

RESEARCH

Unburdening family and friends is key driver for direct cremation

An independent study looking at the factors driving growth in direct cremation plan sales has shown that making things easier for family and friends at the time of need is the single biggest factor influencing purchasers.

While lower costs, keeping things simple and the speed and efficiency of direct cremation were also cited as important reasons for choosing a direct cremation plan, the main consideration is removing the burden from those left behind. Respondents felt that this would allow family and friends to focus on their grief and spend time with each other, instead of having to organise a funeral.

The study, which involved in-depth interviews with those considering a direct cremation plan purchase, also showed that understanding of direct cremation has increased significantly since Golden Charter last commissioned research on the area in 2022. However, it did identify some knowledge gaps in relation to what happens after the body is collected and before it is taken to the crematorium, and what happens after the cremation takes place but before the ashes are returned to the next of kin. This highlights the need for greater transparency for those considering purchasing a direct cremation plan.

Jill Hood, Chief Marketing Officer at Golden Charter, said: "This research, coupled with feedback from our network, is proving highly valuable in helping us to develop and shape our product range, ensuring we create plans that meet the needs of different types of customer."

"It's clear those considering direct cremation plans are different to those who purchase traditional funeral plans. They may be slightly younger, but most notably they're different in terms of their attitude and outlook – they're happy to break free from tradition, they value simplicity and believe it's better for their loved ones to grieve in their own time instead of at a funeral service."

Recent figures released by the National Association of Funeral Plan Providers (NAFPP) show that almost 65% of plans sold between April and June this year were direct cremation plans.

INNOVATION

Celebrating excellence: gold for being green

Prestigious award highlights Leverton's dedication and commitment to sustainability

Eco-conscious North London funeral director Leverton & Sons Ltd has achieved a respected industry accolade for its efforts to make send-offs more sustainable.

The business, which is renowned for its service to both local families and the Royal family, has attained a gold award from the Greener Globe Funeral Standard scheme.

Leverton & Sons had previously been awarded bronze for devising and implementing an environmental policy, and this latest milestone comes after the management team completed an audit across the firm, identifying

areas of best practice and opportunities to go even further for the planet.

Hannah Leverton, the firm's spokesperson, said: "We've been committed to green funeral practices for many years. For example, we were the first funeral director in the UK to offer an electric hearse to bereaved families. So, it's fantastic to receive recognition for our work in this area."

"But the journey doesn't end here. We'll be building on this award with additional environmental initiatives, such as more zero-emission vehicles, sustainable coffin types and reductions in energy and water consumption."

Hannah added: "With demand for greener funerals growing, it's vital that funeral directors not

"With demand for greener funerals growing, it's vital that funeral directors not only offer eco-friendly options but can also demonstrate broader sustainable practices in the running of their businesses"



(From left) Carolyn Day, of the Greener Globe Funeral Standard, presents Leverton & Sons' team members Andrew, Hannah and Pippa Leverton with their Greener Globe Funeral Standard Gold plaque

PARTNERSHIP

We will make a difference

More than 500 independent funeral directors have signed up to donate £25 to the Royal British Legion and Poppyscotland for every Golden Charter funeral plan sold or allocated between late October and 31 March 2025.

Since the charity partnership was established in 2016, Golden

Charter and its funeral director partners have raised more than £800,000 to provide lifelong support for serving and ex-serving personnel every day of the year.

Ben France, Head of Corporate Partnerships at the Royal British Legion, said: "Over the last nine years, Golden Charter and participating funeral directors

have raised over £800,000 to help us provide practical,

emotional and financial support to veterans and their families when they need us most.

"On behalf of the Royal British Legion and all we serve, I want to say a huge thank you for your generosity and kindness. Through the extraordinary commitment from Golden Charter colleagues and independent funeral directors across the UK, we have been

able to transform the lives of thousands of people in the Armed Forces community for the better." All funeral director





“I’ve no doubt that we will see the business succeed in achieving our highest platinum award in the near future.”

In addition to Greener Globe Funeral Standard recognition, Leverton & Sons is a member of the Association of Green Funeral Directors and Natural Death Centre. The business is also committed to Camden Climate Change

only offer eco-friendly options but can also demonstrate broader sustainable practices in the running of their businesses.”

The Greener Globe Funeral Standard initiative was launched by former crematorium manager Brendan Day, in a bid to drive environmental awareness among what is a very traditional sector.

Of the award, Brendan said: “We’re pleased to see such a renowned funeral director as Leverton & Sons receive our gold award. It’s very well deserved, given their pioneering approach to sustainability in funerals and it sends a really positive message to the wider profession about the need to protect the environment.

Alliance’s Cutting Carbon scheme.

Leverton & Sons was established in 1789 by John Leverton and operates five offices across Inner and North London – Camden, Golders Green, Hampstead, Kentish Town and Muswell Hill.

Former Chairman Clive Leverton was also a founding member of SAIF.

For many years, the company has been at the forefront of innovations in the funeral profession. For example, it was a pioneer in elevating women to frontline funeral directing roles at a time when the industry was still male dominated, and was one of the first businesses to publish its prices online.

DIARY DATE

Education focus

The countdown to the 2025 Cremation and Burial Communication and Education (CBCE) has begun.

Next year’s event will take place Monday 23 to Wednesday 25 June at the Hilton Southampton – Utilita Bowl.

Organised by the Cremation Society and the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities, CBCE 2025 will include experts and keynote speakers to discuss some of the significant developments in the sector.

For more information, visit www.cbce.org.uk



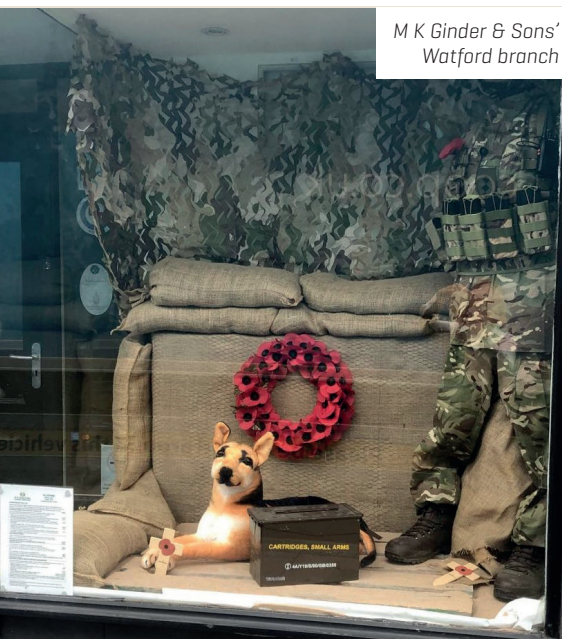
COMMUNICATION

Meeting friends

SAIF CEO Terry Tennens F.SAIF welcomed the opportunity to speak to members of the Funeral Suppliers Association (FSA) about co-regulation of funeral directors and his past career endeavours.

Terry said: “It was excellent to be among friends at the FSA and particular thanks to Alun Tucker, CEO, President Anthony Hill and President-Elect Jade Wilcox.”

The talk took place during the FSA’s recent annual general meeting.



partners of Golden Charter are eligible to opt into the campaign, which means that a £25 donation will be made for every plan sold or allocated to the business until 31 March 2025.

To find out more, speak to your Golden Charter business manager or email rbl@goldencharter.co.uk.

Pictured are remembrance window displays of funeral directors participating in Golden Charter’s Royal British Legion and Poppyscotland campaign, featuring Victoria House Funeral Service and M K Ginder branches in Watford and Bushey.