

**Our Head of Operations
has been recognised
for his hard work
and dedication to
the profession**



Our Head of Operations, Sean Martin (pictured above), received a lovely surprise when he attended the SAIF (National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors) AGM in March.

Much to his surprise, Sean was awarded a Fellowship in recognition of his distinguished and outstanding service to the UK independent funeral sector.

Sean has served as a member of the SAIF National Executive for seven years, during which time he represented independent funeral businesses and SAIF in Government and was involved in negotiations with both the Competition & Markets Authority and the Financial Conduct Authority. He also overhauled the professional standards procedure and disciplinary systems, bringing them up to date with current legislation. These are just the highlights of his achievements and he has contributed in many other ways, as well as running our very successful business. We are delighted that Sean has received the highest honour that SAIF can bestow on an individual, it is very well deserved.

*"To all the wonderful staff at
Newlings of Royston*

*Thank you so very much for all your
kindness, support, thoughtfulness and
respect through such a difficult time.*

*You helped so much and we could not
have done it without you all.*

*You were absolutely wonderful and
nothing was too much trouble"*



**See inside for
information
about Direct
Cremation and
"My Funeral
Wishes"**



Funeral Trends - what do they really mean for families?



We are supporting a nationwide campaign to help bereaved families better understand funeral options, amid concerns that families are not receiving the opportunity for adequate farewell and remembrance of the relative whom they have lost. This has often occurred when the person who has died has made all the decisions without prior discussion with their family. We are realising that this is never more relevant than when the deceased person has left instructions or made provision for a direct cremation, which does not provide a funeral or an opportunity to mourn and it greatly restricts the family's ability to grieve and remember as perhaps they would have wished.

The funeral is very often the start of the healing process following bereavement and the "Let's Talk About Direct Cremation" campaign has been launched in response to growing concerns about "no-fuss" funerals, which often prevent mourners from gathering to say goodbye.

The Campaign is led by SAIF (the National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors), the UK's largest trade association representing independent family funeral directors. The objective of the campaign is to raise awareness of the differences between direct cremation and an attended funeral, where families can make a more informed choice including simple, traditional, natural or more modern options.

With many years of providing a service to the bereaved, any local family funeral director would share the following observation if asked for their advice:

"A funeral may be about the person who has died, but it is very much for the family and those left behind, who may seek closure and comfort through proper remembrance and an opportunity to grieve together."

If you are considering pre-arranging your funeral, we would strongly advocate that you have an honest and open discussion with your family as to what their needs may be, rather than making the decision for them.

The increasing number of national online direct cremation companies with slick TV advertising may make you feel that you would be reducing an emotional and financial burden on your family by not having to attend your funeral. This may be the case, however, it could be very different to the expectation and emotional needs of those closest to you.



What the TV ads do not tell you about the online national direct cremation companies is that they do not offer the same level of service to the family left behind or the care standards to the person who has died. The options available from your local Family Funeral Director in your home town, may include full preparation of the person who has died, having the ability to choose and see them in their favourite outfit and enabling friends and relatives to spend time to pay their respects in a local Chapel of Rest, all of which is helpful in overcoming the grief and sense of loss.

What is also not shared is that some online national providers often have a 6-7 week delay before the cremation takes place and the cremation facility may be several hundred miles away from where the family have lived. Care is not local. Whilst these details may seem insignificant when considering our own funeral arrangements, these elements, and others, can bring great comfort to those we leave behind.

At Newlings of Royston we have met families who have respected a loved one's wish for a Direct Cremation, despite their personal reservations about not having a funeral service. In the weeks that followed, they have had regrets about missing the one opportunity to prepare for and attend a funeral service which would have offered them the time to grieve and say goodbye with the unity and support of others. The funeral is, after all, an opportunity for people to be together in their shared grief to share memories of the person who has died, and perhaps to find out about different aspects of their life that they may otherwise never have known.

Bereavement counsellors and local clergy have advised us that they are seeing increasing numbers of people seeking support where a close family relative opted for a direct cremation. Although the wishes of the deceased were followed, bereaved relatives have expressed feelings of guilt and sadness that they haven't had the opportunity to say a proper goodbye or to provide the send-off they feel the person deserved.

We would encourage those seeking to pre-plan their funeral, to talk to their family about their expectations and emotional needs and to take the time to find out whether a Direct Cremation does or does not satisfy their needs. If, having considered all the options, a Direct Cremation is considered to be the most appropriate, we can provide this service, we will offer our full support and the highest standards of care from our local funeral homes. The most important thing is that the family make an informed decision.

Terry Tennens, Chief Executive of SAIF welcomes our involvement in the campaign and says "I defend anyone's right to have a Direct Cremation but it's important that people know exactly what they are buying and look beyond the 'no-fuss' headlines to ensure that this kind of service is appropriate for them and their families."

Introducing ...

"My Funeral Wishes"

We are often asked about funeral pre-planning, as some people wish to make an advance payment towards their funeral costs. However, pre-paid funeral plans are not the only option.

Not everyone can afford to pay for their funeral in advance, particularly in the current economic climate. We have therefore created a no-cost option to enable people to simply record their funeral wishes – this can greatly assist family members, friends or Executors who will be making the difficult decisions at the time.

The benefits of recording your funeral wishes include:

- Making things easier for your family and friends at the time of need.
- You can store as many copies as you wish, with as many people as you wish, including us as your chosen Funeral Director.
- Giving you peace of mind that your wishes will be taken into consideration.
- It can be as simple or detailed as you wish it to be.
- You can review and amend your wishes at any time.
- No upfront costs – there is no charge to register your funeral wishes with us.

To find out more:

Our experienced Funeral Arrangers will be pleased to guide you and answer any questions you may have. Your discussion will be treated in the strictest confidence and there is no charge for this service.

Please contact us to make an appointment.

Should you wish to complete the details yourself, you can do this online or download a copy of the form from our website:

www.newingsofroyston.co.uk

Alternatively, a copy of the form can be collected from us or posted to you.

New to Newlings of Royston, but not to the funeral profession



If you have called the office recently you may have detected a strong Scottish accent, in which case there's every chance you will have spoken with our new **Funeral Manager, Stephen Greenlees.**

Stephen has many years' experience in the funeral sector, having worked for two of the larger funeral providers. Before joining Newlings of Royston, he spent some time managing a crematorium but he missed the very unique role of the Funeral Director and decided to return to what he knew best. He is delighted to be working for an independent funeral director and we are very pleased to welcome him to our small and friendly team.

Stephen will be getting out and about to meet people in the area but do feel free to pop in to say hello if you are passing.



In April we were invited back to organise a putting competition for Royston Town FC Charity Golf Day. Around 40 golfers played 18 holes before attempting to score the longest putt in our competition. Dan Brooks won the first prize of a bottle of whiskey and other golfers picked up prizes along the way, including golf balls, wine and chocolates and our much-coveted Newlings of Royston water bottles!

The whole event raised around £1,200 which will be split between Royston Town FC and the British Heart Foundation.

Our popular Sing-alongs will return

We are sorry that we have had to postpone some of our sing-alongs in recent months. Les has been attending to a family matter but he is very keen to return to entertain you all just as soon as he is able to. Please keep in touch with Andy who will be pleased to arrange this for you: andym@newlingsofroyston.co.uk



Look who's 60!



Driver/Bearer Colin Paris celebrated his 60th birthday in March and we took the opportunity to have a little gathering for him. Judging by his face, he was pleased with his gifts!

