

## Pure Cremation Sponsors Dying Matters launch event



“Our British reserve gets in the way of us having an open and honest conversation about how we would like to spend our last days, what is important to us and how we would like to be remembered.”

Pure Cremation is the 2018 headline sponsor of the Dying Matters in Your Community launch event, designed to kick-start a nationwide ‘big conversation’ about death.

It is the first time that the leading provider of direct cremations in the UK has sponsored this event, organised by Dying Matters, which is part of Hospice UK and campaigns to encourage people to break this last taboo and talk openly about dying, death and bereavement.

The event will be attended by around 100 representatives from the NHS, faith groups, the hospice movement, the Care Quality Commission and the Cremation Society of Great Britain.

Members of the public will also be there to get inspiration and advice on how to organise an event of their own to bring this challenging subject into the open during Dying Matters Awareness Week, planned for 14th – 20th May 2018.

Speakers will include author Kevin Toolis, whose book ‘My Father’s Wake’ was published last year, Gary Rycroft, chair of the Dying Matters Forum, Tracey Bleakley, Chief Executive of Hospice UK and Linda Magistris, CEO of The Good Grief Trust.

Catherine Powell, Customer Experience Director of Pure Cremation, said: “Our British reserve gets in the way of talking about how we want to spend our last days, what matters to us, and how we want to be remembered. Times have changed, and funerals are changing too, so it’s more important than ever to get this conversation going.

“In the absence of clear requests, grieving families go into “autopilot” and rely on the local undertaker to guide them through a traditional funeral, mainly because they’re in no state to research all of the options. The result may be an unsuitable funeral that costs more than the deceased would have wanted them to spend.

“Only one in four of us tell our families in advance what sort of funeral we would like to have, which is a great pity because chatting things through with loved ones can bring families closer together and ends confusion.

“Many people tell us that they want a [celebration of life event](#) at a favourite place, others reject the fuss and bother of a traditional send-off, but all are determined to remove uncertainty, prevent overspending and reduce distress.

“Having a conversation about your “goodbye” can be a very positive experience and Dying Matters Awareness Week is the biggest campaign in England, encouraging communities across the country to come up with their own events to get people talking about the only thing we can all count on.”

Events last year were diverse, ranging from coffee mornings and talks about palliative care to tours of crematoria and included some very public invitations to people to think about their mortality.

In Lincoln shoppers were invited to chalk up their 'bucket list' of things they'd like to do before they died, while the West Yorkshire town of Todmorden held 70 events in its 'Pushing up the Daisies Festival' which ended with a Firey Folky Funeral Feast.

Pure Cremation is the UK's only dedicated provider of direct cremation – the [no-fuss alternative to a traditional funeral](#). A direct cremation is a low-key affair in which the deceased person is collected and cared for before a cremation without any funeral service. The ashes are then returned to the family who can arrange their own farewells at a later date if they so wish.

Growing in popularity, direct cremations now account for in the region of seven per cent of all cremations in the UK. They appeal to people for a wide variety of reasons – some don't like funerals, full stop, others don't want to have a religious or formal ceremony. Some appreciate the freedom to arrange a very personalised farewell on a separate occasion, for others the sheer simplicity of the concept is attractive.

Catherine explained: "Families hold all sorts of commemorations after a direct cremation – be it scattering ashes in a favourite woodland, a thanksgiving service in the local church or lighting candles around the globe to join a scattered family together.

"Whatever their reasons, more people are choosing direct cremations for themselves, particularly after experiencing the direct cremation of a friend or relative."

The Dying Matters In Your Community Launch Event is being held at Woburn House Conference Centre, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HQ, on 6 February 2018 and is fully booked. The first session will be streamed live on the Dying Matters Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/DyingMatters/> from 10-10:20.

**Written by:** Catherine Powell

**On:** 6th February 2018