

Safeguarding you in the worst of times

Safeguarding those final goodbyes

By Tim Purves Chairman of William Purves, Scotland's largest independent funeral directors

The repercussions of the Covid-19 outbreak are being felt in communities around the world. It's inevitable that restrictions on mass gatherings and enforcement of self-isolation are having an impact on how we mark major life events. With weddings, birthday parties and other public events all now banned, funerals are the only gathering of people permitted, but even they are feeling the effects as our government takes action.

The safety of our communities is always going to be the priority. However, removing the right of saying a final farewell can have profound and lasting consequences. As it stands in Scotland today, funerals can still take place, however the situation is evolving rapidly, and we are having to adapt.

Funeral ceremonies have been instrumental in helping people say goodbye to their loved ones for centuries. They provide a memorial to them and are also a key part of the grieving process, providing a sense of closure to friends and family. Sharing that sense of loss is a natural part of a funeral service, which allows those grieving to feel supported by others.



Now, traditional services have been adapted to aid social distancing in line with current industry and government guidance. Funeral attendance is restricted to only the closest family members at this time. While burials are still permitted, many people are opting for cremations services, as churches have made the decision to stop large gatherings. Instead of using our limousines, families have the option of the hearse going home and family following, or alternatively meeting the hearse at the crematorium or cemetery.



While our offices now have temporarily restricted access to the public, we are very much still providing a 24/7 service. And although we always prefer to speak in person at this time we cannot – but we can provide telephone, Skype or FaceTime calls to aid those who are housebound.

For those unable to attend cremation services, there are often live streaming or recording opportunities so they don't have to miss out on the chance to say goodbye. We can also arrange a full memorial or celebration of life at a later date, so your loved one gets the send-off they deserve.

We will ensure that viewing is made possible for as long as we safely can – even if the deceased had Covid-19 – because being able to view the deceased can be extremely important in helping someone progress through the grieving process.

As we work through this unprecedented time, our industry-leading embalmers continue to act in line with the current government and best industry guidance. We continue to offer embalming so that families in isolation can still have a

funeral service at a later date – this is our way of safeguarding a goodbye.

Although we hope the situation will not worsen further, we are prepared. We have bolstered our coffin supplies and have access to a large mortuary which can manage increasing numbers if necessary.

Operating a 24 hour 365 days on-call service and working in shifts as standard, our dedicated team are well prepared and ready to look after families. This means we can provide the same service, no matter the hour of need.

Amid the Covid-19 outbreak, we are doing what others won't in order to provide the best of service at the worst of times. However the situation progresses, our purpose remains the same – providing core funeral services that give families comfort in trying times and offer the opportunity for a final and fitting goodbye.

[More information here](#)