

1,000 years of legacy secured

Funeral Partners is growing faster than ever before. Offering a safe pair of hands and a secure future with our commitment to high standards.

As a business owner, take control to assure your future reputation



Your reputation is our reputation

We have welcomed over 1,000 years of heritage and experience to our business in the past 12 months as business owners continue putting their trust in Funeral Partners to secure their legacy.

Selling your business is a big step and there are many different reasons for deciding to do so. The reasons for selling are wide and varied, these include succession planning, realising value, support with regulation and enabling you to focus on your families without the burden of business administration.

We remain supportive and positive about regulation, as the majority of the professionals in our industry act with integrity, honesty and respect. Our processes, procedures and governance like daily checks, regular audits and mystery shops are used to ensure we

deliver the most professional and caring service possible. Recent environmental visits by local authorities are evidence of our industry's increasing public profile and further change is yet to come. As part of this we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the NAFD and SAIF on the joint principles and minimum standards they have agreed.

A new government also means a change in policies. It has already been announced that amendments to employment law are imminent, bringing with them more onerous requirements on business owners. Furthermore, the Government's commitment to avoiding increased taxation on working people leaves fewer ways for them to raise tax revenues. Key taxes under scrutiny that affect business owners include Capital Gains Tax and relief on pension contributions.



“Funeral Partner’s sector-leading reputation as the acquisition partner of choice has meant that in the past 12 months we have added 14 high-quality family businesses, bringing with them an impressive 40 additional funeral homes. I never take it for granted that former owners, including many who stay with us to continue running their businesses, put their faith in us to enable their legacy to thrive. I’m proud they see Funeral Partners as a name synonymous with respect, trust and exemplary service.”

Sam Kershaw, Chief Executive Officer

Why me? Why now?

You run a successful business. It provides a vital service to your community, supports your employees and pays for your livelihood. It's your passion, one of your greatest achievements, and yet it can be difficult to take time away and "switch off" for holidays and time with family and friends.

So, what happens when you decide to take a step back and spend more quality time with your nearest and dearest? Who is going to take over the reins, support your staff and continue to serve your communities?

That is where we can help you. Becoming part of Funeral Partners secures the long-term future of your business, allows you to tailor your role to meet your ambition, and continues the legacy you have built up over the years. A transitional period is vital, so it's never too early to plan. Many owners enjoy their work so much that they remain involved in the business for longer than they had originally planned and we are delighted that many former owners remain ambassadors or business principles and younger family members stay on to develop their careers with us after acquisition.

The challenges of owning a funeral business have never been greater, an industry that continues to see much change, with further regulatory changes expected soon. Now with the chancellor talking of tax rises, should taxation on the disposal of shares change, the government could be taking a higher proportion of the value you built up over the years when you eventually wish to take a step back.

Now could be a great time to think about the future whilst business owners can currently avail themselves of Business Asset Disposal Relief ("BADR") when they sell their business. This means they pay Capital Gains Tax at a lower rate of 10% on the first £1m of gain on sale. Above this, the Capital Gains Tax rate is 20%. There is little information on what the Chancellor might decide to do, but with rumours of a change in Capital Gains Tax growing, the monetary impact on business owners could be significant.

If you are interested in hearing more about how to become part of Funeral Partners either now or in the future, please get in touch.

Give us a call to discuss your future and how we can provide you with an answer to those ever-present questions on how your future could look, our flexible deal structures and approach.

Nicholas O'Hara Funeral Directors

Founded in 1974, Nicholas O'Hara has been serving communities in Dorset with an unwavering dedication to the highest standards and personal service.

With the first and main funeral home based in Wimborne, Nicholas O'Hara has since expanded to support four further communities. The company now celebrates 50 years since Nicholas, in his early 20's at the time, first opened the doors with the support of his parents.

A key element of joining Funeral Partners was to allow Nicholas to step away from the business entirely and enjoy a long and well-earned retirement, spending more time with his wife Jackie. Their children, Anthony and Natalie O'Hara are continuing the day-to-day running of the business and prospering with Funeral Partners.

“We have been given the scope to continue running the business and they were impressed by the high standards we have set for arranging funerals and caring for the deceased.”



Sam Kershaw CEO, Natalie O'Hara, Anthony O'Hara

“It was the right time to give security to the business for the future. We’ve been raised in the industry, but our own children have different career ambitions.”

“We were very reassured with Funeral Partners, how they were with us and their vision of what the future would be like.”

“We have been given the scope to continue running the business and they were impressed by the high standards we have set for arranging funerals and caring for the deceased.” – Anthony O'Hara

The business was well known to Funeral Partners for a number of years prior to them joining in May 2024. Conversations formally started in November 2023 when Anthony and Natalie realised that there was little succession in their own families to continue to a 4th generation.

Those initial conversations were undertaken in the strictest of confidence and allowed the owners time to discuss and come to a decision they felt was right. The Funeral Partners team were on hand to answer questions as and when they arose.

“The acquisitions team made the process as transparent as possible and kept us all up to date with progress as we navigated the sales process. They worked with integrity and the upmost professionalism.” – Anthony O'Hara

The due diligence process took around 12 weeks, and although there were a few more questions than the owners may have anticipated, Anthony and Natalie were organised and responsive to information requests which helped to deliver a smooth process.

“The acquisitions team made the process as transparent as possible and kept us all up to date with progress as we navigated the sales process. They worked with integrity and the upmost professionalism.”

“We are here to support you from the initial phone call, visits after hours or away from your funeral branch. We are flexible to create a deal to suit your circumstances. Having good professional advisers in the form of accountants and solicitors is crucial to advise and guide you.” – Steve Wilkinson

The team at Nicholas O’Hara were informed by Anthony and Natalie in advance of the acquisition, as per their wishes. We encourage owners to have these conversations as early as they feel comfortable, and we are happy to give as much support as is wanted in answering any initial questions from employees and providing them with reassurance.

Lee Howard, our Operations Support Manager in the South, helped the business with their transition to Funeral Partners before the transaction completed, providing hands-on assistance. He was also supported by our wider regional teams and dedicated HR business partner.

“Lee is invaluable. His dedication to ensuring a smooth transition from our systems to Funeral Partners was second to none. The wider team support helped us get on board with the inevitable changes to compliance and IT systems, and a dedicated HR business partner was able to support our team with questions. It was much smoother than initially anticipated, with no change to the client service.” – Anthony O’Hara

Funeral Partners are committed to retaining the high standards of the business and

maintaining the quality of the branches. The fleet of silver Jaguars was an area of particular importance to Nicohlas for the brand reputation and we will continue to ensure that the fleet are appropriately maintained and renewed.

Going forwards, we are investing in the team’s personal and professional development, ensuring those that wish to are enrolled in training to further their career. We also continue working with Anthony and Natalie on the expansion of the business into new areas, fulfilling their ambitions to continue growing their community activity and local support programmes.

“By joining Funeral Partners, we have secured the legacy of our family, with our name remaining above the door. Funeral Partners is very much a partnership. From those initial conversations, to the ongoing day-to-day, we feel very much cared for. We have no doubts that this was the right decision.” – Anthony and Natalie O’Hara



“The wider team support helped us get on board with the inevitable changes to compliance and IT systems, and a dedicated HR business partner was able to support our team with questions.”

Howard Chadwick Funeral Service

Over 30 years ago, Howard and Sandra Chadwick, alongside their nephew Alistair Cox, opened Howard Chadwick Funeral Service. A further six family members have worked at the business, making it a truly family affair. At the time of joining Funeral Partners, three generations of the Cox family were working in the business.

The owners were experienced in the funeral industry, with decades of service in their local communities before venturing out on their own. Their premises near Wallingford in Oxfordshire are purpose-built and designed to serve the needs of the community perfectly. The family wished to retain the property and a new long-term lease was agreed with Funeral Partners to secure their legacy and provide a future rental income for the former owners.

As part of the transaction, Howard and Sandra wished to take a step back from the business and enjoy retirement together, whilst Alistair wished to remain with the business to develop it further with our support.

They reached out to Steve Wilkinson in October 2023 to explore the opportunity of selling the business to Funeral Partners. All conversations were kept entirely confidential



Business Principal Alistair (on the right), alongside both his dad Neil and his son Thomas

to avoid any family or staff learning of the prospective sale.

“In the early meetings I had, it was clear that the people I was speaking to have a wealth of experience in the industry.”

“There was one meeting at my house, and when those who had attended were leaving, I saw how warmly they interacted with each other, and I realised then this was the sort of team I could work with.”

“They genuinely want the best for you and bereaved families.” – Alistair Cox

From the first meeting, it was clear there was an interest from both parties to move ahead with a transaction. Funeral Partners provided a clear and honest evaluation of the business and gave the owners the time to consider whether it was right for them.

Our due diligence process, assisted by our experienced external advisors, proceeded smoothly with the business joining Funeral Partners mid-way through April 2024. Family members and the team at Howard Chadwick were told in advance of joining Funeral Partners and met our Operational Support Manager, Lee Howard, before the official handover.

Lee was able to run through the initial changes that are required upon joining

“There was one meeting at my house, and when those who had attended were leaving, I saw how warmly they interacted with each other, and I realised then this was the sort of team I could work with.”

Funeral Partners and reassured the team that the majority of changes they will see are related to back-office processes, rather than the changes to the way they serve their families.

“We’ve kept our team informed throughout and it has been really helpful to have their support and backing. They’ve embraced the changes and the new support network of having professional centralised marketing, IT, finance and HR teams.”

“Of course, there are things that change, but it quickly becomes clear why that is not only necessary, but beneficial for the business.

“We’ve kept our team informed throughout and it has been really helpful to have their support and backing. They’ve embraced the changes and the new support network of having professional centralised marketing, IT, finance and HR teams.” – Alistair Cox

As part of our ongoing investment into new businesses in our network, we commit to improving premises and the working environment for all our employees. Funeral Partners have a management team of



industry experts and a range of experience from other industries which helps support innovation and future growth of the business. On a local level we know how important you and the team are within your community, the knowledge and relationships you have, we listen and work with you to make sure your business continues to thrive

“Funeral Partners has also already made investments to the funeral home – both in the front client-facing facilities and in the back of house. I have been so impressed when they have asked my opinion, and when I have disagreed, they haven’t just gone over my head. My biggest concern was about losing my voice and influence, but that definitely isn’t the case.” – Alistair Cox

Howard Chadwick Funeral Directors is a brilliant addition to our network of Funeral Directors and growing presence in Oxfordshire. We will work hard to maintain and grow the reputation that has been built up over the last 30 years.

“I am happy to be staying on and excited to continue to build our future, protecting our heritage and maintaining our high standards of care for our clients and families. It is business as usual with the support of an amazing team at Funeral Partners.” – Alistair Cox

Some frequently asked questions, answered

What is your approach to property?

If you own the freehold, either we can purchase this with the business or you can retain it and we will rent it from you on a long-term lease. If you do not own the freehold, we will either enter into a new long-term lease with the landlord or take over the existing lease.

How will my business change post-acquisition?

As part of the due diligence process, we will work collaboratively with you to develop a tailored integration plan. Whilst there will be some changes, we will work closely with you to help ensure we preserve what makes your business great, including keeping the name above the door and protecting the heritage and tradition of the business.

I have younger family members in the business. What will happen to them?

Having existing family within the business is important to us for continuity of service and reputation. With the support of the Funeral Partners network, younger family members can prosper and one day manage the business, continuing its success thus far. Being part of the Funeral Partners network also allows family members to explore training and other roles across the wider organisation; whether this is a management position or a move into a head office role such as support functions, the opportunities are plentiful.

What will happen to my employees?

Safeguarding the interests of employees is central to our acquisition approach. Employees won't be worse off and we will protect their current terms and conditions.

We will provide all employees with training and development opportunities that will allow them to thrive under Funeral Partners ownership.

Will a new manager be drafted in to control the business?

No – through the acquisition process, we will work with you to understand the needs of the business and how best to support these. You will have the continued support of our regional team and head office functions. Additional local resources and support can be provided, but this will depend on the situation.

Safeguarding staff

We recognise how important your employees are to the continued success of the business and that for a lot of owners, employees are family members and close personal friends.

When you're ready to tell your staff, we will be on hand to support you; we find doing this pre-completion works best. We want to reassure staff that their jobs are safe, have the opportunity to meet some of us and provide them with the necessary information and support.

A Questions and Answers booklet will be provided to staff containing a comprehensive suite of information, answering key questions and documenting what staff can expect over the coming weeks.

Your Heritage and Reputation are important to us

As Funeral Directors ourselves, we really do understand just how important your reputation is. Working with us means that your community will continue to be served in the same way that you have previously served as an independent family-run business. We wouldn't want it any other way.

Creating a deal that is tailored to your needs

We offer a great range of flexibility in our negotiations because we want to ensure that our prospective funeral homes have a deal that is tailored to them. This isn't merely on a business level with the numbers and legal structure that any deal will involve, but also on an emotional level where the future of the owners, their employees, brands and reputation within the local community are central to the deal.

It sounds simple, but 'we do what we say'. Not just following the wording of the agreement with a new funeral home, but sticking to the spirit of the agreement. That's just the start of establishing the concept of 'Your reputation is our reputation'.



Securing the future of your business

We know that deciding to sell a well-loved business is a momentous decision and we appreciate that you'll want all the available options explained to you in full.

Even if a sale is not a consideration for you now, it's never too early to have an initial chat and understand your options and why now may be a great time to explore them.

For an informal, confidential, conversation call:

**Find out more about us at
funeralpartners.co.uk/story**



**Free online
valuation tool**

Scan me

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“From our homes in Devon to the heart of Scotland, Northern Ireland and everywhere in between, the Funeral Partners tulip should be taken as a sign of quality, and a symbol that you can have confidence in the service you will be provided.”

Sam Kershaw

Chief Executive Officer



Our name is recognised in the profession for integrity and honesty. We have welcomed over 140 family businesses to our group, conducting over 28,000 funerals each year across our 280 branches. Operating in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. We pride ourselves on the longstanding relationships we keep with former owners and the fact that many choose to stay with us long after selling their family business.



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