of the care and consideration we show our clients – being environmentally aware is just as important, as is minimising the resources we use.

These are topics you'll be hearing lots more about thanks to the formation of the Dignity Group Environmental and Sustainability Committee.

With representation from across the organisation, their aim is to drive forward our strategy for being green and promote the various ways our people can make a difference too.

A fresh approach

The committee meets every month with colleagues from Funeral Operations, Crematoria, Manufacturing, Facilities, Health and Safety, Fleet and Procurement among those regularly contributing.

Together they'll be monitoring our environmental performance using indicators such as energy consumption, emissions and waste.

Also significant is the ethical side of how we operate, for example when buying goods and choosing suppliers.

Sourcing Manager Laura Bratt, who chairs the committee, said: "While environmental awareness is far from new to Dignity, we are taking a fresh approach by establishing this committee.

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“It brings together all the existing activities occurring in individual business areas and allows us to formulate a joined up strategy with measurable targets.”

Expect to see consideration for the environment and sustainability in our policies going forward, plus the committee will highlight any legislative changes colleagues need to know about.

Finding ways to improve

We'll feature regular updates on the committee's progress in Dignity Inside, but already there are some exciting initiatives taking shape.

These include rolling out more smart meters and energy efficient lightbulbs, investigating alternative sources of energy, increasing our recycling and cutting back on single-use plastics.

Laura added: “Everyone has a role to play in improving our green credentials, just as everyone will have ideas for things we could do better.”

“The committee would love to hear from colleagues, so please reach out to us with your thoughts and suggestions.”

INTRANET GETS A MAKEOVER

Our corporate brand rollout continues, with the intranet homepage next to get a new look.

Back in April, we revealed a fresh look for Dignity Inside, with a new name, logo and colours all reflecting the updated Dignity plc brand.

Just as Unilever is the parent company for household names like Fairy, Bovril and Wall's ice cream, the Dignity plc brand differentiates our corporate communications from those of Dignity Funerals, CMG and Simplicity.

Having a parent brand like this gives us a distinct and professional look and tone of voice when talking to our shareholders, investors and colleagues.

Continuing this rollout, we've given the Dignity Intranet homepage a makeover. As part of the update, we've highlighted the most popular links to make it easier to find the information you need, quickly.

This includes having the link to RDS on the top menu bar, IT Service Desk information near the top and big buttons to take you to the Dignity Academy Portal, Proactis and Dignity Inside.



If you prefer to use the old intranet homepage, you can even switch back by clicking on the button at the top of the page.

You'll notice that it is only the intranet homepage that's been updated. This is because we're aiming to improve the whole intranet soon, so it makes sense to do these bigger changes all together later on.

We hope you like the new look! Send us your feedback and any ideas for other improvements you'd like to see on the intranet.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

Director of Standards, Compliance and Regulation Natalie McKail
has joined the ExCo team.

Natalie McKail has been appointed to Dignity's Executive Committee (ExCo) as part of our continued focus on quality and standards.

Her role includes oversight of regulation and compliance across all business areas, as well as our health and safety programme.

It's a reflection of Dignity's commitment to becoming a market leader in these areas, from the quality of care and professionalism we offer our clients, through to how we keep colleagues safe in the workplace and fully up to date with all regulatory requirements.

Chief Executive Officer Gary Channon said: "This isn't just about ensuring we're meeting the standards expected of us, but exceeding them to deliver the best possible service for those experiencing bereavement.

"Natalie has the full support of the plc Board in leading on our approach to standards, regulation and compliance and taking any action required to drive through improvements where they are needed.

"Such efforts are essential for us to succeed in our ambition to make Dignity the best end of life provider in the UK."

Natalie joined Dignity in April 2021, having previously held several high profile and respected positions in the funeral sector and built up experience in health and safety compliance.

As the former Inspector of Funerals for Scottish Government, she led the development of a funeral director licensing and registration regime, as well as a new Code of Practice designed to help deliver consistently high standards of service to bereaved families.

Since 2019, Natalie has also held position as an independent working group Chair for the cross-funeral industry initiative the Funeral Service Consumer Standards Review.



"Natalie has the full support of the plc Board in leading on our approach to standards, regulation and compliance and taking any action required to drive through improvements where they are needed."

FROM A TO Z

Rounding off your guide to all things CMA as we continue to work through the required changes.



The final implementation date for the Funerals Market Investigation Order is drawing closer.

Let's run through the remaining items on our list of CMA essentials to make sure there are no surprises when we reach that all-important September deadline.

If you missed part one, or just need a quick refresher, simply click [here](#) to catch up.

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Prohibited practices

Under the Order, funeral directors are prohibited from entering into arrangements with third parties which are intended to encourage or incentivise referrals. Third parties could include hospitals, hospices, care homes and providers of bereavement support.

The Order also prevents funeral directors soliciting potential customers in the course of delivering services to a coroner or the police.

Q



Quality

In addition to its package of remedies, the CMA recommends establishing an inspection and registration regime to monitor the quality of funeral director services.

It also says future market outcomes should be closely monitored and steps taken to address any harmful behaviour.

S



Standardised Price List

All funeral directors must publish an itemised price list as prescribed by the CMA. It contains a standardised set of products and services so customers can consider their options and compare prices between different firms.

It's extremely important we display the list in accordance with instructions from the CMA, so if you're working in a branch please pay close attention to the briefing note that comes with your printed materials which will tell you exactly what to do.

Any variations to where the price lists and other materials are displayed must be authorised by an Area Manager first.



Terms of Business

Customers must have easy access to a funeral director's Terms of Business, such as deposits required, when payments are due, what payment options are available and any charges made for late payments.

Ours are included in the Dignity Price List, available both in branch and online.



Unattended Funeral

A funeral which does not include a service and where mourners don't attend. This can be a burial or cremation, although for our clients we are only offering unattended cremations.

We'll need to include the cost for this service on our Standardised Price List, along with the equivalent cost for an Attended Funeral.

If a family chooses to arrange a separate ceremony or event after the Unattended Funeral, we can always help them as part of our range of additional services.



Website

Uploaded documents such as the Standardised Price List need to be prominent on a provider's website.

The CMA says to put these documents no more than one click away from the homepage, with any links or buttons clearly labelled.

Any queries?

That brings us to the end of our rundown (no obvious items beginning with 'Z' came to mind!). If there's anything we haven't tackled that might help you in preparation for next month, please let us know.



SHOWCASING GREAT STANDARDS

Jennings hosts a VIP visit involving leading figures from industry trade body the NAFD.

Colleagues at Jennings Funeral Directors in Wolverhampton were proud to play host to visiting dignitaries from the National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD).

The team welcomed the Right Honourable David Heath CBE, former Deputy Leader of the House of Commons and Minister of State in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, who is now Chair of the Independent Funeral Standards Organisation (IFSO).

He was joined by Jonathan Rees, Independent Chair of the NAFD, and the Association's Chief Executive Jon Levett.

Representing Dignity were Andrew Judd, Executive Director of Funeral Operations, Natalie McKail, Director of Standards, Compliance and Regulation, and Chris Harper, who manages the Jennings business.

Chris led the group on a tour of the premises, showing how standards are maintained within the branch for care of both clients and the deceased.

There were also discussions about the coronavirus pandemic and the importance of adapting our services for clients, while also recognising the support provided by the NAFD during such challenging times.

Andrew said: "The day was a great success. It gave us an opportunity to meet David for the first time and to update Jonathan and Jon on our new strategy and organisational structure, which puts a strong emphasis on quality, standards and regulatory compliance.



"It was important to stage the meeting at one of our branches and introduce our visitors to the people that really make a difference."

Welcome: Andrew Judd (centre) and Natalie McKail with guests (l-r) David Heath, Jonathan Rees and Jon Levett.

"It was also important to stage the meeting at one of our branches and introduce our visitors to the people that really make a difference every day by taking great care of Dignity's clients."

The IFSO has been established by the NAFD as an independent regulatory body which will provide a robust mechanism for monitoring quality and standards for funeral directors and improving outcomes for bereaved families.

Regulation affects us all, regardless of job role, so make sure you're following the latest news and updates here in Dignity Inside.



Does anything beat a generous slice of homemade cake and a piping hot cuppa?

Well, yes – if that same tasty treat helps to raise money for charity!

There's just one month to go until the World's Biggest Coffee Morning, an annual event from Macmillan Cancer Support.

Fundraisers up and down the country will be getting their bake on and filling up their mugs in a bid to collect donations for people living with cancer.



The official date is Friday, 24 September, although it's flexible so coffee mornings can be held whenever suits.

Among those already involved is the team from John Meynell Funeral Directors in Newton Aycliffe, under the stewardship of colleague Jackie Toghill.

Would you like to join them? Sign up on Macmillan's [website](#) and the charity will send you a fundraising pack with their top tips for a successful day.

These include hosting a COVID-safe coffee morning in person with appropriate social distancing and even cashless donations. Alternatively, a virtual gathering can prove just as enjoyable and still highly effective at raising money.

Don't forget to email us any photographs from your coffee mornings, or simply upload them straight to Dignity Inside's [Good Deed Feed](#).

The World's Biggest Coffee Morning raised a staggering £10 million for Macmillan in 2020. And with your support, this year could be even sweeter!

